

TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NATIONAL
DANCE EDUCATION POLICY IN JAMAICA:
PUBLIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM
AND OWNERSHIP

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“Dance has the power to grasp people’s full attention.”

—Samantha Daley, 17-year-old (Dance and the Child International [daCi], 2008, p. 15)

ABSTRACT

I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand
—Confucius (551 - 479 BC)

Fundamentally about “doing,” Dance is a strong element of Jamaican social and cultural expression. This dissertation is based on the premise that in order to fully educate Jamaica’s children and to accomplish “National Outcome 2: World Class Education and Training” of the *Jamaican National Development Plan for 2030* (Planning Institute of Jamaica [PIOJ], 2009, p. xvi), Dance should be an integral part of Jamaica’s educational curriculum. This study draws on multiple perspectives and sources (autobiographical, critical, historical, socio-cultural, and political) to construct an advocacy platform for the establishment of Dance in Jamaican schools.

For the past three decades, Dance educators in Jamaica have developed Dance curricula for public educational institutions, but there is still a need to justify the validity of Dance as part of the general school curriculum and the advantage of its institutionalization to the wider society. Assuming that the objective of our schools is to provide holistic education, then it seems a common sense proposition that every child should be given the opportunity to participate in a dance program. Dance allows children to appreciate rich and diverse cultures, beliefs, and societies. It involves the “whole child” while developing dexterity, intuition, sensitivity, reasoning, memory, and imagination. Assuming that Dance is afforded the opportunity to educate, then research should be conducted to inform curriculum development and decision makers.

Five research questions guided the inquiry: (a) What are the historical underpinnings of Dance in Jamaican society that inform the role of Dance in the educational system; in what ways did Dance individuals, groups, institutions and or companies shape the Dance culture in post-colonial Jamaica (1962 – 2009)? (b) In what ways can children in early childhood, primary and secondary educational institutions in Jamaica benefit from the inclusion of Dance Education in the formal school curriculum? (c) How do education stakeholders in Jamaica view the need for a national policy for Dance Education in Jamaica? (d) What factors have prevented the development of a national policy for Dance Education in Jamaica? (e) In reviewing post-Independence Government legislature and policies for education and culture (1962 – 2009), what is needed to support the development of a national policy for Dance Education? The evolution of Jamaican dance education history since Independence in 1962 is both a point of departure and an anchor to broach other themes for discussion: shifting educational philosophies and Dance as a phenomenon of cultural and aesthetic dimensions.

Findings of the study strengthen the premise that for every child to be afforded the benefits of Dance Education, Dance should be included in the formal curriculum of public schools as a matter of policy. Such a policy should address major issues like curriculum revision and teacher education, making Dance an essential part of the early childhood through secondary education core curriculum. Jamaica's children need opportunities to communicate in their own unique voice—they need to 'own' the Dance. This research has generated a framework towards development of an initial concept paper for policy development in Jamaica. The study is limited to Jamaica, but findings may have implications for the Caribbean region.

DEDICATION

To my parents George (1925–2003) and Thelma DeGrasse, who were reluctant to support my vision to dance as they did not understand it, but who were later transformed; and to the children of Jamaica, especially those with whom I have had the pleasure of engaging in Dance as art and education at the Junior Department, School of Dance, Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

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CHAPTER 1
THE POTENTIAL OF DANCE EDUCATION
IN JAMAICAN SCHOOLS

“I love dancing because it helps me to express myself. I feel free when I dance.”
—Geneille Williams, 9-year-old (daCi, 2005, p. 5)

Introduction

Reflecting on my development as a student and teacher of Dance, it seems like I have always believed that every individual should be given the opportunity to dance as part of their formal education. As a professional advocate for the importance of Dance Education in Jamaican society, I often offer a common sense rationale along these lines—Dance is essential to humanness and therefore can enhance social, cultural, educational and economic existence, especially when effectively nurtured from an early age. I align with Hanna’s (1987) holistic conception of dance, in which “Dance interweaves with other aspects of human life, such as communication and learning, belief systems, social relations and political dynamics, loving and fighting, and urbanization and change” (p. 3). This dissertation draws on multiple perspectives and sources (autobiographical, critical, historical, socio-cultural, and political) to construct an advocacy platform for the establishment of Dance in Jamaican schools.

This chapter provides background to the study, beginning with autobiographical reflection on my own journey as a dancer, teacher and advocate for Dance as an educational modality. I then broaden the lens to outline a post-Independence historical-

political perspective for considering the potential of Dance Education in Jamaican school curricula. The chapter concludes with an overview of research purpose, questions, methodology, and progression of dissertation content by chapter.

An Advocate's Journey

Anyone who has experienced the transforming power of dance has probably asked the question, "What is it about dance?" I know that I have asked many such questions. What is it about dance that can change an individual into an empowered, impassioned human being – before my eyes? What is it about Dance that reveals who and what I am? What is it about dance that revives my spirit, reveals my soul, and transforms my being? What is it about dance – that makes me, me? Dance has shaped my life, and as I teach, I witness its power in my students, including ones who may find it difficult to speak to their peers, yet excel in dance performance. Dance can reflect the individual spirit when words are inaccessible or insufficient.

I was not taught as a child to appreciate the arts of my native Jamaica as representations of me, yet I knew from an early age that I wanted a career in dance. My parents, like other Caribbean parents I know, did not agree; for them dance was not a profession worth pursuing. Nevertheless, in September 1983, at age 18 years, I fell in love with the Jamaica School of Dance, first as passive observer and then as active participant. Since then dance has become as essential to my life as breathing. Importantly, in terms of this dissertation research, I credit dance with awakening in me a conscious awareness of culture and directly facilitating my self-discovery as a cultural being.

Explicit cultural experiences, including dance, were not part of the formal curricula of my early childhood, primary or secondary education.¹ I remember my secondary school entering the annual Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) Festival of Performing Arts Dance Competition with a Revival² dance. While I enjoyed the movement experience and the positive social dynamics between peers, we did not explore or even discuss the historical and cultural context of the dance during this extra-curricular teaching and learning process. Nevertheless, the Revival dance steps were familiar to many of us. One could pass practitioners of this cultural dance “having church” on a street corner in Kingston (the capitol of Jamaica) or any other city street corner in Jamaica; such events included fervent singing, praising God, preaching, movement and collecting money from passersby or onlookers who would sometimes join in the ritual.

Reflecting on those Revival classes, I have mused about how the teacher did not demonstrate any of the nuances associated with the dance. Dips, turns, jumps, and songs seemed to flow naturally from our bodies as if we were members of a Revival group. We sometimes performed the movements in a mocking manner, giggling and pretending to be possessed by the spirit. The Revival dance was the only educational movement opportunity available to us at that time and much of our knowledge came from incidental cultural transmission.

In spite of the lack of formal educational and familial support, dance was what I wanted to do and as a teenager where I knew how to excel and “be.” I enjoyed family gatherings where I was asked to demonstrate the latest dance moves. As president of my secondary school’s 4H Club, I introduced dancing as one of the club’s weekly activities

in which I taught and choreographed. It was noticed that my peers and I were having fun at meetings and we were given opportunities to perform for in-school events. I was an average student academically, but through dance leadership in the service club context, I felt fulfilled and accomplished. I experienced the joy of personal agency when I danced or created dances.

During my secondary school years, I was often invited by the principal of Franklyn Town Primary School in Kingston (where one of my sisters was employed as the secretary) to perform for school gatherings. I volunteered to work with Franklyn Town Primary school students in preparation for their inter-house³ dance competition during the Easter school term and at age 16 years was employed to teach dance as an extracurricular offering for a summer program. Franklyn Town Primary School was my first formal yet informal experience with dance teaching and performance. I describe the experience as formal since I was hired by the principal to teach Dance,⁴ but also informal as I was not prepared through dance teacher education and was unskilled according to contemporary standards.

I worked with students in grades four to six, many of them interested in being part of a dance group. I recall one grade five boy who did not initially join the class but was present at every session. He stood to the side of the room and observed, trying to catch the steps without being obvious. After several weeks of watching and much encouragement from me, he came into the class. He was quite hesitant at first and his peers were not supportive to his presence. When he started moving, many students laughed and poked fun at him, but somehow he made up his mind to remain. A few students were encouraging, and so he gravitated towards them and persevered.

Mid-way through the session participants were all having a good laugh, including him, at his unique movement vocabulary, which included a homo-lateral style of locomotion (same arm, same leg moving together) rather than the “normal” cross-lateral pattern. He looked like he was having fun. This and countless other experiences convinced me that not only do children love to dance, but that there is something about dance that empowers the mover, generating confidence and personal artistic expression. I did not know what it was, but I felt it in me and observed it in the children I worked with at Franklyn Town Primary School.

At that time I could not understand why my parents did not seem to see who I was when I danced and how important dance was in giving me a voice. To dance felt ‘real’—I was able to speak volumes through movement. I felt free to move—to explore my environment and to educate others about themselves. My parents thought that dance did not hold much academic rigor, yet dance required tremendous physical training during one’s formative years. They were concerned that I had begun too late to master the essentials and that I was avoiding ‘important’ study by choosing an easy way out—dance. I was troubled that the principal of this institution was able to see the passion I had for dance and dancing, yet my parents could not. The thought of someone else understanding the importance of dancing to me, but not my immediate family, was confusing.

The children I worked with at Franklyn Town Primary School were able to make connections and meanings about themselves with discoveries like, for example, a theme like “I am a Jamaican” when we worked on a dance using the 1978 JCDC Festival song, “Land of My Birth”⁵ by Jamaican popular music singer Eric Donaldson. I was encouraged by these developments and by the principal to pursue formal training in

dance. Formal education meant that I would be able to put movement experiences into words and to educate others about and through dance systematically. I was led to higher education in dance, a four-year program at the then Cultural Training Centre (CTC), an academic experience that opened my mind, body, and spirit to the numerous modalities of dance and fed my emerging mission for dance to become an integral part of Jamaican school education.

After graduating from the CTC in 1987 with a Diploma in Dance in Education, I taught dance in various institutions (early childhood through secondary school settings; workshops with the JCDC) for one year before leaving for the United States to pursue a baccalaureate degree in dance. During my first job as a trained teacher of dance with the Institute of Jamaica (IOJ) Junior Centre, a student about 7-year-old said to me after a creative dance class, “Miss, I love to dance...I can make up all kinds of things when I am dancing.” I still remember the look in her eyes and that she was still moving as she spoke to me. I had observed this look numerous times in other students and knew it in myself. My student felt free to be creative and to express her thoughts using her whole body. Reflecting on this student’s response to Dance and many others I taught in 1987, it seemed even more clear to me that all children need formal creative outlets and that the arts, specifically dance, if effectively delivered, could assist in educating youth about themselves and their society for an improved global environment. I needed further education to prepare me for a professional career that could support these assumptions and values.

My journey to the United States for further studies in dance was motivated by the desire to refine my professional voice and was also a way of demonstrating to my parents

that there was more to a career in dance than what existed in Jamaica. I wanted to show them that dance had a body of knowledge similar to other professional fields. I had exhausted the possibilities for higher education in dance in Jamaica and it was time to move on. My first program in the United States was exciting and new, but it did not address the area of dance that I craved—the field of dance education. After a year I transferred to another college where I pursued undergraduate and graduate work in dance and had opportunities to take courses in education.

After graduation in 1993, I returned home to work at the CTC as full-time faculty, with the JCDC as dance workshop facilitator and adjudicator, and for several PreK-12 institutions. In the absence of a trained workforce, I tried to do it all. By this time dance had burgeoned in society, especially concert dance. The CTC was still relatively unknown to the general Jamaican populace as an institution for higher education in the arts, yet dance performance within schools and communities had increased throughout Jamaica due to the prominence of the JCDC and its annual Festival competition. Student admission to the CTC Jamaica School of Dance had grown in quantity and quality. Applicants were extending beyond the few keen on Dance Education like myself; young professionals from the Eastern Caribbean (Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, St. Lucia, Trinidad, and Tobago, among other islands) were being awarded governmental scholarships through the Organisation of American States (OAS) to undertake higher dance studies. In addition, the School was attracting a large group of young people who seemed to wander off the streets possessing raw talent, but seemed uncertain about why they were at a School of Dance. In March 1995, the CTC was transferred officially to the Ministry of Education and Culture and renamed the Edna

Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) with an expanded mission to provide first class arts teachers and practitioners for Jamaica and the Caribbean. I became Director of the EMCVPA School of Dance in 1999.

Ten years later, I took a two-year leave of absence to once more embark on further studies. With a significant amount of experience teaching Dance, designing curricula, and working with teachers at all levels in Dance, I returned to the United States to pursue doctoral studies. Again, the decision for further academic development was inspired by personal and professional reasons. On a personal level, I wanted to fulfil a promise made to my first mentor Sheila Barnett while a student at the CTC that I would one day pursue doctoral studies in dance. Further, I believed that for dance to achieve the kind of credibility needed to become an established part of Jamaican educational curriculum at all levels, the country needs persons to be the voice of the subject, specifically, persons armed with doctoral qualifications. I am finally doing the research necessary to support the cause of dance education in the curriculum of Jamaican public educational institutions. It is pertinent to articulate through research what is absent from Jamaican dance and dance education and to establish clear rationales for including the arts, specifically dance, as part of formal education for early childhood, primary, and secondary education.

Today, recollecting the early years of my dance journey in particular, my only regret is that like so many other Jamaican teenagers, I spent the first 18 years of my life unaware that a School of Dance even existed, a tertiary institution devoted exclusively to pedagogical and technical training funded by the Jamaican Government. This blindness, however, was more than a personal or parental failure; it was an indication of the gap that

existed in the national vision for education and culture, a gap that has nonetheless supported a tertiary arts institution without feeder schools. Thirty years later, not much has changed; this reality is at the core of my desire to develop a national dance education policy rationale for public educational institutions in Jamaica. My mission is for Jamaican and Caribbean youth to finally have a mandate for consistent developmental learning processes ingrained in the arts, processes I will argue are necessary for the strategic educational development of a postcolonial nation.

I began this study with a number of concerns relating to the state of Dance Education in Jamaica. In 1991, the CTC Jamaica School of Dance was attaining world standards in practice and curriculum development – graduates were able to matriculate into North American universities by transferring course credits earned from the EMCVPA. Students and graduates were auditioning for the Juilliard School, Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, York University in Canada and other tertiary institutions, yet dance was not formally present in the general school curriculum in Jamaica. This discrepancy meant that potential applicants to the EMCVPA School of Dance had to acquire pre-requisite dance knowledge and skills independently. In addition, the JCDC was vigorously promoting dance's cultural, social and economic benefits through its competitions and workshops. School groups were emerging all over the island as teachers or leaders who attended JCDC dance workshops became confident in teaching dance and were being employed in some instances to teach dance in schools.

Reminiscent of my Franklyn Town Primary School experience, however, Jamaica was continuing to perpetuate the notion that one does not have to be qualified in Dance to be able to teach Dance. As evidenced in current dance teacher employment practice up to

2009, education stakeholders—in particular parliamentarians, principals, teachers, and parents—did not seem to be concerned about standards in preparation for teaching dance. The emphasis in teaching dance was on product and not about the process or benefits beyond performance. With regard to dance in schools, individual institutions decided what obtained in the teaching of dance or the individual teacher decided what and who would be taught. There was an uneasy sense that dance belonged to everyone and everyone was dancing yet dance was not affecting education or a wide cross section of our youth.

All of these conditions strengthened my premise that if the nation of Jamaica was to benefit from dance's potential benefits and values as an educational modality, dance experiences in Jamaica needed to be organised to include curriculum development and teacher education. In this regard, there was need for research to lay the groundwork for a national policy for the establishment of dance in Jamaica's public educational institutions at early childhood, primary, and secondary levels. The next section introduces a socio-historical and socio-political framework for the endeavour.

Background for Advocacy: The Arts in Post-colonial Jamaica

Since Jamaica's independence in 1962, a number of local, regional and international initiatives have placed the arts at the forefront of education for young people. One such initiative came out of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). In 1999, at the 30th session of UNESCO General Conference, there was an international appeal for teaching of the arts in schools. As an

action towards this end, in 2003 UNESCO member states, including Jamaica, adopted a proposal by Portugal to organise a World Conference on arts education to be held in Lisbon in March 2006. Part of the background to the UNESCO Position Paper (UNESCO, 2006a) for the conference states that Arts education has a positive influence on a child's overall development, both academic and personal. The paper asserts that such an education, when it makes use of a child's creative potential, strengthens the acquisition of knowledge and life skills: creativity, imagination, oral expression, manual ability, concentration, memory, and personal interest in others. Arts education aims at passing down cultural and artistic heritage to young people, giving them the means to create their own language and contributing to their personality development on emotional and cognitive levels.

The paper speaks powerfully to the teaching of arts practices—dance, drama, music and visual arts—in formal public education institutions, advocating that nations, including their 193 member states, can be transformed through education that includes the arts. The arts promote cultural diversity and through their cross-disciplinary functions provide a solid foundation in education for our children. The arts are a vehicle of social, cultural, educational and economic transformation and may be considered to possess capacities that are inherent to Caribbean peoples.

