



Supporting the Wellbeing of Leaders in Primary Schools

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT – SURVEYS

HREC Project Number:	HRE2022-0626
Project Title:	Supporting the Wellbeing of Leaders in Primary Schools
Chief Investigators:	Associate Professor Susan Beltman & Dr Madeleine Dobson
Student researcher:	Cleo Jenkins
Version Number:	Version 5
Version Date:	25 th September 2023

What is the Project About?

The declining wellbeing of school leaders is increasingly recognized as a worldwide public and educational concern. The objectives of this research, are: 1.To engage in a critical review of literature focusing on or related to school leadership and wellbeing. 2.To conduct an in-depth longitudinal exploration on what factors shape school leaders' wellbeing. 3.To analyse the data and identify recommendations to improve school leaders' wellbeing. The findings from this research have the potential to contribute to the knowledge base of personal and professional factors impacting school leaders' wellbeing, how education authorities can best support school leaders and the improvement of school leaders' wellbeing to ensure that school communities can flourish.

Who is doing the Research?

This research project is being conducted by Cleo Jenkins, with supervisors Associate Professor Susan Beltman and Dr Madeleine Dobson. The project is funded by Curtin University and the results will be used by Cleo Jenkins to obtain a Doctor of Education. There will be no costs to you, and you will not be paid for participating in this project.

Why am I being asked to take part and what will I have to do?

We are seeking 50 primary school leaders (Principals and Deputy Principals) who work in Government Primary Schools. Participants can be any level of experience, substantive or acting in their position. You will be emailed a Qualtrics online survey once a fortnight (Thursday) for a total of 22 weeks. The initial comprehensive pre-survey will consist of 15 questions, which will include demographic question such as school level, years in the position and the school's geographical location. The concluding comprehensive post-survey will consist of 11 questions.

The short response surveys will be short (4 responses maximum) and easily accessible through electronic work and personal devices. Survey responses on wellbeing will be recorded against a Likert Scale. You will be asked to rate your overall wellbeing as a school leader on a scale from very poor, poor, somewhat poor, neutral, somewhat good, good or very good. You will be asked what has led you to make this judgement.

The data recorded via the Likert scale will be subject to quantitative analysis. Open-ended responses will be thematically analysed. Two questions will be asked on the topics of challenges and successes within your role. A reminder will be sent to you if the survey has not been completed on any set day. If you miss more than two responses, you will be omitted from the study base.



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Following the 22 weeks, you can opt in to participate in a semi-structured interviews lasting no more than one hour. The conduct of the follow-up interview is subject to the research team receiving approval from the WA Department of Education. Once approved, these will be conducted through an online platform, such as WebEx, at the convenience of the participants. The interview will be recorded to ensure there is no distraction with note taking. Following the interview, you will receive a copy of the transcript.

Are there any benefits' to being in the research project?

The Australian Standards for Principals identifies five professional practices, one of these being *Developing self and others* (AITSL, 2017). School leaders are committed to their own ongoing professional development and personal health and wellbeing to manage the complexity of the role and the range of learning capabilities and actions required of the role. Taking part in this research, may provide you with:

- The opportunity to express an opinion and describe your feelings on the topic.
- Personal wellbeing data tracked over time for your own reflection and development.
- A greater awareness of self and what it is you need to thrive personally and professionally.

This research project may benefit other people in the future, and we hope the results of this research will allow us to:

- Contribute to the knowledge base of personal and professional factors impacting on school leaders' wellbeing.
- Provide education authorities with longitudinal wellbeing data of school leaders lived experiences in the profession.
- Promote health and wellbeing in the workplace.

Are there any risks, side-effects, discomforts, or inconveniences from being in the research project?

There are no foreseeable risks to you, other than giving up your time to take part in the study. Surveys should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Your data will remain confidential, you will not be identified throughout the study and all data will be secured safely. We have been careful to make sure that the questions in the survey do not cause you any distress. But, if you feel anxious about any of the questions you do not need to answer them. It may be possible, due to the nature of the topic, that you experience difficulties with your wellbeing during the period of the study. If you indicate severe illbeing, a note will be displayed and we encourage you to contact the Employee Assistance Program (1300 307 912) and community support can be accessed via your GP and Lifeline (13 11 14).

Who will have access to my information?

The information collected in this research will be re-identifiable. We will ask for your name and email address at the start of the study to enable us to collect the fortnightly responses, track, link and analyse the responses over the course of the study, and plot the data components. You will be sent an email link from Qualtrics to complete a survey once a fortnight. Your data will remain confidential. Participants' names will be removed during and when publishing the study and we will ensure that no participant can be identified. Electronic data will be password-protected and hard copy data will be in locked storage. The information collected in this study will be kept under secure conditions at Curtin University for 7 years after the research is published and then it will be destroyed. The following people will have access to the information collected in this research: the research team



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and, in the event of an audit or investigation, staff from the Curtin University Office of Research and Development. The results of this research may be presented at conferences or published in professional journals. You and your school will not be identifiable in any results that are published or presented.

Will you tell me the results of the research?

If you are interested in obtaining a summary of the results, please contact the researchers after the conclusion of the study. Results will not be individual but based on all the information we collect and review as part of the research.

Do I have to take part in the research project?

Taking part in a research project is voluntary. It is your choice to take part or not. You do not have to agree if you do not want to. If you decide to take part and then change your mind, you can withdraw from the project. If you choose not to take part or start and then stop the study, it will not affect your relationship with the research team, university, staff or colleagues. You can withdraw your participation prior to submitting your responses by simply closing the browser. If you choose to leave the study, we will use any information already collected unless you tell us not to.

What happens next and who can I contact about the research?

For more information regarding the project or if you have any questions, please email Cleo Jenkins at cleo.jenkins@postgrad.curtin.edu.au or her supervisor, Associate Professor Susan Beltman at s.beltman@curtin.edu.au. If you decide to take part in this research we will ask you to sign the consent form. By signing it is telling us that you understand what you have read and what has been discussed. Signing the consent indicates that you agree to be in the research project. Please take your time and ask any questions you have before you decide what to do. You will be given a copy of this information statement and the consent form to keep.

Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved this study (HRE2022-0626). Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular, any matters concerning the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or you wish to make a confidential complaint, you may contact the Ethics Officer on (08) 9266 9223 or the Manager, Research Integrity on (08) 9266 7093 or email hrec@curtin.edu.au.