In the Caribbean, and Jamaica in particular, there is a history of public arts festivals that bring writers, artists, musicians and other creative people together and generate income for the local economy. One such event is CARIFESTA, the Caribbean Festival of Arts. Conceived as a regional event encompassing all the creative and artistic skills and energies of countries in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the wider

Caribbean, and the Diaspora, CARIFESTA was meant to give credence to Caribbean arts and to encourage regional cultural exchange. The first CARIFESTA was held in Georgetown, Guyana in 1972. In 1976, the second festival was held at the Cultural Training Centre (CTC) in Jamaica, out of which came recognition of the need for a tertiary Arts institution in the Anglophone Caribbean.

A shift in thinking seems to be occurring around the perceived need for the arts in education, as developing countries like Jamaica with a rich cultural heritage look to the cultural and creative industries⁶ as revenue earners to support the local economy.

According to UNESCO (2006b):

Creative industries are becoming increasingly important components of modern post-industrial knowledge-based economies. Not only are they thought to account for higher than average growth and job creation, they are also vehicles of cultural identity that play an important role in fostering cultural diversity. (Introduction)

What better way to provide sustainable development for the arts than through education?

The Jamaica Trade and Investment Promotion Organization (JAMPRO) website states that Jamaica's reputation as the "cultural mecca" of the Caribbean has positioned our creative industries as a key revenue generator for the local economy. JAMPRO highlights that the industry encompasses music, craft, cuisine, fashion, fine arts, publishing, film and video, advertising, architecture and a host of other creative goods and services.

Globally, the creative industries are estimated to account for more than 7 per cent of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and the sector is forecast to grow at a rate of ten per cent annually (JAMPRO, 2012).

The *Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan* (PIOJ, 2009) has been described as Jamaica's strategic road map to direct the pathway and develop Jamaica's

status by the year 2030. Its mantra describes: “Jamaica, the place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business” (p. vi). One of its tenets is that youth should be empowered to contribute meaningfully in building their own communities (PIOJ, p. vi). Community development depends on individuals who are confident, able to connect to their own feelings, respect others, and imagine and create new images from this consciousness, and who solve problems in innovative ways. It is important, therefore, to expose our children to creative means of transformative education and to include the arts in education for purposes of social and economic development. A national policy is a necessary and logical next step to secure the place of the arts, specifically dance, in schools.

Overview of the Study

Statement of Purpose

Currently, in Jamaica, the term “dance education” seems to be an empty phrase, without weight. It may be used in relation to any type of dance activity associated with children or schooling in dance. General educators may use the term to separate the experimental creative process (dance education) from training in strong technical skills (dance performance/ competitions). Further, dance education lacks a discrete identity in Jamaica as it is subsumed under Physical Education in public school education.

Since 1988, the CTC Jamaica School of Dance has educated students in Dance Education in three-year programs through the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) dance teacher education program. In August 2010 the EMCVPA began offering a Bachelor of Arts in Dance Education. However, dance does not exist as an educational component in PreK-12 education; hence college students may be confused by the term “dance education,” as their first exposure to it is at the tertiary level of education.

Hilsendager (2000) describes the problem of nomenclature on a broader scale, stating, “Throughout the course of the twentieth century, dance education emerged as a “label”, a “something”, an “entity.” Today, dance education alternately refers to a product, a process, a pathway, a paradigm, a purpose, a prescription, and/or a possibility” (p. 14). In this vein, there is a need to clarify an identity for “dance education” in Jamaica, thus contributing to the possibility of systemic change in Jamaican educational curriculum and beyond to the Caribbean region. As asserted by Kahlich (1993):

Dance education must fully buy into the philosophy that the purpose of education (and thus dance education) is to aid and guide each student to discover and value his/her potential and interests and examine his/her identity and role as an individual and social being. (p. 126)

This implies that Dance Education must embrace the general principles of education and socio-cultural existence. The research will expose and analyse the uncertainty about what “dance education” means in the Jamaican Dance context and how to improve teacher education and education in general with the inclusion of dance. It will seek to facilitate the discourse necessary for buying into the concept of dance as an educational change agent to benefit the national shared vision in education and culture,

and to support a national goal to empower our children to achieve their fullest potential as stated in the national strategic plan. Through a comprehensive process of scrutiny about the meanings and potentials of dance education in Jamaica, this study seeks to contribute a structure to inform decision makers in a process leading to a national dance education policy decision, and to examine and advance the cause of dance education in Jamaica as important to fully educating our youth.

The current status of dance education in Jamaica is fraught with irony and paradox. While a few decision makers and general educators seem to understand the value of Dance as a socio-cultural need for Jamaican children through institutions like the JCDC and the EMCVPA, among others, Dance is not recognised as a discrete, coherent, and progressively delivered subject of learning within early childhood, primary and secondary school curricula. The current state of dance in schools reveals significant gaps, notably between grades three and ten; between dancing for festival competitions and dancing in the classroom; between training dance educators and training our general teachers in aspects of dance education.

Another aim of the research is to document the current status of dance education in Jamaica: to ascertain how the arts in education support or fail to support the national vision (PIOJ, 2009) and to articulate an expansion or perhaps a total shift in the dance education paradigm in Jamaican society—social, educational, and cultural. My intention is to provide empirical data to support the dialogue for inclusion of dance in mainstream education, which will elicit evidence toward a concept paper for a national policy in dance education across public educational institutions in Jamaica. The process of policy development would also allow for a gradual public ownership of dance education through

a greater understanding of its content as an instrument of personal, cultural, and social transformation. Preparation for the development of a national policy in Jamaica would not only hold implications for standards and teacher education, but would require compulsory national dialogue towards a shared vision.

Research Premise and Questions

A core assumption of the study is that a national dance education policy would establish standards for quality dance education at every level of the general education structure and redefine teacher education preparation. The above section has sketched out my broad vision and goals for this research, which need to be tethered to specific research questions. The following questions guided the study:

- (a) What are the historical underpinnings of Dance in Jamaica that inform the role of Dance in the educational system? In what ways did Dance individuals/groups/institutions/companies shape the Dance culture in post-colonial Jamaica (1962-2009)?
- (b) In what ways can children in early childhood, primary and secondary educational institutions in Jamaica benefit from the inclusion of Dance Education in the formal school curriculum?⁷
- (c) How do education stakeholders in Jamaica view the need for a national policy for Dance Education in Jamaica?

- (d) What factors have prevented the development of a national policy for Dance Education in Jamaica?
- (e) In reviewing current (1962-2009) Government legislation and policies for education and culture, what is needed to support the development of a national policy for Dance Education?

Significance of the Study

As a discreet subject in formal education, Dance Education would provide opportunities for Jamaican young people to pursue ownership of their creative abilities. As suggested earlier, Dance involves the ‘whole child,’ drawing on dexterity, reasoning, intuition, imagination, feelings, and social sensitivity (Cone & Cone, 2012; Gilbert, 2004; McCutchen, 2006; Nelson, 2009). Holistic dance education exists already in a few Jamaican schools where teachers are educated and equipped with content and methodologies. However, by establishing a national policy, major issues like curriculum revision and teacher preparation would be addressed systematically, aligning dance with other subjects in our early childhood, primary and secondary core curriculum. This would offer all students the opportunity to benefit from dance’s potential problem solving, health promoting, and creative values. The emphasis in holistic dance education is not to create technicians, but to foster creativity, imagination, and cultural literacy, the “medium by which a people are prepared for the creation of their own particular civilization, and the advancement and glory of their own race” (Garvey, 1923, p. 6) This new paradigm of

Jamaican Dance Education would develop the country's higher forms of capital, its "cultural, human, knowledge and institutional capital stocks" (JIPO, 2009, p. 11).

Establishing the legitimacy of Dance Education through a national policy would pave the way to developing a Jamaican early childhood, primary and secondary national dance curriculum. This national document would establish standards, describing what all Jamaican children should know and be able to do at each level of schooling. Standards would be consistent with national educational goals projected by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Culture for this cohort. The first national goal for education under *Vision 2030 Jamaica* is that, "Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential" (JIPO, 2009, p. xxv). Dance Education can be clearly aligned with this concept.

National curriculum standards exist in a number of developed and developing nations and the arts, including the performing arts/dance, are well represented (O'Donnell, 2004). Hamblen (1995) notes, "National goals are seen as the way arts education can achieve equity with other subject areas in our schools" (p. 28), that is, all subjects in the curriculum would be governed and represented by the national body using national guidelines. The establishment of national standards through a national curriculum would, for example, give rise to academic integration. Dance would no longer function solely as an extracurricular activity, but would be a vital part of the total educational process. Coherent, systemic planning is needed. Carroll (1993) warns:

The arts could easily be eliminated if they are not sufficiently valued in light of other variables. Worse yet is the possibility that the arts will be pushed into the centre of the curriculum without appropriate planning, staff recruitment, in-service training, resources, and curriculum development. (p. 19)

There is also a need to “orient general classroom teachers in Dance and provide them with fundamentals that can bring substance to their presentations in or about dance” (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, International Council of Fine Arts Deans, & Council of Arts Accrediting Associations, 2001, p. 38). These are the teachers who spend the most time with students and would be able to incorporate Dance within curricula. At this stage of development of Dance Education in Jamaica, however, teachers tend to teach Dance out of personal interest and for cultural spectacle—the presentation of dance products for concerts or competition. In addition to recognising the intrinsic value of Dance, a national dance education policy would allow teachers to gain the knowledge and skills to connect dance to other academic areas like Science, Math, and Literacy. Our teacher training institutions and universities would be able to prepare teachers to support children’s academic and creative learning through Dance.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of Dance Education and prompts research and documentation in Dance Education, also situating the EMCVPA as a leading institution for Dance and Dance Education in the Anglophone Caribbean. It gives dance educators a voice in mainstream education and arts dialogue in Jamaica and the Caribbean. It also provides research-based evidence about the attributes of dance-educated K-12 students from the perspectives of teachers and principals, individuals who may be a source for future national development plans and policy reform as governments seek to improve the quality of life for its citizens.

Delimitations

- (a) This research speaks specifically to Jamaica and not the entire English-speaking Caribbean;
- (b) This research does not seek to design policy, but to provide significant data that will feed into decision thresholds for the process of future development of an Arts Education policy, including Dance Education, in Jamaica;
- (c) Historical development of dance in Jamaica will be addressed from a dance education perspective; and,
- (d) Data will speak to education, arts and culture since August 1962, when Jamaica gained independence, to 2009.
- (e) For purposes of this study, education stakeholders surveyed and interviewed are delimited to education professionals only, not the full range of stakeholders encompassing parents and children.

Limitations

- (a) There is a dearth of information on Dance in general, and on Dance Education specifically, in Jamaica;
- (b) A few printed materials on Dance Education are outdated, but important to historical perspective;

- (c) Some primary source documents are inaccessible due to poor archiving procedures at the JCDC;
- (d) The 2010 death of Rex Nettleford, who played a significant role in Jamaican dance and culture and would have been included in the pool of interviewees, removed access to an important figure and source; and,
- (e) Lack of funds to conduct regional teacher workshops through the JCDC at the time of data collection limited ready access to a large number of teachers. Questionnaires were therefore administered via email and direct individual contacts and only to teachers of dance and principals of public institutions that offer Dance.

Research Methodology

In order to address the proposed research questions and permit research-based advocacy towards a cabinet decision on a national policy for dance education in Jamaican school curriculum (early childhood through secondary), the study employs a qualitative methodology with triangulation of multiple sources of information. Sources include: government legislation and policy documents (local, regional, international); historical literature on Jamaican dance and dance education; arts and dance education advocacy literature; interviews with key figures in Jamaican dance, education and culture; questionnaires administered to dance teachers and principals in schools offering dance;

and autobiographical and critical reflection. The study was approved by the Temple University Institutional Review Board, the University's overseer of human subjects research ethics. The consent form for questionnaire respondents is provided in Appendix A.

I analysed Jamaican government documents in order to trace and illuminate a national shared vision for the arts as a component of national development since Jamaica's independence in 1962. I examined the historical development of Dance in Jamaica—pivotal events, persons, institutions, agencies and organisations that have influenced the status of dance and dance education in present-day Jamaica. Further, I assessed the current profile of dance with reference to existing and developing government policies in education and culture, and in relation to the EMCVPA School of Dance, Jamaican dance companies, and the JCDC, which has the mandate for the development and preservation of Jamaica's cultural heritage.

I collected pertinent historical perspectives through qualitative interviews with significant representatives of dance, education, and culture—Barbara Requa (co-founder of the Jamaica School of Dance, renamed the School of Dance (EMCVPA) and a founding member of the NDTC); Yvonne Kong (immediate Past Principal of G.C. Foster College of Physical Education); Sydney Bartley, (Principal Director of Culture, Entertainment and Creative Industries in the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture), and Phyllis Reynolds (Education Officer in the Ministry of Education who was instrumental in the 1998 Primary Education Reform).

In order to include current and active voices in the analysis, I also consulted a range of educational stakeholders through questionnaires. I administered questionnaires

to selected teachers and principals of early childhood, primary and secondary education institutions in Jamaica who have implemented dance in their schools without formal assistance from the Government (extra-curricular and/or within the school's mainstream curriculum).

Finally, as introduced already in the present chapter, the dissertation has an autobiographical dimension. As a teacher of dance with 30 years of experience in Jamaica, including ten years as Director of the EMCVPA School of Dance, I include my own memories and critical reflective voice in the discourse. It is important that my voice is reflected as I have extensive work experience in Jamaican dance, culture and education and have been perplexed about nation building and the arts. My sense has been that key decision makers, including Government officials, do not make relevant connections with the arts and culture as part and parcel of educational advancement in K-12 education. This perception motivated me to become a catalyst for the change.

Dissertation Schematic

This dissertation contains seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the study, highlighting my own journey as an advocate for dance education from a young age and other contextual information. This chapter also provides an overview of the research in terms of purpose, questions, significance to the field, research design, and progression of the dissertation. Chapter 2 presents the research design and methodology. Contents include the rationale for my choice of research design, data sources and the overall approach to this multilayered qualitative study.

Chapter 3 provides historical context for this advocacy research project, theorising a deep history of Jamaican Dance and following a developmental trajectory through Jamaican Independence (1962) to the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* (2009); the chapter focuses on the people, institutions, and organisations that have featured in Jamaican dance. Chapter 4 reviews Jamaican government legislation and policy documents, as well as reform movements that have driven education, the arts and culture between 1962 and 2009. Chapter 5 reviews selected literature on arts and dance education advocacy, highlighting writers from the United States who significantly influenced my professional development; the chapter also discusses Jamaican advocacy literature.

Chapter 6 presents an analysis of questionnaires completed by more than 40 teachers of dance and principals at schools that offer dance across early childhood, primary or secondary education. These individuals represent a demonstrated national individual and collective commitment to dance in education as a necessary contributor to cultural identity and preservation as they continue to teach dance in schools under adverse conditions. This chapter also provides insight into the works of Requa, Bartley, Kong and Reynolds, key informants to the research.

Chapter 7 provides a summary of the dissertation findings, along with suggestions for future research, recommendations and conclusion. The title of this chapter, “Dance Education Ownership – Giving Life to the Promise” speaks to the need for Jamaica to own the value of Dance Education in formal education, and to my own belief in the power of Dance as a transformational modality for our children.

Summary

This chapter, like the entire document, embraces a straightforward premise that it is important to examine and advance the cause of dance education in Jamaica with a view towards national policy development. It is proposed that as a discreet subject in education (pre-school through secondary), dance education can provide opportunities for young people to pursue ownership of their creative abilities. In this chapter, I have introduced historical context for dance in Jamaica, dating from Independence in 1962 to 2009. I have described how my personal journey as an arts education advocate has informed the motivation to engage in this research. It is clear that this research was inspired by a deep personal desire for all Jamaican children to experience dance in meaningful ways and, specifically, as part of their formal education. This chapter has also introduced the study design: purpose, assumptions, research questions, significance, and research methodology, including delimitations and limitations of the study.

¹ In some countries this range of childhood schooling is given a unitary nomenclature, such as P-12 or PreK-12.

² Revival dance – a Jamaican traditional dance that has religious underpinnings coming from the Great Revival of 1866. See Ryman (1984).

³ Inter-house, is a co-curricular competitive activity among prescribed groupings within an educational institution. These groups are usually aligned to prominent graduates of the institution or persons who have made a significant contribution. Activities are used to foster school spirit and establish positive values of community and citizenship.

⁴ This dissertation employs capitalization for Dance and Dance Education when referencing these terms as formal educational subjects.

⁵ “Land of My Birth” was the winning song for the 1978 Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) Festival Song Competition.

⁶ Cultural Industries refers to industries that combine the creation, production and commercialization of creative contents which are intangible and cultural in nature. Creative industries encompass a broader range of activities which include the cultural industries plus all cultural or artistic production, whether live or produced as an individual unit. See

http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/30297/11942616973cultural_stat_EN.pdf/culture, 2012.

⁷ Early childhood education: for children birth to five years; delivered through community operated Basic schools, kindergarten in privately owned preparatory schools, and government/public infant departments of primary institutions. Primary education: for children ages six to eleven years; covers grades one to six of public and private schools in Jamaica. Secondary education: prepares students for further education and/or employment; begins at age 12 and may span five to seven years; institutions offering secondary education

are new secondary, secondary high or traditional high, technical high, agricultural/vocational and independent high schools. See Ministry of Culture (2001).

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

“[Dance] has helped me spiritually, emotionally and physically and has been one of the most educative activities of my life.”
—Ashley Reynolds age, 15-year-old (daCi, 2006, p. 10)

Introduction

This study employs a qualitative methodology incorporating historical research, analysis of arts/dance education advocacy literature, qualitative interviews and questionnaires, and autobiographical reflection. This provides a triangulated research design drawing on a range of sources and methods to produce a comprehensive picture. Creswell (2007) defines triangulation as a process that “involves corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective” (p. 208). Through analysis of multiple sources of theoretical information and empirical data, I develop a rationale for policy-mandated Jamaican curricular reform that incorporates dance education in public education institutions.

Figure 1 illustrates the research design, outlining categories of influence that bear on this inquiry into the need for a national dance education policy for PreK-12 education. The design accommodates overlapping trends and issues. For example, government policies and frameworks directly affect the type of dance experienced by Jamaican citizens. The history of dance education in Jamaica reflects the country’s social, cultural

and economic realities that have impacted education and training, and the social and economic value placed on dance.

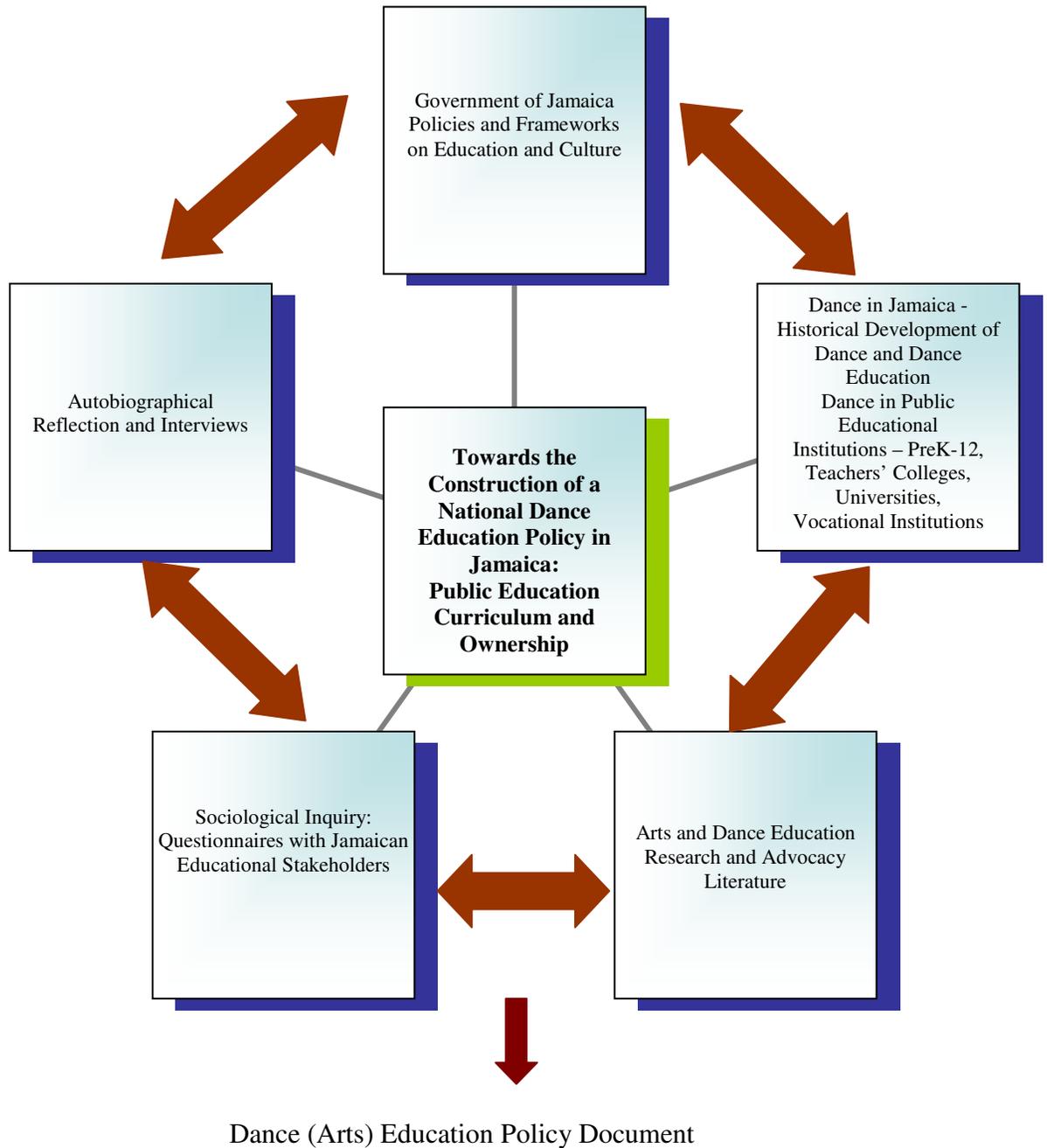


Figure 1. Advocacy Research Design.

This qualitative design allows for a broad consideration of the value and viability of a national dance education policy for Jamaica. Grounded in analysis of historical documents and scholarship, it incorporates diverse perspectives including the live voices of dance and education professionals, observers, and the researcher. Historical analysis establishes context, providing insight into culture and trends that speak to possibilities for future development.

The historical perspective illuminates pivotal events, trends, persons, institutions and organisations that have influenced the status of dance in Jamaica from Independence in 1962 to the advent of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* in 2009. In tracing the emergence of the various dance companies since 1962, it is necessary to reference Ivy Baxter, Jamaican dance pioneer, who organised and led the first modern “barefoot” dance company in Jamaica between 1950 and 1960, and Prof. the Hon. Rex Nettleford, OM (Jamaica), FIJ, OCC (1933-2010), whose in-depth writings on Jamaican dance and culture include advocacy for dance in education. Further, current profiles of dance with reference to existing and developing government policies in education are examined. The EMCVPA and the JCDC, which have the mandate for the development and preservation of Jamaica’s arts and culture, are necessary components of the historical perspective examined.

Gay (1976) writes, “Historical research involves studying, understanding, and explaining past events. The purpose of historical research is to arrive at conclusions concerning causes, effects, or trends of past occurrences which may help to explain present events and anticipate future events” (p. 9).

This dissertation research examines historical sources to support a trajectory towards national policy development and not to arrive at conclusions concerning causes. Berg (1999) notes, “In writing a narrative of events...the historian may, on a broad scale, clarify concepts and establish contextual connections that reveal new areas for further investigation or even uncover missing links in existing documentation” (p. 226).

This description highlights historical research and writing as an interpretive act. Much of what is documented in this dissertation on the history of dance education in Jamaica is interpreted and shaped by the writer establishing contextual connections from national policies and frameworks on education and culture. Jamaican dance education history remains under-documented and resides in various mediums, one of which is our oral and dancing history. There is also a contextual connection in response to an oral history sensibility that includes the writer’s own voice.

The historical method of this study also emphasizes the living voices of persons who have impacted dance education in Jamaica. Chevannes (1991) considers oral history a valuable tool for collecting data and a complement to the Caribbean culture. Information passes quite easily in the Jamaican society in this way – part of the African tradition. This orality, according to Chevannes (1991), “...does not mean illiteracy, but rather the special value that’s attributed to orality” (p.11). He further states that it “means that our elders are a treasure house of information about the past” (p. 11). In this study, information is garnered from multiple perspectives, including individuals who orally narrate historical memories and connect these with current cultural, artistic and educational issues.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework scaffolding in this study is based on social constructivism and advocacy. In social constructivism, individuals are in search of meanings in their own world as they relate or interact with others in their circle. The researcher is led to seek an overarching view and not to be limited to individualized perspectives from social or cultural standards. According to Creswell (2007),

Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms that operate individuals' lives. (p. 21)

In addition, researchers' own cultural and historical experiences shape and interpret these interactions and such background is acknowledged as influential in both research design and findings.

Advocacy complements social constructivist theory. Through advocacy the researcher gives voice to participants and is able to develop a plan to assist the subjects of interest, in this case the people of Jamaica. Creswell (2007) writes, "The basic tenet of this worldview is that research should contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of participants, the institutions in which they live and work, or even the researchers' lives" (p. 21). To situate this research in a paradigm of advocacy for a national dance education policy for Jamaica, a legislative framework document is a necessary next step to this dissertation.

In this study stakeholder voices are accessed through questionnaires, interviews, and the researcher's own autobiographical and critical reflection. Prior to collecting

interview and questionnaire data, participants were asked to complete a written consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board of Temple University.

Research Methods

Questionnaires

To capture current and active voices into the discourse, I designed a questionnaire containing 22 items, including a combination of concrete, factual questions (1-10) and open-ended items (11-22) related to the respondents' dance experiences and to the research questions:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Academic background / qualifications
4. Level of institution (Early childhood, Primary, Secondary)
5. Role: (teacher or principal)
6. Length of experience as a teacher/principal
7. Describe the art forms that exist in your institution.
8. How many years has dance existed in your school?
9. How often does the dance class meet, when does it meet, and what is the duration of the class?
10. In what context is dance taught at your school? (discrete subject; after school; within physical education)

11. Describe the dance space (facility) in your school.
12. List no more than four Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) awards your school group has received in any art form.
13. List any JCDC awards received in Dance in the last three years.
14. Describe your exposure to and experience with dance as art and/or education.
15. Describe a memorable experience with any art form: dance, drama, music, visual arts.
16. What types / styles of dance do you enjoy most?
17. Describe up to three changes you would like to see in terms of dance in schools.
18. Do you think that there is a place for dance in the mainstream curriculum of your school? Please elaborate.
19. What are ways children might benefit from the inclusion of dance in your school curriculum?
20. Have you explored any avenues in promoting dance (the arts) for inclusion in the mainstream curriculum of your school?
21. Are there challenges to the inclusion of dance in your school's curriculum? Please elaborate.
22. Do you think there should be a national policy establishing dance as a discrete subject in early childhood, primary, and secondary curriculum in Jamaica? Why or why not?

In addition to signing consent forms, teachers and principals completed a biographical information sheet for purposes of assigning a research subject number and acquisition of personal information. These were distributed with questionnaires by

various means: in-person, facsimile, email or in the case of many principals by way of the dance teacher attached to her or his institution.

There were challenges implementing the questionnaire method. Initially my intention was to personally distribute teacher questionnaires in the context of the annual JCDC Festival workshops where teachers across all parishes gather for professional development in dance. However, JCDC's funding was cut, resulting in cancellation of workshops. I therefore used a kind of snowballing method to generate some of my sample (Blaikie, 2009; Jupp, 2006). I had developed a working relationship with teachers of dance at various institutions in my capacity as dance educator generally and workshop facilitator and adjudicator for the JCDC and contacted them directly; some of these teachers then contacted other teachers and their principal. I solicited participants (both teachers and principals) via telephone and other contact opportunities, such as teacher practicum supervision visits. I even carried out targeted visits to schools and homes of prospective participants.

I was hoping to receive at least three responses from each of the 14 parishes (two dance teachers and one principal who includes dance in the school curriculum). Out of approximately 60 contacts made, 52 individuals agreed to complete the questionnaire (43 teachers and nine principals) and the final response rate was 47 (40 teachers and seven principals) representing 12 parishes and all 3 levels of education (early childhood, primary, secondary).

The questionnaire was administered by email to a delimited sample of dance teachers and principals who have implemented dance in their schools without a formal governmental (Ministry of Education) sanction. These programs exist either as extra-

curricular (after school) or within the informal school curriculum (during school). The questionnaire was designed to elicit information on teachers' and principals' thoughts and beliefs about dance in formal curricula and their understanding of dance education.

I hoped to capture data representing parishes across Jamaica. I was able to access participants from 12 of the 14 parishes. The majority of respondents, however, are from the corporate area in Kingston and St. Andrew, as these were most accessible. All participants' schools have entered the JCDC Festival competition for dance although this was not a requirement for selection. I had worked with many of the teachers at various JCDC workshops over the years or at the EMCVPA through short courses or professional development workshops. Two principals were unknown to me and were recruited by the dance teacher to complete the questionnaire. Questionnaires were submitted to participants by hand, email or facsimile. Each participant received a number so as not to reveal their identity and allow for thoughtful, uninhibited responses.

Five individuals did not return the questionnaire. Two persons were unable to access and return the information electronically, and one school (principal and teacher) did not return the information. The latter is a school that had included dance in their curriculum because of the principal's interest. One school that did not return the questionnaire the principal is also the teacher of dance. This I thought would have been an interesting inclusion as it was an anomaly for the principal to be the dance instructor.

Figure 2 provides a map of Jamaica showing the 14 parishes and highlighting the parishes from which professionals who filled out questionnaires are drawn.

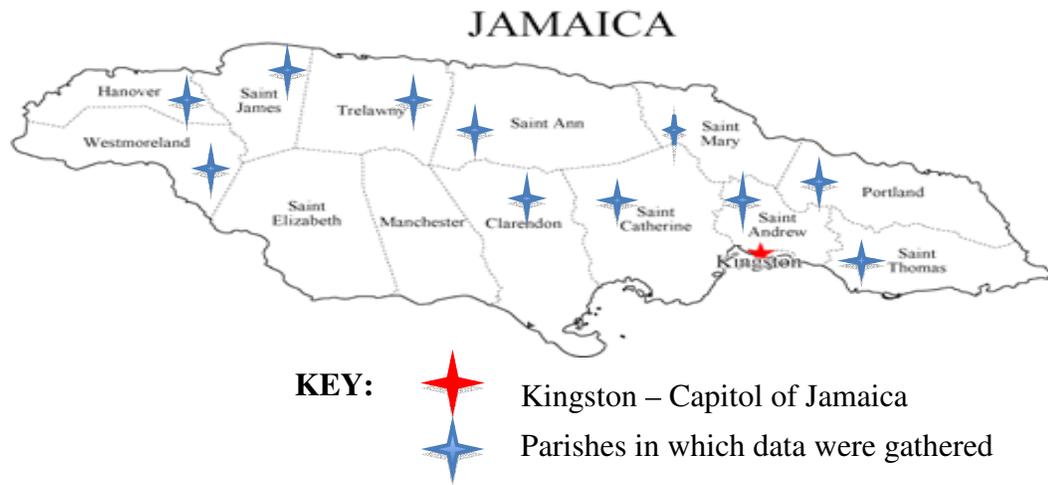


Figure 2. Map of Jamaica.

Analysis of Questionnaire Data

I summarized participants' concrete biographical data into a table by age, gender, position as principal or teacher, institutional levels, teacher qualifications, and years of teaching dance. The data will provide context determining key categories, eliciting concepts or ideas generating multiple perspectives for interpretation. I then coded each open-ended question for recurring words and ideas as well as unique, individual responses. Overall data analysis endeavoured to detect (1) local beliefs and perceptions, (2) what problems are perceived or anticipated in the educational system, and (3) what trends are thus far governing dance in schools.

Interviews

In-depth interviews with key figures in Jamaican dance, education and culture added another layer of historical/cultural analysis; informants delve into past events while also describing and interpreting current lived behavioural patterns and cultural and social experiences of the Jamaican people. In addition to amplifying historical context, informants illuminate contemporary issues pertaining to the viability of a national policy for dance education.

I conducted in-depth interviews with four key individuals who have contributed to important national developments in dance education, physical education, and government (culture and education). Informants include Barbara Requa (dance educator), Sydney Bartley (Principal Director of Culture, Entertainment and Creative Industries, Ministry of

Youth, Sports and Culture), Yvonne Kong (immediate Past Principal, G.C. Foster College of Physical Education), and Phyllis Reynolds (retired Education Officer, Core Curriculum Unit, Ministry of Education). I intended to interview Prof. the Hon. Rex Nettleford, OM, FIJ, OCC, who covers all these strategic areas, but, sadly, he passed before I was able to do so.

Barbara Requa was chosen for her knowledge and connection with dance in Jamaica spanning more than 50 years. Requa is one of three co-founders of the CTC, Jamaica School of Dance (renamed the EMCVPA, School of Dance), and a founding member of the National Dance Theatre Company (NDTC) of Jamaica. She opened a private dance school for children in Jamaica in the 1960s, and as a founding member of Dance and the Child International (daCi); her insight into the development of Jamaican dance, both education and concert dance is invaluable. Requa has also worked with the JCDC as facilitator and adjudicator for upward of 40 years and was instrumental in the development of the Theatre Arts subject examined in the Caribbean Examination Council's (CXC) Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) as a curriculum writer for Dance.

Yvonne Kong is the immediate Past Principal of the G. C. Foster College of Physical Education where she served as principal from 2004 to 2009. G. C. Foster College is the only institution of physical education, sports, and teacher education in Physical Education in Jamaica and the English-speaking Caribbean. As Dance resides under Physical Education in Jamaica's PreK-12 curriculum, Kong's views are pertinent

to the discourse. Kong also presented dance in the JCDC Festival of Performing Arts competition while she was a Physical Education teacher in primary and secondary institutions.

Phyllis Reynolds is a retired Acting Assistant Chief Education Officer (ACEO) of the Core Curriculum Unit of the Ministry of Education and Culture and a major contributor to the *Primary Education Improvement Program (PEIP II)* (1998), a curricular reform that has the 'arts at the centre.' Through her work at the Ministry she was influential in developing the first Primary Teachers Integrated Arts Program created and facilitated by faculty of the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts. This program was developed to educate trained teachers in primary education in the arts to facilitate the revised curriculum. Teachers who displayed an interest in the arts or who had seniority were chosen from primary schools across the fourteen parishes in Jamaica to participate in this program.

Finally, I interviewed Sydney Bartley, a member of the team who formulated the National Cultural Policy of 2003 and served in the Department of Culture for over two decades. He is currently responsible for monitoring the Cultural Policy and has overall responsibility for management of culture and heritage matters in the public sector. He sat on several school boards, including the EMCVPA.

As with questionnaire respondents, all interviewees completed consent forms. These include signatures of interviewee, a witness, and the researcher. In addition to the

consent form covering collection of verbal data, participants gave permission to be audio-taped. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed by the researcher. Questions were sent to interviewees a few days prior to allow them adequate preparation time if needed.

Carried out over six months in 2010, interviews spanned 60 to 90 minutes in length. I tailored questions to each individual's background and professional contribution. Interview questions are provided in Appendix B. Participants chose the interview site, based on his or her personal convenience. I briefed each individual fully about the purpose of the study and how information would be used. Interviewees were accommodating, providing specific detailed documentation where necessary. For example, Reynolds provided a copy of the rationale for the *PEIP II* (1998), which included the consultative processes and sample timetable. Interviewees were keen to tell their stories and to add their voices to the dialogue. The common belief among them was the necessary role of dance for cultural development and the work of the JCDC in unearthing the natural talent of many young Jamaicans. Interview findings are captured in chapters 4 and 5 as support dialogue. There were varying opinions towards dance as a discrete subject in schools as well as the need for a policy on a national level and are presented in the research to interpret larger meanings of the narrative. Requa's questions supported the oral history tradition juxtapose her work as a dance educator in Jamaica. The others were questioned about a national policy and its impact on nation development goals.

Autobiographical and Critical Reflection

As a teacher of dance with over 30 years of experience in Jamaica, including ten years as Director of the EMCVPA, School of Dance (1999-2009) and approximately 20 years with the JCDC, first as facilitator, then facilitator and adjudicator, I thought it was important to critically reflect on my own experiences and memories of involvement in dance from an early age as well as my critical reflective voice as a dance education professional. My long association with dance enables me to provide contextual description of the cultural milieu of Jamaica over three decades and to reflect on key interactions with teachers with whom I have developed a long history of trust relationships. I engaged in a journal process throughout the study, which assisted me in acknowledging any biases and subjectivity and to create a transparent narrative, in keeping with standards of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007).

Summary

This chapter continues the research process by focusing on the methodology and design of the study. The study employs a qualitative methodology incorporating historical research, analysis of arts/dance education advocacy literature, qualitative interviews and questionnaires, and autobiographical and critical reflection. The theoretical framework scaffolding in this study is based on social constructivism and advocacy. The sociological dimension of the study involves a concerted effort to learn from key educational stakeholders – a respect for participant meanings (Creswell, 2007, pp. 37-39). The

chapter discusses research ethics and procedures for collecting data, data coding, and data analysis. Methods implemented in this research allow critical examination of sources, and establish contextual connections and interpretation of layers of data towards advocacy for a Jamaican government policy development program for dance education.

CHAPTER 3
**BACKGROUND PERSPECTIVES ON JAMAICAN CULTURE,
DANCE AND DANCE EDUCATION**

“When I dance I’m transported to a different world where there are no limits.”
—Danielle Robinson, 17-year-old (daCi, 2006, p. 7)

Introduction

Recognising its longevity and ubiquity as a mode of human behaviour, dance has been defined and redefined by practitioners, educators, social anthropologists, cultural workers and other professionals and organisational structures. The purposes of dance are vast as they carry the social, cultural, educational and political realities of peoples. Dance tells of the past and carries imprints of our journey in the present. I believe that through our dance we know ‘who we are’—how we choose to exist personally, socially, and culturally; Dance reveals personal identity through how we move and relate as human beings.

Embodying personal meanings for each individual, dance is so complex in its manifestations that rationale for its inclusion in formal education in postcolonial societies like Jamaica may seem untenable. This chapter addresses the first research question and sub-question: What are the historical underpinnings of dance in Jamaica that inform the role of Dance in the educational system? In what ways did dance individuals/groups/institutions/companies shape the dance culture in post-colonial Jamaica (1962-2009)?

Dance is significant to the human spirit as it teaches about human values and culture. Dance in Jamaica exhibits several cultures combined. One dominant culture is that of our African ancestors. According to Ryman (1984):

Dance has done more than to preserve the movement expressions of our people; it is both catalyst and agent – particularly of the African aspect of our heritage, which constitutes the major part of our birthright. As catalyst it generates and continues to give meaning to activities like the preparation of *fufu* (food, African origin) and as agent, it remains the single most important vehicle through which to recall the past and reveal the essence of Jamaican culture. (p. 198)

Similarly Welsh (2004) notes, “Dance is used to facilitate all phenomena in most African societies. All commemorations and events are documented in the dance. Births, deaths, weddings, coronations and rites of passage are just some of the occasions for which dance is performed” (p. 14).

These occasions are also reflected in the Jamaican cultural practices by way of our traditional and folk dances. Chevannes (1991) defines culture as “... the way of life of a people” (p. 10). This definition is broad and somewhat vague in terms of this research as it projects a sense of culture being monolithic. Dance may be variously defined according to its forms and functions within specific cultures and sub-cultures. Jamaican culture represents many cultures merged; thus a definition of culture should include the articulation of processes, or the fusion and transmission of life practices. In Jamaica, Dance is revealed within everyday embodiments like how we walk (swinging hips and the rhythm in the steps) and in my opinion even how we dress (the wearing of head-tie by representative of cultural groups or the prescribed clothing of the Dancehall culture); it may be difficult to tell where the dance begins and ends.

Hall (2005) defines culture as a translation of other cultures. He argues that there is no pure culture; “If you think of culture always as a return to roots — R-O-O-T-S — you’re missing the point. I think of cultures as routes —R-O-U-T-E-S — the various routes by which people travel, culture travels, culture moves...etc” (Hall, 2005, p. 36) Jamaican dance culture has developed through the adoption and adaptation of African, European and Asian forms and structures, which exerted varying influences at different stages of Jamaica’s history. It can be said that the Jamaican culture is a translation of several cultural routes—early inhabitants, the Taino Indians, colonizers from Spain then Britain, enslaved Africans (predominantly from West Africa), and indentured labourers from India and China.

If we carry our translated culture with us, we carry our Dance. Dance remains true to the individual spirit and embodies meanings of the past in the present for the future. How then can we explain how Jamaican Imogene Kennedy, referred to as “Queenie” due to her position as head of the Kumina⁸ group, was able to communicate in the Kumina language and movement of the Kicongo (also Kikongo) people of West Africa when she never left Jamaica? Or, how do children younger than six years perform the complicated figures of the Quadrille dance at the annual JCDC festival competitions?

I believe that most Jamaicans would say that we are a dancing people: – ‘*wi love fi dance*’ (*we love to dance*); ‘*wi dance fi every ting*’ (*we dance for every occasion*). For me these phrases translate to say that dance liberates us, allowing the ‘bodymind’ to transcend the immediate. Enslaved Africans used work songs to make the work load seem lighter and move faster; they mimicked plantation masters for their own entertainment of dance and play; dance was and is expressed in religious practices; and it

was and is how we pass on the culture from generation to generation – how we educate about our history. Ryman (1994) writes, “Jamaican dance like a mirror reveals our culture onto the onlooker – sometimes magnified or frozen in time yet at other times hauntingly straddling the past and the present” (p. 3).

Jamaica’s long, rich history of dance dates back to its first inhabitants, the Tainos.⁹ Baxter (1970) notes, “This culture had, in addition to civil and social connotations, certain artistic forms, especially in music and the dance, which apparently were highly developed at the time of the Spanish Conquest” (p. 25). If we assume that prehistoric humanity danced, then it seems likely that Jamaica’s first people danced. However, how much the Tainos have contributed to the Jamaican dance experience is still unknown and an area for future research. These native inhabitants became extinct by the end of the sixteenth century.

Over the years dance has enabled countless Jamaicans to access their spiritual heritage through dance-music, religious experiences like Kumina, Revival,¹⁰ and Dinki-Minie,¹¹ and to release their emotions during times of social consciousness, upheaval and strife—maroon dances, Reggae,¹² and later Dancehall.¹³ Jamaican traditional and popular dances tell our story—the stifling, merging, melting, partnering, tussling, coexisting and evolving story of our Taino, Spanish, English, African, and Asian ancestry in a not-so-foreign, foreign land of hardship, passion, pain, freedom, emergence, independence and survival. Our ancestors are kept alive through our dances and are believed to aid us in our endeavours.

Each generation finds its place in the dance and the dance in each generation. In the same way that Jamaican traditional dances have served our parents and their parents

in work, play, worship and education, current popular dances serve the present generation. A few years ago in researching the emergence of the Reggae music and dance phenomenon, I discovered that reggae dance takes its movement from traditional folk culture and everyday happenings. Many of the early lyrics depicted social commentary and the movements are adapted and adopted from Jamaican traditional and folk dances. The Reggae dance-music experience began in western Kingston, Jamaica, among the masses and disenfranchised communities.

Niaah (2010) notes similarly with our current dance form Dancehall, “...dancehall goes beyond that of a musical genre. It is the way of life for a group of people, largely disenfranchised youth—who are sustained by it...” (p. 132). Jamaica’s youth identify with the rhythm, the movement form and its representation of the masses. It tells the story of their history and it is the mask they wear for hope and a future. It is imperative to examine the Jamaican dance landscape to rationalize its need as a tool to educate.

Dance preserves the Jamaican identity as a depository of history, culture and society. It is a means to educate our children about themselves in response to a global, technology-oriented world. Institutions like the NDTC, JCDC, and the EMCVPA, among others, are founded on premises of individual and collective empowerment through cultural identity. Individuals like Baxter, Nettleford, Barnett, Requa, Bert Rose and Joyce Campbell are representatives of the post-Independence era of dance education development in Jamaica. Their stories are reflected in this chapter through the various histories as I review this development.

Stories of the Pioneers

Ralston Milton "Rex" Nettleford, OM, FIJ, OCC (1933-2010)

The writing of Nettleford is critical to this dissertation as he espouses a theory of national development akin to cultural identity. Socio-political and socio-cultural constructs of post-colonial Jamaican society are highlighted in two texts published almost 20 years apart: *Dance Jamaica: Cultural Definition and Artistic Discovery – The National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica 1962 – 1983* (1985) and *Caribbean Cultural Identity: The Case of Jamaica* (2003). The latter and most recent text provides foundation for discussion of issues surrounding Jamaican and Caribbean history, national consciousness, and cultural identity. Nettleford (2003) presents a critical analysis of social, political, and economic trends that have affected the development of cultural identity in post-Independence (1962) Jamaica and the Caribbean. He examines the history and development of the arts in the Caribbean territory by focusing on the role of local and international cultural organisations, including: the Institute of Jamaica, Jamaica National Library, the EMCVPA, CTC, UNESCO, and OAS, which was built with the vision that national development is desirable, achievable and sustainable by a collective cultural consciousness.

Nettleford (2003) discusses exhaustively the rich mixture of African, European, and indigenous cultural elements that have produced a uniquely Caribbean identity and social systems. Specifically, he suggests that the creative arts have had the greatest success in generating national unity out of what he calls a creolisation process—“the agonizing process of renewal and growth that marks the new order for people who came

originally from different Old World cultures and met in conflict or otherwise on foreign soil” (Nettleford, 2003, p. 3) This process has honed the creative imagination of Caribbean peoples who extrapolate identities from each ethnic representation as a source of West Indian cultural orientation.

The breadth and depth of Nettleford’s scholarship is outstanding. Citing broadly from West Indian poet Kamau Brathwaite, French intellectual Jacques DeLors, Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott, reggae superstar Bob Marley, and Trinidad and Tobago calypsonian Mighty Sparrow, he builds contextual groundwork to align his premise that cultural identity, whether individual or collective, is synonymous with national advancement. My analysis of the text focuses on Nettleford’s (2003) notion of the arts as a tangible source of cultural dynamics. With this in mind, Part Three, “The Cultural Dimension of Development,” is a central point of the book that provides evidence to situate the theoretical framework of my research both that of social constructivism and advocacy (Nettleford, 2003).

On first read, I was captured by Nettleford’s (2003) writing style and rhetoric. After my second read, I felt empowered as a Caribbean national. The book instils in me a sense of purpose as an artist in general and as a dance artist and educator with the vision of policy development in particular. I became clear about issues I had been grappling with in relation to cultural nurturing as part and parcel of creative diversity in shaping Caribbean identity (Nettleford, 2003). Nettleford (2003) states, “The issue of *cultural identity* takes on powerful significance when growth and development become primary concerns of a nation” (p. xxiii). In order for a parliamentary decision to be made, decision

makers need to rethink the role of culture and the arts as significant contributors to economic development.

One topic that held my attention in Part Three (Nettleford, 2003) is the role of bipartisan politics in effecting cultural development and dynamics. Bipartisan politics embrace the reality that the other may not endorse what one political party deems pertinent to national development. This situation affects continuity of effort as it pertains to long term strategic planning. For example, one political party may be supportive of the JCDC as an organisation to improve national consciousness, while the other establishes a new entity or project. This means that for an idea of national cultural goals to be effective, there should be a high level of agreement between both sides of parliament. It is my observation that cultural development represents one of the few areas that shows continuity of effort and commitment across successive post-colonial political administrations. A chronological analysis of pertinent government policy and legislative documents is provided in chapter 4.

Part Three (Nettleford, 2003) also highlights education and training as vital means to the preservation and development of cultural values. Preparing expertise to transmit artistic skills to the wider society needed educational programs, thus the establishment of a tertiary institution for the arts—the CTC in 1976—discussed later in this chapter. In addition, a number of cultural organisations and agencies moved to the forefront or were created to deal with an emergent emphasis on human resource development. As Nettleford (2003) observes, “In the area of the *Creative Arts* there has been greater success at relating national unity to the cultural products out of the awesome process of creolisation or indigenization” (p. 17).

Nettleford (1985) looks at the history of Jamaican concert dance, a history in which Nettleford was highly instrumental as co-founder and artistic director of Jamaica's first modern dance company, established in 1962.

The National Dance Theatre Company (NDTC)

I was nine years old when I first saw the NDTC in performance at an Independence Day celebration (August 6, 1974) at the National Stadium, a 35,000 seat, partially covered space in Kingston, Jamaica. I did not know who they were at that time, but I felt their passion and fervour of movement reflecting the pride I felt on this occasion. Their costumes gleamed in the evening sunset as I focused intensely on the moving bodies in the distance, the "easy," cool, Jamaican breeze brushing my face. I remember thinking as I watched the performance that I wanted to dance. The impact of this first exposure to the NDTC remains vivid in my mind, and their contribution to dance theatre and dance education has been significant in not only my life, but in the lives of many Caribbean people.

Nettleford's (1985) *Dance Jamaica: Cultural Definition and Artistic Discovery* was the first book on Jamaican dance theatre written by a Jamaican in the late twentieth century. It highlights the NDTC as an institution similar to that of the JCDC, born out the need to situate culture and cultural identity consciousness as the way forward for a post-colonial nation like Jamaica. In order to fully understand the NDTC's purpose and that of dance education in Jamaica, one must situate the company in the context of Jamaica's national development. According to Manley (1985),

The Company has time and again afforded Jamaicans the stimulus of sharing the genuinely creative expressions of its artistic endeavours, with the attendant intellectual and spiritual enrichment and sheer pleasure and enjoyment which such experiences impart. Above all, it has through its choreography, created a mirror in which Jamaica can see the best in herself. (as cited in Nettleford, 1985, back cover)

The NDTC is about more than movement; it is our reflection and, in my opinion, a postulation of our reflexive ability as a nation. In a country with a history of enslavement and other colonial practices, the people need opportunities to tell their story as part of a release that must underpin any notion of a healthy society. Nettleford (1985) suggests,

The National Dance Theatre Company was a cultural institution created not out of hubris but out of the genuine belief that, in order to survive as a political entity, a nation must nurture the ambience within which the creative spirit of the people can enrich the polity. (p. 39)

Accordingly, Jamaican artists/people need avenues through which our voices can be heard and our images displayed. Each era requires provision for new voices and new images to support the continuous process of cultural, social and economic development. This is essential to the process of mental freedom and it was the root from which the NDTC grew.

Jamaica's independence in 1962 meant that we "pulled down the red, white and blue flag of imperial Britain and replaced it with the gold, green, and black flag of an independent Jamaica" (Nettleford, 1985, p. 39). This brought forth a feeling of national pride and a consciousness in our people, supporting the emergence of cultural/artistic institutions like the NDTC. Out of this furore for nationhood, the NDTC began its journey by building on the "creative intensity, generated by self-discovery and self-

emancipation” (Sherlock & Bennett, 1998, p. 391), with the focus on a new Jamaica after 1962. The NDTC was poised to play its role in nation building with dance as the medium. Performed on Wednesday, August 1, 1962, *Roots and Rhythms* was aptly the title of the company’s first concert season as a celebration of the move towards the identity that Nettleford (2003, 1985) often articulated.

The company emerged from a union of dancers drawn in part initially from the Ivy Baxter Dance Group whose existence spanned the decade 1950 to 1960 (Banham, Hill & Woodyard, 1994, p. 212). Moving spirits behind the company’s formation were Nettleford, then a staff lecturer in political education at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica, and Eddy Thomas, who had recently returned from studying and dancing in New York on an arts travel grant from the Jamaican Government (Nettleford, 1985, p. 40). Barnett, Requa and Campbell were among the dancers from the Ivy Baxter Dance Group who became foundation members of the NDTC and whose impact on dance education in Jamaica has been significant to date. This group of young Jamaicans became a symbol of change, taking Jamaican dance theatre into the wider Caribbean and beyond.

The objectives and achievements of the NDTC were and remain as outlined by Nettleford (2002):

- (a) To provide a vehicle for well-trained dancers and other dance theatre artists, such as choreographers, composers, and musicians, who want to participate in the creation of works of excellence rooted in Jamaica and Caribbean cultural realities;
- (b) To help create an informed Jamaican audience critically responsive to works of excellence in the theatre arts;

- (c) To experiment with various dance forms and techniques;
- (d) To develop a style and form that faithfully reflects Caribbean movement patterns; and,
- (e) To encourage serious research into the indigenous dance and music forms of Jamaica as well as the Caribbean.

In 1963, the NDTC had its first overseas tour to Stratford, Ontario, Canada to perform in the Stratford Shakespearean Festival. Sponsored by the Jamaican government, this was a phenomenal achievement for a newly formed group from the Caribbean. The company's first performance in New York, April 8 – 16, 1973, came eleven years after its beginning and a decade since its first overseas tour. By 2009 the group had travelled to several North American cities and states including New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Toronto, Ohio, Washington, D.C., Miami, Alberta, Ottawa, Fort Lauderdale, Atlanta, Connecticut and South Florida. Outside of North America, overseas tours included the Caribbean, Mexico, London, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Germany, Australia, China and Japan (Banham, Hill & Woodyard, 1994). In North America, the National Dance Theatre Company has been compared to the Katherine Dunham Dance Company, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, and the Dance Theatre of Harlem (Kisselgoff, 1983; Barnes, 1983).

The company has embodied the various cross-sections of its cultural history, and its movement vocabulary and musical expressions are a reflection of this creolized form. In the early years there were definite NDTC connections to American dance institutions and individuals like Martha Graham, Alvin Ailey and others, which provided avenues to the world stage. This began when co-founder Thomas studied at the Graham school from

1960 to 1962. The Graham school was one of the few American modern dance schools that admitted dancers from the Caribbean. Consequently, Graham was the only non-Jamaican to become a founding Patron to the NDTC (Jones, Nettleford & Robinson, 1983).

Thomas danced with the Martha Graham Company during his sojourn in the United States, which opened the door for others to attend: Clive Thompson (who danced with both Graham and Ailey); Bert Rose, Barry Moncrieffe and Audley Butler (who won scholarships to the Martha Graham Centre of Contemporary Dance). The company received an open invitation to take classes with the Martha Graham Company when in New York. Also in New York, NDTC dancers Derek Williams and Patsy Ricketts were founding members of Arthur Mitchell's Dance Theatre of Harlem. By the end of the 1960s, other members of the company had worked with modern dancers and choreographers including Eleo Pomare, Rod Rodgers and Anna Sokolow and in Off-Broadway shows. The NDTC worked with Katherine Dunham dancer Lavinia Williams who travelled to Jamaica from Haiti (by invitation of the company), John Jones, and Alvin Ailey, who allowed the duet from *Revelations* to be brought into the NDTC repertoire (Jones, Nettleford & Robinson, 1983).

Through determination and a quest for national and international cultural identity, the NDTC returned to North America year after year with dances that illustrated their mixed traditions. These works were not only a reflection of cultural and historical beginnings, but also educational and artistic processes enriched by those with whom the

NDTC came in contact. This may have been what NDTC dancer Christopher Walker meant by “I felt like Jamaica was larger than the country itself” (personal communication, October 19, 2003), when he was on his first tour with the company in New York.

The vision of the NDTC and the commitment of members like Barnett, Requa, and Rose gave birth to a school of dance in 1970 and the Jamaica School of Dance at the CTC in 1976. Since the NDTC’s initial articulation of objectives in 1962, the company has expressed strong views about working with a sustained program of training and performance (Nettleford, 1985, p. 40). From as early as 1960, Jamaican dancers also received training in dance techniques from visiting instructors from the United States through the summer school at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Department of Extra-Mural Studies. Nettleford was resident tutor responsible for the summer school program at the UWI, Mona at the time. This concept of education and training meant that the Company would survive as it had a source of replenishing its membership. They also needed to develop the next generation of choreographers, dance instructors and educators who would not only serve the NDTC, but the nation at large. Nettleford (1985) states, “Although the activities of the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica shall continue, the field of dance needs other dimensions in education to ensure that dance creators, performers, instructors, critics, and audiences are continuously supplied to the nation” (p. 103). And hence a school of dance was established as a necessary next step towards national development. Long before this development, however, a consistent thread of dance education and training had been

taking place under the auspices of Jamaica’s annual Festival competition. The next section reviews the history of the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC).

The Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC)

One evening my 4-year-old niece came home quite excited because she was going to ‘festival.’ Her parents asked her what was festival and she lifted her shoulders and with a questioning look on her face said, “I don’t know, our teacher just says we are going to festival to perform our dance.” She was excited. She ran away singing, “I am going to dance at festival.” I remember my first festival experience and even though I was much older, a high school student at the time, I was singing the same song. I did not know what the festival event meant from the perspective of national consciousness. However, I knew what it represented to a teenager—a field trip, dancing, culture, foods and fun. One would get a chance not only to be away from school for a day, but to be a part of the excitement of dancing and viewing dances on a big stage. Festival also meant costumes, judges, and awards—gold, silver and bronze medals—and the dreaded Certificate of Merit, as this paper meant that your group was not good enough to be medalled. This section describes the origin and development of Jamaica’s government supported Festival culture.

The JCDC (initially the Jamaica Festival Commission) is a national entity that has advanced and maintained the national vision and purpose of promoting cultural programs and activities in communities throughout Jamaica. Its mission to unearth the natural talents of Jamaicans is achieved through its annual national celebratory and commemorative activities including competitions (Festival of Arts), training workshops,

exhibitions, symposia, pageants and parades. In the early to mid 1900s cultural festivals (music, speech, poetry, art) in Jamaica were confined to individual parish celebrations. The first island-wide festival celebration was staged in 1955 and by 1960 a National Festival of Arts was in existence. These events were formalised further in 1962 to mark Jamaica's independence and in 1963 the first Festival of Independent Jamaica was launched as an annual event.

When the Commission's Festival work became a national project in 1963, the first anniversary of Jamaica's Independence, several community groups island-wide were brought together under one umbrella as a noted cultural expression. Also in 1963, the Honorable Edward Seaga (a former Prime Minister of Jamaica), in his capacity as Minister of Development and Welfare, developed a five-year plan (1963 – 1968) for the Festival as part of his development plan for Jamaica. The *Jamaica Festival Commission Act* was enforced on September 1, 1968 (*Act 32 of 1968*). The *Act* outlined the purpose and function of the Commission to encourage the annual Independence anniversary activities and to stimulate local talents as major goals.

The 1963 initiative by the Honourable Minister stated that the Jamaican Parliament was serious about the impact of an organised cultural initiative on national identity consciousness and cultural development (JCDC, 1988, p. 15). It was also a response to the need to develop the artistic talents of a country's people, specifically ones who recently experienced political independence. Festival events were aimed at cultivating cultural expressions and the creative talent and spirit of Jamaica.

A paper titled "The Jamaica Cultural Development Commission" (author and date unknown) outlines the five functions of the commission at its inception, two of

which are particularly relevant to educational advocacy: (a) to promote cultural development as an important factor in national development; and (b) to stimulate local talent through training, workshops, competitions, exhibitions, pageants, parades, displays and “such other activities as the Commission may from time to time determine.” These two functions are directly related to my research premise, conveying the mission of JCDC, a government entity, to link cultural development with national development, and the need for training in the development of talent, including dance.

In 1980, the Jamaica Festival Commission was renamed the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission by another Act of Parliament (*Act 8 of 1980*) and its original functions expanded to include training workshops and other needs determined by the Commission. Through the JCDC’s cultural initiatives, many Jamaicans – both youth and adults, were exposed to and remain in contact with dance, speech, drama, music, visual arts, literary arts, and culinary arts. Many Jamaicans seek to be promoted, recognised, and empowered by, or simply to have fun through activities of the commission (JCDC, 1997).

The JCDC has had direct impact on all Jamaicans, as it has become a Jamaican way of life to embody and translate the culture of performing arts among other commemorative events. As described by Laing (1980),

The Arts Festival provides an opportunity for competition and exhibition of the best work of our established and aspiring artists in the literary, visual and performing arts. There are nine areas of creative endeavours. These include dance, music, drama, speech, writing, culinary arts, art, craft and photography, with a rational system of awards. (p. 2)

Festival invoked a different meaning, feeling and purpose for the various categories of workers and participants—The Ministry of Culture, the staff of the JCDC headed by an executive director, the organizers of the many cultural events and competitions, teachers

or group leaders, performers (students or community groups), spectators (audience and fans), adjudicators, vendors, and financial sponsors. In spite of one's level of involvement, festival evokes shared feelings of national pride and cultural development.

My involvement with the JCDC began in 1985 assisting Barnett and Requa. I was still a student at the CTC, Jamaica School of Dance. However, in 1986, I assisted Requa at a workshop in Montego Bay, St. James, where I taught one section by myself. This was the beginning of over a dozen such workshops between 1985 and 1988, especially with Requa, my dance education lecturer and mentor. Barnett and Requa had the practice of taking highly skilled students as apprentices to these workshops. Another student taken on these trips was Lenneth Richards, who is now the Traditional Folk Dance Subject Specialist at the JCDC.

Requa and I journeyed to several parishes each workshop period—St. Ann, St. James, Westmoreland, Portland, and Manchester among others—to conduct sessions in Jamaican traditional folk forms, modern and Jamaican popular dance, and dance composition. I never felt like a student, but a privileged apprentice. My role was to conduct the warm up and the popular dance components; I would sometimes assist with teaching modern and folk dance forms, or as a model for demonstration purposes. I would observe closely and learn teaching strategies, as Requa would facilitate processes that transformed the simplest, most ordinary steps into new movement materials. She would always say that she could teach anyone to dance, and I believed it, as she proved it every time.

My overall memory is that participating teachers enjoyed the process, giving their full attention. They often had questions about their movement experiences and took

copious notes. They treated me like a facilitator almost equal to Requa, asking me to demonstrate skills and taking my advice on dance making matters. They appeared to leave the workshop recharged to return to their institution or community centre recommitted to the dance. The dialogue between them included what they would improve for the competition or how they would include the newly acquired skill to teach dance in their institutions. In a 2007 workshop evaluation form, teachers' responses reinforce my early recollections outlined above:

Question: Describe the impact (if any) that the JCDC workshops have had on your development as a teacher of dance.

Teacher #1. It has given us a better understanding of a lot of things, e.g. awareness of space, time, etc. It has really helped us to be better teachers.

Teacher #2. This is my first workshop with JCDC. Today was great. I have learnt a great deal that I can take back to my students and also our Dance Ministry at Church.

Teacher #3. The workshops have helped me to develop an attitude for dance and even an interest in becoming a dance teacher by attending the school of dance soon.

Teacher #4. It makes me want to enter, even though I don't think it is my strongest point.

Prior to my first workshop experience, all I knew of the Festival movement was that it allowed individuals from all over Jamaica to be involved in cultural arts activities—dance, drama, music, speech, and so forth for Independence, where all the

best talents were showcased for Independence celebrations. I was unaware of workshops to prepare teachers, students and community leaders for the various levels of competitions—zone, parish, regional and national levels (these levels of competition have changed from time to time depending on the availability of national funding). I felt that teachers were ignorant of dance and did not care to learn. Working with this group dispelled many of my preconceived notions about teachers' commitment to the competition.

At the same time, as I continued working with the JCDC, I came to observe types of behaviour by teachers/leaders that raised critical pedagogical questions about interaction with students. For example, some appeared unkind in their treatment of students, pulling and shouting at them, especially if mistakes were evident on stage. I, along with other facilitators, observed this type of behaviour at various times throughout the competition. Dance workshop situations highlighted other challenges to the education and training of teachers; for example, many believed that teachers in Kingston and St. Andrew were at an advantage as they were close in proximity to the School of Dance and therefore had access to the professionals. These personal beliefs of teachers were disclosed to me after many workshop sessions in rural Jamaica.

During the 1990s to 2005 JCDC dance workshops were conducted by parish and region (three parishes combined). They ranged in duration from one to three days. Three-day workshops meant additional training experiences for teachers and or leaders due to either a lengthy hiatus since the last workshop or an influx of new entrants. One-day workshop sessions consisted of warm-up, skill development, application and cool down. The style of the class varied depending on the form of dance: Traditional Folk (dances

that reflect the various cultures of Jamaican peoples) or Contemporary (modern or creative dance). There were also experiences in improvisation leading to dance making skills. The JCDC subject specialist would also include a session on the JCDC Dance Syllabus aimed at providing participants with a deeper understanding of festival practices.

One drawback to the one-day workshops was that all participants, novice and skilled, were exposed to the same content and experiences. With combined levels for workshops, newer participants were at a disadvantage, as they were unable to grasp concepts as readily as the more experienced teachers. As a result, sessions were not as meaningful as they could have been and we were sometimes requested by these teachers to come into their schools or community centres to provide additional assistance. Notwithstanding, persons with little experience seemed to also benefit from observing or partnering with those with more experience. In any case, limitations of space and funding required multi-level sessions. The lack of spaces to accommodate concurrent movement sessions as well as financial restrictions limited the number of master teachers for each workshop. This situation made the workshop process challenging for both participants and facilitators. Sometimes the more experienced teacher-participants would arrive late or would not attend. Some experienced participants told me they felt held back by the newcomers, while new participants expressed that their needs were being ignored to facilitate the more experienced teachers.

On my return from the United States to Jamaica in 1992, I was employed by the JCDC as a workshop facilitator and adjudicator for the dance competition. After sitting through myriad dances of all styles at zone elimination, it was clear to me that not much

had changed in preparing teachers for the competition. The more experienced teachers were at an obvious advantage; they were more familiar with the syllabus and their pieces seemed more planned with creative movement content. I saw frustration on some faces and I, too, had become frustrated. Much work was needed to improve the state of dance in schools. Teachers needed to acquire the necessary tools of the trade—movement vocabulary and a national dance syllabus to guide the teaching process.

In several dialogues with teachers/leaders, I noted that some teachers/leaders seemed to take the dance competition too seriously, for example, employing professional dance teachers to choreograph just for the purposes of the competition to secure a gold medal. Some groups' costumes were elaborate and expensive, costing parents and sometimes the institution significant sums of money. Many groups appeared more focused on winning a medal—arriving early to rehearse, a serious disposition, students not encouraged to converse with other groups, expensive costume, than on developing a winning attitude—being disciplined, courteous, encouraging of others in the competition, controlling their emotions. For instance, some became disgruntled with adjudicators' comments on mark sheets, accusing them of being partial or harsh, and voiced their displeasure in the presence of students and other participants. I also observed that teachers sometimes attended workshops just to “catch new moves” and copy wholesale from other groups. Such intentions became apparent in duplications of music and whole movement sequences. In my perception, some teachers/leaders in the competition who articulated an avid interest in dance seemed to have little concern for a professional dance process. I found this paradoxical.

In 2005, faculty of the EMCVPA School of Dance assisted with development of a new workshop idea for dance teachers/leaders. We (subject specialist Lenneth Richards and I) wanted to provide a more focused type of training. Instead of JCDC employing resource persons based on availability, a program of training was developed with a small group who would be the core facilitators for dance. Instead of different facilitators for each region working in isolation without knowing what the next person was doing, we proposed that workshops be conducted by pairing facilitators. Someone from the core group would attend every workshop for the season. Together we planned and organised content and methodology, a strategy allowing for parity between what was taught in St. James and what was taught in St. Mary or Kingston. Further, the workshops were developed into two-day events with sessions in traditional offerings of modern dance and dance composition, as well as improvisation and discussions on the state of dance in schools.

Participants were asked to provide feedback by way of an assessment instrument on dance education in their parish so as to provide us with the necessary feedback for future workshops. The workshops also sensitized us to those who wanted to pursue dance at the tertiary level. In previous years, the JCDC awarded scholarships to the Jamaica School of Dance for those teachers and leaders who excelled in the competitions. We also wanted to monitor interest in this area.

This was exciting work, but disheartening at the same time. As a workshop facilitator, I heard many participant anecdotes about their experiences of teaching dance in schools. On the positive side, many teachers appeared eager to learn and to extend their approach to dance as an educational modality. There were even a few who thought

of using dance as a tool to reinforce other subjects. However, many limitations affected the feasibility of dance in schools. Teachers talked about needing better facilities and materials; many were teaching under poor conditions—on concrete floors with only a roof, in rooms with poor ventilation, or with furniture packed to the side of an already small room.

A few teachers not employed to teach dance received no additional compensation, as it was attached to their departmental responsibilities in physical education. Some teachers/leaders worked with parents to finance their position. A few did not have even the moral support of their principal, school board or other colleagues. In addition, those interested in higher education in dance could not afford to leave a current job to return to school. The teacher questionnaires administered in this research provide a systematic and current sampling of dance teachers/leaders' experiences and attitudes towards dance in education. Questionnaire findings are presented in chapter 6.

Jamaican Tertiary Dance Education

In post-colonial Jamaica, government policies aim to foster cultural identity, and programs are designed to promote national unity. Government seeks to equip generations with hope, cohesiveness, and positive personal manifestations that enable community advancement and inevitably a country's spirit. Nettleford (2003) writes,

[In] societies like Jamaica and the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean, the question of cultural identity logically gains high priority alongside political independence and economic self-sufficiency in the awesome process of decolonization or, as some would put it, in the arduous struggle against external domination. (p. xi)

Prime Minister Manley (1974) asked Jamaicans to re-establish themselves, to be more efficient in their views as cultural beings on a mission to eradicate feelings and manifestations of inferiority brought on by centuries of external leadership. He states,

Post-colonial societies must accomplish two things if they are to re-establish self-confidence and re-embark upon the process of self-discovery that is expressed by the evolution of a people's culture. They must rediscover the validity of their own culture at the moment of the colonial intervention and retrace the steps that had led through history to that point. And they must establish within a frame of reality, the culture which colonialism imposed upon them so that this may loom neither too large nor smaller than it deserves and suffer from none of the distortions which can result from the ambivalence of a ruler-subject situation. (Manley, 1974, p. 146)

As a leader who embraced and grappled with situations of social and cultural consciousness, Manley was instrumental in reconfirming and establishing organisations devoted to Jamaican cultural and artistic development. He appointed a Minister of State with responsibility for information and culture located in the Prime Minister's Office (Nettleford, 2003, p. 83), and transformed existing national institutions, including the Institute of Jamaica (founded in 1879 and encompassing the African-Caribbean Institute of Jamaica (ACIJ)), the National Gallery, the National Library Service, and the Jamaica Festival Commission.

Jamaica was looking to Jamaicans as the source of social development, and the arts were one way forward. It is worth remembering that, "Jamaica's dynamic artistic movement is part of the process by which we first attained and later experienced independence" (Manley, 1974, p. 155). Jamaicans recognise the value of embracing their own arts and culture and therefore embraced self in the process of transformation. Prior to 1962 Jamaican artists, led by Edna Manley (founder of the Jamaica School of Art and

mother of Michael Manley) began to embrace our African tradition and created works of art that reflected a Jamaican sensibility; an act of self-determination and self-discovery.

Manley (1974) also asserts:

Art is the mirror through which a society perceives itself; and it is a mirror that must be held up to young societies constantly if they are to achieve a sense of their separate identity in the world. Clearly, therefore, the development of the latent artistic talent of a society is important to its growth and critical to the process of psychological transformation with which we are concerned. (p. 155)

Manley was not the only one who embraced this principle. In the late 1960s, Barnett and Requa, both trained as physical education teachers, started a private funded school called the Contemporary Dance Centre (CDC). They were also founding members and principal dancers of the NDTC. The CDC offered two areas of training—education courses for physical education teachers interested in dance and a program in dance for children ages 4 to 18 years. Barnett was the coordinator for the adult section and Requa coordinated the juniors. The CDC's first venue was located in Half Way Tree in Kingston, upstairs from the Rainbow Club. As enrolment increased, other venues were found including the Junior Centre, also in Half Way Tree, and a large space at the Alvernia Convent on Old Hope Road, Kingston. In the meantime, Rose who had recently returned from New York opened a small dance studio for contemporary dance.

The program in dance for children at the CDC started with Requa and was the beginning of what would become the Junior Department of the School of Dance (JDSD). This junior school however, was a private-funded dance studio. Approximately one per cent of the students from this school continued and pursued a career in dance while approximately 60 per cent became members of dance companies. Children at the JDSD

are encouraged to participate holistically in classes and pool creative ideas under the guidance of expert facilitators, and within a caring and stimulating environment. In this way, the physical, mental and spiritual processes are developed. In addition to facilitating growth in their physical, expressive and creative abilities, girls and boys who participate in dance classes at JDSD experience heightened levels of discipline, self-esteem and a lasting appreciation for teamwork, and the importance of community.

It is not by accident then that the Junior Department of the School of Dance became a founding member of Dance and the Child International (daCi) in 1978. Over the years, more than one hundred young people between six to eighteen years have been exposed to cultural exchanges through dance and performance around the world by attending daCi conferences. The first conference attended by Jamaican children was held at University of Utah in 1991. Our students have acted as cultural ambassadors, showcasing Jamaican dance to a number of participating countries and cultures that may not have had the opportunity otherwise. Jamaica also had the pleasure of hosting the daCi conference in 2009 and continues to be an active member of the organization.

Nettleford (1985) mentions the opportunity that arose for establishment of an institution like the NDTC, and which was strengthened further by the artistry and educational aptitudes of Barnett, Requa and Rose. In 1970, these members of the NDTC opened a school that would not only offer classes for company dancers, but would train choreographers, instructors, and dance educators for the wider society. The first classes were conducted in a shed built by the company on property donated by the Jamaican government situated in the Little Theatre complex on Tom Redcam Avenue in Kingston. Operated by Barnett, Requa and Rose and assisted by teachers from the company, the

school offered classes in educational dance for teachers, methods for teaching dance and Laban methodology for teaching children. There was also a strong focus on research and training in African and Afro-Caribbean dance forms.

In the eight years after independence from Great Britain, ideas of nationhood and nationalism reverberated in social emancipation and cultural consciousness. The 1970s echoed a new beginning to the embracing of our African ancestry and the emerging “global village.” It was a time of articulating visions of an independent, emancipated Jamaica—politically, socially, culturally and economically. In 1976, the NDTC’s School of Dance was given to the government when the first arts training complex, CTC was built and renamed the Jamaica School of Dance. In 1995 the Jamaica School of Dance at the CTC, mandated to train cultural agents, performers, choreographers, and dance teachers, was reclassified as a tertiary institution and renamed the EMCVPA, School of Dance. Until 2003, the EMCVPA School of Dance was the only institution in the English-speaking Caribbean that provided higher education in the arts.

For its first two decades, the CTC was a division of the Institute of Jamaica along with Schools of Music, Art, and Drama, with all schools offering a diploma as the highest educational certification. The CTC came out of the movement to use the arts as the springboard of nationhood, and the need to produce cultural agents¹⁴ and teachers for a society aimed at overcoming the ills of colonization. The arts were considered the antidote so to speak, to combat social and cultural intolerance and residual anxieties. Nettleford posits, “The practicing artist became a symbol of the new national consciousness in the struggle, whether he/she was involved in painting or sculpture, literature, theatre, dance or music” (cited in Hall, 2006, p. 8). Out of this movement the

need for a cultural development strategic plan was identified by the Government of Jamaica in 1972. This plan articulated the need for a cultural policy in addition to the establishment of cultural institutions.

During the early 1980s, students of the school, including myself, began embracing constructs like ‘cultural agent,’ ‘sense and sensibility,’ and ‘cultural revolution.’ This marked a consciousness of self and society sparked by a Jamaica-conscious curriculum. The school was purposeful in structuring programs that reflected a move toward cultural and national consciousness. In the initial years, many courses embraced a Jamaican consciousness, for example, Caribbean Studies and Jamaican/Caribbean Folk Forms, and the school made links with traditional folk dance community groups, especially for dance technique and dance research purposes.

As a student during this time of cultural interactions, I gained knowledge of a Jamaican identity. I became knowledgeable in Jamaican traditional and folk dances like *Revival*, *Kumina*, and *Dinki-Minie*. I also connected to childhood memories of the “Poco Meeting”¹⁵ at the corner of my street in Western Kingston on a Saturday evening, and drums beating in the distance accompanied by singing and chanting in the event of a death in the community—the “nine night”.¹⁶ Students of the Jamaica School of Dance (myself included) began to understand the value of an arts and culture institution to Jamaica and the Caribbean and our responsibility as a post-Independence generation of dance educators and dance artists.

On returning to Jamaica from baccalaureate and master’s studies in the United States in 1992 and joining the full-time faculty at the CTC, a new student population had emerged. The school was supporting a more complex demographic drawn from five

main categories: (a) a performing arts cohort consisting of secondary school youth (the group also catered to primary school students) who had been making waves in the society with outstanding performances—singing, dancing and acting - a new phenomenon in Jamaica outside of the annual Little Theatre Movement (LTM) National Pantomime;¹⁷ (b) parents who now wanted their children to be trained in order to export their talent to New York and other such places in the United States; (c) young adults who were performers in the tourist sector (entertainment coordinators and dancers) and who recognised the need for training in this area; (d) professionals (trained teachers and dancers) from the Eastern Caribbean; and, (e) overseas students by way of study abroad and cultural exchange program, as well as independent researchers. Category five students came by way of the State University of New York (SUNY) College at Brockport and other study abroad programs. Although this group was small in number, overseas students had great socioeconomic and cultural impact on the institution. This group also appreciated the technical rigor of the program of the School of Dance, especially in Caribbean and Jamaican traditional folk forms.

Many graduates of the CTC were being hired in schools, but still mainly on a part time basis to teach dance after school as an extracurricular activity. Graduates who returned to the Eastern Caribbean were in a similar predicament as those in Jamaica, and many changed their profession or migrated to the United States, Canada or the United Kingdom (UK). The JCDC continued to facilitate island-wide dance workshops with faculty from the School of Dance to ‘unearth’ the talent of the Jamaican populace. Their all-year presence stimulated national interest in dance and encouraged the participation of many schools and community groups in the dance competition. To be awarded a gold

medal in dance was the pride of every school and community group. However, dance needed a more secure presence in the national structured curriculum if its other benefits were to be recognised.

In 1987 the Ministry of Education reassessed the schools and their curricula to align them with other tertiary institutions like the UWI, Mona's Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) program. In 1991, a degree program was established in association with the UWI, Mona campus. Due to admissions requirements, however, this UWI-CTC collaborative degree only benefited students registered at the UWI, Mona. On one hand, the UWI, Mona, had a tradition of only accepting students with Advanced Level passes in the General Certificate of Examination (GCE) overseas examination for secondary schools. On the other hand, due to the nature of the institution, the CTC accepted applicants with the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) or Ordinary Level passes and artistic education and aptitude.

As introduced above, in 1995 the CTC was transferred officially to the Ministry of Education and Culture and renamed the EMCVPA. Edna Manley was the mother of Michael Manley and founder of the School of Visual Art more than four decades prior. Also in 1995, the separate schools merged into one institution with one mission. This new mission demonstrated a burgeoning of new perspectives in Jamaican arts education and culture. The need for cultural agents was no longer the emphasis as in earlier years. The EMCVPA's expanded mission was to provide for Jamaica and the Caribbean first class arts teachers and practitioners. Cultural agents were placed under the Ministry of Education. Each K-12 institution is expected to choose a teacher from among its staff

whose responsibility it is to ensure that there is relevant engagement with culture within the curriculum. These persons may be, but are not limited to, visual and performing arts teachers at the school.

However, there was a definite separation in thinking between dance teachers and dance performers. The JBTE Diploma, along with being under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education, meant that graduates of the teacher education program were welcome academically and with equal salary to their academic counterparts in mainstream education. This new paradigm provided the institution in general and the School of Dance specifically with the confidence necessary to reposition dance in Jamaican society. As part of our recruitment proposal, we were able to articulate parity with other teacher education institutions. Applicants were confident that a Diploma in Dance Education would guarantee employment. With this in mind, many students chose to pursue the teaching track over the performance and choreography track prior to 2009.

Even though the EMCVPA School of Dance mandate was to prepare teachers of dance for secondary education, schools were not hiring all these professionals on a full time basis. There may have been several reasons for this situation: (a) it was less expensive to hire or allow someone to teach with just an interest in the subject of dance, as dance resides under Physical Education (PE) and not as a discrete subject; (b) many education officers, principals and senior teachers were unfamiliar with dance as an educative subject; and, (c) schools did not have the physical facility for this practice (this was evident when students had practicum experiences in classrooms where they had to push desks to the side in order to facilitate teaching).

It also seemed that many schools were more concerned with employing dance teachers to prepare students for the National Festival of Performing Arts annual dance competition than for educating our children in and through dance. This interest was evident in the increasing number of schools and community groups that participated in the competition and the number of dance pieces produced annually by individual schools for the event between 1963 and 2009. Physical education teachers were also being used by their institutions to enter dances in festival competitions as part of their teaching responsibilities. There was an obvious increase in the number of entries to the JCDC dance competition in the 1990s. In 2007, at the end of facilitating a workshop, subject specialist Richards stated that the traditional folk dance section of the dance festival saw a 200 percent increase in entries between 2000 and 2007, a clear indication of the interest in dance. It seemed evident that dance as a discrete subject in education was overdue.

More than two decades ago, Barnett and Requa developed dance syllabi for primary and secondary schools as part of the national Physical Education (PE) curriculum. These two educators were respected contributors to the fields of both dance and PE as their early training was in PE. These syllabi exist today and serve as a prototype for current curricula. Nonetheless, there has been an undercurrent of uneasiness between PE and dance teachers. Some PE educators believe that dance, subsumed under PE in mainstream education, is best suited as an after school activity due to the inadequacy of the physical infrastructure for dance. Over the years Barnett and Requa were challenged to substantiate the value of dance as part of the general school curriculum and the societal advantages of its institutionalization as a discrete subject. At the School of Dance they were challenged to produce qualified teachers to go into PreK-

12 institutions and make the connections for public support even though they could hardly find an environment conducive for this type of work.

Opponents of dance, many of whom are the “man/woman on the street” (as well as parents, teachers, guidance counsellors, and principals), may think that developing countries like Jamaica do not need Dance as a formal educational subject; young people need time for more serious subjects like Math, English and Science. Others may believe that dance is for certain people only, notably girls and those who possess natural ability. Nevertheless, as of 2009 dance programs exist in many Jamaican schools – public and private, as both formal curricula and extracurricular activity, where its needs and benefits to education have been demonstrated and accepted by principals and school boards. Dance has been a distinct part of many school curricula, for example, inner city secondary schools like Tivoli Gardens Comprehensive High and St. Annie’s Comprehensive High, and primary institutions like Jones Town Primary and Denham Town Primary, even though it is not part of formal education. Tivoli Gardens Comprehensive High will be mentioned later in this chapter under dance groups.

Graduates of the EMCVPA School of Dance teach Dance in approximately 40 primary and secondary schools island-wide as extracurricular activity and in 25 schools as part of the formal curriculum without direct government approval and without a formal Dance curriculum. Dance is offered in schools where principals or vice-principals believe in its cultural and national value to students, communities and their institutions. Teachers of these institutions are all graduates of the School of Dance or have taken short courses through workshop collaboration between the School of Dance and the JCDC. Through a

survey method, this study examines perspectives of current educational stakeholders on the status of dance in Jamaican schools (see chapter 6).

In 1990, the CTC, Jamaica School of Dance began an exchange program with the State University of New York (SUNY) College at Brockport. This program demonstrated the need for a baccalaureate dance degree in Jamaica and the English speaking territories. Students who wanted more than a Diploma in Dance (the highest award prior to September 2008) were given the opportunity through SUNY Brockport. The exchange created possibilities for Jamaican/Caribbean students to pursue further knowledge and qualification beyond the Diploma level. The program further legitimated the study of dance and dance related disciplines, including graduate studies. Thus far, more than twenty students have completed undergraduate dance degrees from this institution and three, including myself, have completed graduate degrees.

The words of Garvey resonate with me as I recall my student days at the Jamaica School of Dance: “A people without knowledge of their history is like a tree without roots” (cited in Hall, 2005, p. 37),” or routes—the various ways in which “people” translates, as we extend into the various components of society making history through creative thought. Cultural and dance education provided me with personal history and a sense of self. The school presented me with knowledge of my dance history, demonstrating that dance, as a conduit of culture, history and society, and a vehicle for education, could provide underpinnings for national consciousness, both for the individual and the collective. As described earlier, I was drawn to work with the JCDC in 1986 while still a student at the CTC, Jamaica School of Dance under the mentorship of

Barnett and Requa. Requa, however, mentored me into my professional career as lecturer and then Director of the EMCVPA, School of Dance.

EMCVPA programs provided a structure for coordination, nurturing, and transmission of cultural and artistic knowledge. The college also provided a vehicle for validating the arts in Jamaica as having content and a distinct body of knowledge. A dance education program in higher education is inextricably linked with the fabric of Jamaican culture, focusing on dance as a key repository of education, culture and artistic knowledge. This applies clearly to the Jamaican society where the role of dance is all encompassing; dance is performed on every occasion, “at some point, briefly or always, dance touches everyone” (Brinson, 1991, p. 7).

Further Developments in Jamaican Dance Theatre

In addition to the NDTC, dance, and by extension dance education, has been represented in Jamaica by three studio-originated dance theatre companies—Movement Dance Theatre, L’Acadco, and Company Dance Theatre, and approximately seven school-oriented dance companies—Stella Maris Young Adults Dance Ensemble, Tivoli Dance Troupe, Wolmer’s Dance Troupe, Dance Theatre Xaymaca, Praise Academy of Dance, and Esor. In 2000, the JCDC instituted a new category in the dance competition called “Studio Groups,” which provided the impetus for many school, church and community groups to transition from unskilled/amateur to skilled/professional. One criterion for a studio group is to produce an annual dance performance in a theatre. These

festival institutions opened the place for dance in society further while at the same time influencing public opinion about the nature and existence of dance in Jamaica.

Approximately five years after the formation of the NDTC, co-founder Thomas left the company to pursue other interests, one of which resulted in the formation of the Eddy Thomas Dance Company. Dancers from this newly formed entity wanted a professional dance space outside the NDTC; they were from private studios, community and school groups that emerged from the JCDC exposure, as well as persons who returned home after studying abroad. In 1979 the Eddy Thomas Dance Company was disbanded and in 1982, 20 years after the founding of the NDTC, a third dance company – Movements Dance Company, launched its first season of dance.

Movements (as it was called for short) was founded in 1981 by Denise Desnoes, Michelle Tappin, Patricia Goshop and Monica Campbell, all founding members of the Eddy Thomas Dance Group. These four females perceived a need in the community for another viable dance company that would add to a diverse Jamaican dance scene. They felt that there was enough talent, experience and varied expertise among them to facilitate this artistic undertaking. Movements conducted several dance classes per week for their members, including ballet, and had a separate class for recruits. Classes were designed specifically to prepare dancers for their style and repertory work.

In 1984, another dance company emerged, L'Acadco: L'Antoinette Caribbean American Dance Company. In 2003 the name was changed to L'Acadco: A United Caribbean Dance Force. Founder and artistic director L'Antoinette Stines first started a company in Miami, Florida in 1979 and returned to Jamaica a short time afterwards with the dream of giving back to her country by training dancers. Stines desired to create a

dance technique that would be built on Jamaican indigenous, traditional and popular dance cultures. She believed that the moving body is a conduit of the space it reflects and therefore would be a true expression of a contemporary Jamaican dance theatre culture.

After a few years of not being able to fulfil her initial dream of working with existing groups including the NDTC, Stines decided to resume the company she began in the United States and pursue the type of dance training she envisioned. She began working on a Caribbean dance technique – L’Antech,¹⁸ which she has now codified. Stines started her own dance training institution where she taught Folk, Modern, Ballet, African dance and her own L’Antech. In 2007, she developed what she describes as the “Daaancers H.U.T.” According to Stines, this name means a person who dances with spirit and Highest Ultimate Training (personal communication, September 10, 2009). The “Daaancers H.U.T.” is also a studio space dedicated to the training of inner-city youth in dance, theatre and stilt walking.

Stines did not just emerge from overseas; her dance roots/routes are entrenched in an African-Jamaican sensibility. As a youngster in Jamaica, she danced with Alma Mock-Yen, a founding member of the Ivy Baxter Dance Group who started her own studio at her home after the Baxter’s group disbanded in 1960. In her later years she worked with Kumina Queen “Queenie” Kennedy and became a pundit in this traditional dance. She has also been trained also as a Yoruba priestess, and her company reflected an Africanist perspective in its repertoire.

Tony Wilson’s The Company Dance Theatre was formed in April 1989, however, Wilson started with the Tony Wilson School of Modern Dance in 1987. Wilson was a member of the NDTC for approximately 20 years and a lecturer at the CTC, Jamaica

School of Dance for approximately eight years. He also taught in the Junior Department of the School of Dance during this period. The Company Dance Theatre, though the youngest of all the companies, has demonstrated commitment to the dance theatre stage. Wilson's style has a United States flavour, specifically that of Ailey.

Other dance theatre groups have emerged through individuals who have passed through one of the dance theatre companies mentioned above, or by way of the festival competitions. Stella Maris Young Adults Dance Ensemble started as a school group from Stella Maris Preparatory School and entered the festival competition for many years. Artistic director Monika Lawrence was a member of the NDTC from the 1980s and attended workshop class at the then Jamaica School of Dance. The Tivoli Dance Troupe began out of the Tivoli Gardens Community and Secondary School. This group was the vision of the principal, Grace Hamilton, one of the first graduates of the Jamaica School of Dance. Tivoli Dance Troupe did not form a separate adult performing group, but kept all their dancers under the same umbrella name. Wolmer's Dance Troupe and Dance Theatre Xaymaca, like Stella Maris Preparatory School, moved from school group to company and with a name change. Barbara McDaniel started teaching at Wolmer's Preparatory School on a part time basis in 1985. She entered the school in the festival competition for 11 years.

Dance Theatre Xaymaca was formed in 1996 as a direct response to the need to keep students who demonstrated a keen interest, dancing. After the dancers graduated from this institution they wanted to continue dancing together. McDaniel is also a product of the JCDC Festival dance competition by way of Tivoli's rival secondary school St. Annie's Secondary. Esor was formed by Sandra Rose, another product of the dance

festival movement. Rose, a dance teacher for several schools and community groups, formed Esor in order to keep students who have been dancing for a while together. She merges dancers from her many groups to form the company. Praise Academy of Dance was formed by Pat Noble as a school of dance for Christians. Noble was a member of the Jamaica School of Dance workshop in the 1980s and later started her own group at her church. Dancers at the academy are trained in Modern and Jazz dance.

Summary

This chapter provided a background perspective on Jamaican culture, dance and dance education between Jamaican Independence in 1962 to 2009. The writings and artistic work of Nettleford were included to provide contextual reference to the relevance of dance and culture to national development. Nettleford's advocacy was underscored by the writing of Manley who situates the relevance of the arts in the Jamaican society as national identity and transformation.

The chapter describes the evolution of senior and junior dance companies, as well as cultural and educational institutions that have shaped the Jamaican dance culture since 1962. The next chapter reviews Jamaican government legislation and policy documents in order to trace and illuminate a national shared vision for the arts as a component of national development since Jamaica's independence in 1962.

⁸ Kumina: This form is said to have originated in the Kongo region of West Africa among the Bantu people. The purpose of Kumina is to make contact with ancestral spirits. It is used as a means of protection, revenge and celebration. Kumina is performed at Wake ceremonies as a part of the Set-Up or Ninth-Night activities. It is also performed in the celebration of births, engagements, marriages and politics among other celebratory activities. Instruments used in the Kumina ritual are The Playing Cast (the female drum), the Kbandu (the male drum), Katta sticks, scrapers (corrugated sticks), graters, and Shakas. The music is used to invoke the spirits. See Ryman (1984).

⁹ It is recorded that the Taino Indians are the first inhabitants of Jamaica. See Black (1991).

¹⁰ *Revival* is a religious ritual resulting from the mixing of African and European cultures. This Afro-Christian religion is said to have evolved in the late nineteenth century (1860-1861), at the time of the Great Revival. It has two main branches Pocomania/Pukkumina and Zion. Pocomania/Pukkumina deals with earth-bound spirits and has stronger African elements while Zion is more Euro-Christian and deals with holy angels and heavenly spirits. The main figure is a 'Mother' when it is female and a 'Shepherd' when male. Drums, tambourine, shakas and other percussion instruments accompany the singing with lyrics from hymns as well as words with very little meaning. See Ryman (1984).

¹¹ Dinki-Minie is of African origin found by this name mostly in the eastern parishes of Jamaica. This wake tradition is usually performed after the death of a person, and up until the ninth night after the death. This ritual is held to cheer up the bereaved and consists of dance, music, and food. The music consists of instruments like the benta, which is accompanied with a gourd, kata sticks, drums and singing. See Ryman (1984).

¹² Reggae can be described as the generic name for all Jamaican popular music since approximately 1967. The sound grew out of the Jamaican people. See Chang and Chen (1998).

¹³ Dancehall is an extension of the Reggae music sound from approximately 1983 to present. It is said that in this new era of Jamaican music, deejays rather than singers reign supreme. See Chang and Chen (1998).

¹⁴ Cultural agents refer to the "large number of skilled persons needed to assist in cultural development in a variety of non formal educational settings, as festival officers and other kinds of governmental and non governmental officers especially at the parish or community level" (Institute of Jamaica, 1987, p. 14).

¹⁵ The term "Poco Meeting" is a *Revival* gathering for worship and or thanksgiving. *Revival* is a religious ritual resulting from African and European syncretism. The *Revival* form has two main branches, Zion and Pocomania. A Pocomania deals with earth bound spirits and has stronger African elements. Revivalists who practice Pocomania sometimes have their church meetings on street corners soliciting new members, money and souls. See Ryman (1984).

¹⁶ "Nine-night" is a wake celebration that is organized by the family and friends of the deceased on the ninth night after the death. The ritual consists of dance, music and food. The dances *Gerreh* and *Dinki-Minie* are of African origin in the wake tradition. See Ryman (1984).

¹⁷ The Little Theatre Movement National Pantomime is an annual Jamaican musical produced by the Little Theatre Movement (LTM).

¹⁸ Stines describes L'Antech as "the revolutionary fusion of rich Caribbean folklore with contemporary themes in a distinctive language" (personal communication, September 10, 2009).

CHAPTER 4

JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND REFORMS

Introduction

This chapter examines the historical context and development of education and schooling since 1962, Jamaica's independence, and reflects on how much we have accomplished in the absence of dance education in the formal curriculum. Government documents reveal existing structures and those needed to affect policy change. I review key documents in chronological order from 1962 to 2009 to illustrate parliamentary decisions that have addressed education and culture as integral to Jamaica's national development into the twenty-first century. Documents are analyzed through the lens of national goals and objectives as well as national beliefs and perceptions about education, the arts and culture since 1962.

Legislation and Policy Documents

Jamaica Festival Commission Act of 1968

As discussed in the last chapter, Jamaica has a long history of festival culture. I found an article titled "Festival – Coming of Age," which describes the journey of the festival movement in Jamaica from 1890 to 1963. I believe this is a JCDC in-house

publication as there is no author or date on it. The article reviews the Festival movement in Jamaica highlighting various significant occasions during its history. These include: the beginning of elocution in 1910, which brought forward speakers like Marcus Garvey; the 1929 biennial Music Festival incorporated adjudicators from overseas; in 1946, the first ever Festival of Arts, covering speech, music, drama and art, was staged; in 1955, a comprehensive syllabus was published and distributed all over the island (“Festival – Coming of Age”).

As introduced in the previous chapter, The *Jamaica Festival Commission Act* was ratified on September 1, 1968. The Act is crucial to this study as it substantiates the seriousness of Government’s commitment to the cultural festival showcasing our people’s talents in dance, drama, music, speech, song competition, literature, the fine arts, culinary arts and training. Use of the term “training” implies Government recognition of the need to educate Jamaican citizens about and through their culture in an on-going manner.

I was only able to locate a draft of the original *Jamaica Festival Commission Act* of 1968. “What is Festival?” is a four-page legal size paper that appears to be a government document (a Memorandum) explaining the *Act*. The underlined word “DRAFT” appears in the upper left hand corner of the page. The first sentence reads, “The Jamaica Festival Commission Act 32 of 1968 was brought into operation on September 1, 1968 and the first Commission of thirty members was appointed for the three years period September 14, 1968 to September 13, 1971” (“What is Festival?”) The document speaks to a bill that was passed in the House of Representatives on July 23, 1969 outlining the nature of past festivals to celebrate Jamaica’s Independence as being

confined to direct Ministerial oversight and that the purpose of the *Act* was to establish a statutory body with sole responsibility for the festivals.

This action by Government underscores the premise that cultural development is the major goal of the festival experience in Jamaica. The document also focuses on Festival's paradigm shift from being merely competition to a greater emphasis on cultural celebration. The *Act* also speaks of the shift from Government appointed committees to the fostering of volunteerism and community leadership as a necessary pragmatic approach to Festival preparation. The document also includes a four-year projected plan for 1974 to 1977, including Festival aims, organisational structure, and subject matter content—Music, Speech, Drama, Dance, Popular Music and Festival Song, and Grand Gala, among many others. It alludes to the need for a cultural policy that would be a deliberate action by Government to satisfy the cultural needs of its people, especially if culture is linked to the fulfilment of personal, economic and social development.

Jamaica Cultural Development Commission Act of 1980

The 1968 *Act* was revised by Parliament in 1980 with a change in name to the *Jamaica Cultural Development Commission Act*. As indicated by the new name, the Commission's original functions were expanded to include cultural development in the form of deliberate activities planned for maximum impact on the cultural lives of all Jamaicans. This revised document demonstrates a national vision to shift Festival to the centre of a cultural resurgence of the Jamaican people and to invoke a national spirit. Section 4(a-d) of the Act (1980) defines the roles of the Commission as follows:

- (a) promote cultural programs and activities in communities throughout the Island;
- (b) encourage and organize each year independence anniversary celebrations and other celebrations marking occasions of national interest;
- (c) stimulate the development of local talents by means of training, workshops, competitions, exhibitions, pageants, parades, displays and such other activities as the Commission may from time to time determine;
- (d) complement the work of other agencies engaged in the carrying out of community development programs throughout the Island. (JCDC, 1980).

The *Act* also ensures conformity and provides clarity, equity and access for all citizens, as well as a basic set of guidelines establishing behaviour. It also speaks to governance for employment and development. Section 4 (1) is just one segment of the *Act*, however it speaks directly to the functions of the JCDC especially (c) and (d), which relates the Commission to the work of other entities like the EMCVPA and the need for a policy to ensure sustainable development in education and training for arts and culture.

The Education Act: The Education Regulation—Arrangement of Regulations, 1980
(commonly called the Education Code)

The Education Act: The Education Regulation—Arrangement of Regulations, 1980 is an extension of *The Education Act of 1965*. This legislation outlines national regulations governing all educational institutions in Jamaica. The *Education Act* (1980)

did not, however, provide guidance for curriculum and curriculum development, that is, what each child should know and be able to do. Its emphasis is on governance and administrative systems, delineating the roles of institutional stakeholders within the educational sphere: Minister of Education, school board, principal and teachers, among other stakeholders. The *Education Act* (1980) is included in this governmental context perspective as it is a key document that guides operations and provides the regulatory framework for Government educational institutions.

The *Education Act* (1980) views the CTC as a specialist tertiary institution providing specialized education. The *Education Act* (1980) is salient to this research as a legitimate document demonstrating Government recognition of the arts in public education and its teachers as specialist teachers who are compensated as such.

Education: The Way Upward – A Path for Jamaica’s Education at the Start of the New Millennium (White Paper on Education, 2001)

The policy document *Education: The Way Upward – A Path for Jamaica’s Education at the Start of the New Millennium (White Paper on Education, 2001)* provides a strategic framework and philosophy governing educational reform for the new millennium. It documents the move of the education system towards national reform: early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary, special and adult education, and lifelong learners. It also outlines the management of the educational system and support services. This document established the foundation for other educational reform initiatives including the Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica that followed in 2004. After

much national debate, this *Education: The Way Upward* (2001) arose out of its *Green Paper* precursor a year prior. The opening statement reads:

This Paper represents a commitment of the Government of Jamaica to engage our people in the strongest possible partnership in the development of our human resources as the primary tool for personal, social and economic development. Education and Training is our over-riding priority. It is the key ingredient in the nation's overall development of a creative, productive, democratic and caring society and should prepare citizens for changing roles in a social, economic and global environment that is also constantly changing. (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 1)

The 2001 *White Paper* sets the stage for shared responsibility of education and training for the Jamaican people. It also allows for the development of other policy documents that will stand on its foundation to propel the vision of human resources as a key factor in national development. One of the seven objectives of the Ministry's Strategic Framework is "To maximize opportunities throughout the Ministry's purview that promote cultural development, awareness and self-esteem for individuals, communities and the nation as a whole" (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 1). Ownership of one's self is an added value from experiences in the arts. I suggest that artistic experiences in education can promote the type of citizenry described in the above opening statement by the Ministry of Education.

*The National Cultural Policy of Jamaica – Towards Jamaica the
Cultural Superstate, 2003*

Produced in 2003 by the Division of Culture under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, the *National Cultural Policy of Jamaica – Towards Jamaica the Cultural Superstate* was the first formal cultural policy developed by a Jamaican

Government. It is highly relevant to this study as it navigates the reader through the various agencies and cultural products toward cultural development. The *National Cultural Policy* describes the unique cultural manifestations and distinctive styles that may be considered quintessentially Jamaican, forecasting actualization of the country's potential for national development and global cultural impact. Its vision also speaks to further bolstering the self-confidence and cultural identity of the Jamaican people (Ministry of Education, Youth & Culture, 2003, p. 5). Importantly, the policy links culture and education, stating that education must "take into consideration that learning must ultimately and deliberately lead to a better and richer understanding of ourselves: our abilities, shortcomings, ambitions and strengths. It must empower us to participate fully in national development" (Ministry of Education, Youth & Culture, 2003, p. 5).

The policy outlines a national position on nurturing excellence and gives examples of national arts institutions like the National Pantomime, the JCDC, the NDTC, and the EMCVPA, among other institutions, towards this end. Further, it recognises the potential of Jamaica's cultural industries and their capacity for economic advancement as an alternative to other traditional industries—a vision of the 2030 National Development Plan. The culture policy has also been endorsed by UNESCO and the World Bank as an important instrument of development.

*Report of the Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica:
A Transformed Education System, Revised Edition. 2004*

The Report of the Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica: A Transformed Education System (2004) is a report to the Government and people of Jamaica on what

needs to be improved in order to achieve educational advancement. Explaining the nature of the education reform required for national development and therefore economic growth and stability, the document reveals trends in policy development and processes guiding parliamentary decisions for Education.

Most pertinent to this dissertation, the report highlights the need to look to the arts as an educative measure for our children. It brings the arts into focus as part of the strategy for improving the landscape of formal education. As one of the key issues in curriculum development, the report reveals that, “The potency of the visual and performing arts as disciplines in their own rights, as well as vehicles for teaching and learning, are undervalued in the curriculum development and delivery” (Task Force, 2004, p. 48). One recommendation of the task force is to develop and implement clear and transparent policy to guide curriculum review and development, encompassing: themes and issues across subject areas, resource allocation, training, articulation and sustainability, and integration of the visual and performing arts in the design and delivery of curriculum (Task Force, 2004, p. 50).

The 14-member task force was given the mandate to prepare and present a reform plan consistent with a vision for a world-class education system that will generate the human capital and produce the skills necessary for Jamaican citizens to compete in the global economy (Task Force, 2004, p. 5). In his charge to the task force in Parliament, former Prime Minister P. J. Patterson put forward his personal vision for education in Jamaica: “I want a vision that puts Jamaica’s children’s first and keeps them there. I want a vision that lifts our children from mediocrity to excellence” (Task Force, 2004, p. 20).

The 2004 report underpins several ideals of the previous 2001 *White Paper* and the 2009 *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, which will guide Jamaica for the next 17 years.

Going forward with these documents means that Jamaica stands ready for a plan to include the arts in education in a more meaningful way. The *National Cultural Policy of Jamaica* (2003) has provided some traction for the arts in education, but there still needs to be a more tangible response towards the construction of a dance curriculum that will detail what each child should know and be able to do at various stages of development. In terms of the present advocacy study, the *National Cultural Policy of Jamaica* could potentially be used in place of an arts policy.

Vision 2030 Jamaica: National Development Plan, 2009

The *Vision 2030 Jamaica* (PIOJ, 2009) outlines a broad national strategic plan to the year 2030. It represents an accumulation of all previous national development plans, a selected few of which are listed above. This strategic plan has influenced my writing and reinforced the need for a dance education policy for PreK-12 education.

The *Vision 2030 Jamaica* has as its tagline, “Planning For A Secure and Prosperous Future”. It is a symbol for us as Jamaican Governments, past and present, created a vision to prepare our children for a developing and viable workplace. The Plan of the national agenda is to emphasize the development of people first, and in so doing foster individuals who are self-sufficient, knowledgeable, and trainable. The Plan projects four national goals, fifteen national outcomes and several national strategies linked to the goals and outcomes by which to accomplish its vision for Jamaica to be the place of

choice to live, work, raise families and conduct business (PIOJ, 2009, p. xv). The first goal, “Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential,” has World-class Education and Training as one of its national outcomes—“Our country will develop an education and training system that produces well rounded and qualified individuals who are able to function as creative and productive individuals in all spheres of our society and be competitive in a global context” (PIOJ, 2009, p. xxvi).

Jamaica’s national vision statement, *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, serves as the backdrop by which the arts can move to centre stage in educating future generations about themselves and their society. The underlying principle of an education inclusive of the arts would overlap with the three other national goals: Jamaican society is secure, cohesive and just; Jamaica’s economy is prosperous; and Jamaica has a healthy natural environment (PIOJ, 2009, p. xxvi). Through this strategic development plan it seems obvious that the Jamaican government is serious about a strategic national framework toward education and training of its citizens. When one reviews developments and achievements in education since 1962, one may realize that our children should be afforded the opportunity to engage educationally in a discipline that is so much a part of their lives in a more effective way that will prepare them to contribute to the national vision with a better individual view of self. Education and training has been a longstanding sensitive issue for Jamaica and we have accomplished much over the years, as reviewed further in the next section.

Educational Reforms

Jamaica's Ministry of Education was created in 1953, and in 1957 a reform of public education institutions began. The first reform under the newly established education entity was set out in *Ministry Paper No. 10*. For purposes of this research I have endeavoured to capture the essence of the 1957 reform proposal:

- (a) introduction of the Common Entrance Examinations (CEE) as the basis of entry to high schools;
- (b) creation of additional free places in high schools;
- (c) conversion of the Kingston Technical School into several technical high schools across Jamaica;
- (d) establishment of the College of Arts, Science and Technology;
- (e) building of additional Senior Modern schools;
- (f) expansion of teacher's colleges in order to increase the number of trained teachers in elementary schools; and
- (g) introduction of the principle of parity of pay for elementary and secondary school teachers based on their qualifications. (Miller, 1989, p. 211)

The 1966 *New Deal for Education* was described as the first official plan for education in independent Jamaica (Miller, 1989, p. 211). This was part of an educational reform platform formulated between 1963 and 1966 for a newly independent nation. These reforms saw the inclusion of more children from public educational institutions

being awarded free places in secondary schools than from private institutions; the introduction of junior secondary and comprehensive high schools and training of teachers for this cohort; the building of new schools for junior secondary, comprehensive high schools, and primary education; the revamping of teacher education to include training for secondary education; and the award of Government grants to basic schools.

There have been other educational reforms over the decades since 1966. The 1973 reform saw the full funding of high school and university education; reform of public education curriculum; and “transformation of the junior secondary schools into five-year secondary schools by the addition of Grades 10 and 11” (Miller, 1989, p. 213). Also included were the introduction of teacher education in-service programs; special schools for disabled children under the public education system; the creation of community colleges; a literacy program for adult learners; and “introduction of a double shift system whereby primary and secondary school buildings would be used twice in a single day to accommodate two sets of teachers and students in a single day” (Miller, 1989, p. 213). During this period, Caribbean governments began to replace the examining bodies of Oxford and Cambridge (overseas exams) and to establish the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) as the examining body for Jamaican students at the end of high school. This was a sure sign of Jamaicans taking ownership and shaping the type of society and culture we envisioned.

However, the 1980s saw a decline in the national budget for education, a cut that resulted in reversals of a number of educational reform initiatives. As many as eight primary schools were closed, increasing the teacher-student ratio in remaining schools, and university fees were reintroduced. Notwithstanding, the 1980s saw the establishment

of the earlier described *Education Regulation* (an extension of the *Education Act of 1965*) and the *Jamaica Cultural Development Commission Act* with its then and current mission to unearth, develop and showcase Jamaican culture. The Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART) Foundation, “a program to train school leavers and adults in specific skills” (Miller, 1989, p. 216), was also established.

The 1990s and 2000s saw the emergence of several legislative and policy frameworks that support the education system and provide governance: The National Council on Education, 1993, a policy advisory body to the Minister of Education (Task Force, 2004) and *The Early Childhood Commission Act*, 2003. The CXC Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) was introduced in 1998, replacing the British Advanced Levels (A-Levels), an examination intended for university entrance. As described earlier, the Ministry of Education policy document, *Education: The Way Upward*, 2001, outlines minimum performance targets in its strategic objectives, and the *2004 Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica*, along with several other curriculum reforms, are all combined in the *Vision 2030 Jamaica*.

It is important to note however, that with all the changes in education, the JCDC remains true to its mandate “to develop and promote the creative talents and cultural expressions of the Jamaican people and to ensure the preservation and continuity of our cultural heritage, while supporting nation building and education” (JCDC, 1997, p. 1). One may question the relevance of the JCDC to current cultural needs as well as commend the commission for being steadfast in its mission to cultural development.

Summary

Building on chapter 3, chapter 4 reviews key Jamaican legislation and policy documents that have driven cultural development and educational reforms, demonstrating that a national vision for arts and culture has been a consistent thread of governmental focus. Although much has been written about dance, culture, education and dance in education, the inclusion of dance education as a subject in the Jamaican national curriculum has not been effectively considered. Such inclusion would not only foster skills necessary for a successful workforce, but through ownership of one's culture and identity the learner may develop an attitude for lifelong learning.

The chapter examined the historical context and development of education and schooling since 1962, Jamaica's Independence, in the absence of dance education in the formal curriculum, reflecting on how much we have accomplished for education. The next chapter reviews arts and Dance Education advocacy literature.

CHAPTER 5

ARTS/DANCE EDUCATION ADVOCACY LITERATURE

Introduction

As this advocacy research speaks to the need for a dance education policy for public educational institutions in Jamaica, I include a chapter on literature related to the benefits of Dance in education. The most developed body of advocacy literature for dance in life and culture, including in public education, has been produced in the United States. These writings have framed my thinking for more than a decade, and although I have included sources from the United Kingdom and Ghana, the following review focuses on historical and contemporary writing from the United States. The diversity of sources illuminates the complexities associated with the provision of dance education in public educational institutions and the need for policy for implementation and sustainability.

Arts in Education

In general, advocacy literature for the arts in education stress that the arts should be available for all students in early childhood, primary and secondary education. Dr. Ernest Boyer, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, asserts, “The arts are essential parts of the human experience, they are not a frill” (cited in Dickinson,

1997). All the arts – dance, drama, music and visual arts, contribute to educating the whole person and to the development of human community. As elaborated by Fowler (2004),

The arts are forms of thought every bit as potent in what they convey as mathematical and scientific symbols. They are ways we human beings “talk” to each other. They are the languages of civilization through which we express our fears, our anxieties, our curiosities, our hungers, our discoveries, our hopes. The arts are modes of communication that give us access to the stored wisdom of the ages... Science and technology do not tell us what it means to be human. The arts do. (p. 4)

I align with these assumptions that children need experiences in the arts as an indispensable component of their human development. The arts are necessary for a complete education that prepares children to participate in the social, cultural and economic advancement of society. Fowler (1996) posits, “The arts can transform the way we think and operate” (p. 10), thus preparing us to meet the world effectively.

In support of Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Fowler (2004) explains:

Arts education provides a new approach... music education nurtures musical intelligence, visual arts and design develop spatial intelligence, dance draws upon kinesthetic or movement intelligence, and theatre exercises the personal intelligences. The arts therefore help schools address the total mind and cultivate the full range of human potential. (p. 4)

The above quote stresses the uniqueness of each art form; each offers a distinct way of shaping who we are and the world around us (Gough, 1999). Each brings its own body of knowledge to the education table, allowing individuals to locate themselves among rich and diverse cultures, beliefs, and societies.

Fowler’s (1996, 2004) and contemporary advocate for educational reform Eric Jensen’s (2001) research on arts education and arts education policy have been

particularly useful to this dissertation research. These texts have significantly influenced how I view the arts/dance in public education. I have recommended these readings to colleagues with similar interests in owning one's voice in the discourse on dance education advocacy. They were particularly useful to me because of my engagement in the teaching and learning process and preparing teacher education students in dance methods.

My journey with Fowler began in 1991 when I read a 1977 policy statement co-authored with Araminta Little titled "Dance as Education." Fowler & Little's (1977) mantra that strong arts provide strong schools is germane to not only the American educational context, but can be applied to any society. The book addresses educators, decision makers and parents, outlining the importance of the arts to improving the lives of individuals. Fowler & Little (1977) present solid arguments advocating for the arts as an enormous educational potential, supporting the present study.

Highlighting the role of arts education in a pluralistic society, Fowler (1996) argues, "those who teach the arts must make sure that the many ethnic elements of our culture do not separate us but that all students have access to the universal elements of culture that bind us as a civilization" (115). This argument supports programs organised by the JCDC and their relevance to national consciousness, as well as the role of teacher education in impacting excellence in educating the whole person.

Jensen (2001) theorises connections between the arts, the brain, and learning as an integral relationship that establishes the need for the arts in public education equal to prioritized subject disciplines such as Language Arts. Jensen (2001) believes the arts should be taught in their own right and integrated into every subject. Regarding the

movement arts, including Dance, Jensen (2001) notes, “Kinaesthetic arts allow us to better understand other cultures and provide for our health and emotional expression... Kinaesthetic arts may enhance cognition, positive attitudes, and confidence; in some cases, kinaesthetic arts may grow new brain cells” (p. 71).

Education then should not only facilitate learning at the cognitive level, but should be all-embracing and culture-specific, preparing children with empathetic sensitivity for myriad interacting cultures and societies in a global market place. Jensen (2001) notes, “Education must be attentive to individual differences and community building...” (p. v). Through education, our learners should be assisted to understand who they are and how they function. School should provide all the necessary experiences to unlock the individual’s full capacity to understand and solve problems. As Bruner (2003) asserts, “...education should serve as a means of training well-balanced citizens” (p. 1). My hope is that such arguments will influence Jamaican policy makers to reflect on the benefits of dance for our children and hence move to support policy legislation. In order to train the well-balanced citizen Bruner (2003) speaks of, tertiary educational institutions should become prepared for the task. A policy derived through government legislation would seriously address teacher education pre and post development. Higher education institutions like the EMCVPA have to take on the responsibility and ownership of improving education in the arts for our teacher educators.

In his interview, Bartley (2010) stated, “I think the Edna Manley College should perhaps lead on preparing a policy because they are an arts education institution and it is within their interest that a policy on the arts in education, in the society, should be promoted.” Bartley places responsibility for the development of an arts policy squarely

on the shoulders of the higher education institution that is in the business of education and training. He asserts that even though the effort may be collaborative including the Ministries of Education and Culture, persons in the field are most suited to articulate its direction and vision.

In a similar way, arts educator Karen Lee Carroll (1993) places the responsibility for improving arts education in schools in the lap of institutions of higher education, noting that the future of the arts in schools will be profoundly affected by the content of teacher preparation programs. Based on analysis of self-study documents and college catalogues for 18 institutions in the state of Maryland, she claims that programs that prepare arts specialists lack foundation in arts education research. She notes also that arts-based theories—*aesthetic education*, *kinaesthetic learning* and so on, are absent from textbooks that deal with foundations of education (Carroll, 1993).

Carroll (1993) argues that changes to arts education must occur in the belief systems and value structures that govern their practice. While a number of publications had sought to define arts education, such efforts would remain ineffective unless art educators source definitions from the field's roots. Carroll (1993) aligns with Kuhn's model of paradigm shifts, which includes directing attention to values, beliefs, and practices as part of the initiative and preparation of new members of a professional community. Arguing that art educators had isolated themselves from mainstream general educators and therefore neglected to include them as allies in the fight for arts integration, she posited a need to restructure the theoretical vision of educational practice that is informed by the arts. This article was useful because it provided foundation and content for including the voice of the dance artist and educator in the process of policy

development. It also speaks to the need to continue and utilize the current practice in Jamaica of general educators teaching dance and how this integration may positively influence the way forward (Carroll, 1993).

There are also questions of whose art/dance should be embraced in the public domain and hence taught in the public school system and how the arts/dance should be taught. Hoffa (1992) is provocative in tone, addressing issues of political correctness and multiculturalism. Though related, he argues, they are distinctly different concepts; multiculturalism celebrates diversity, while political correctness stifles expressions of diversity (Hoffa, 1992). Within the ambit of mainstream arts education we are expected to remain politically correct. Usually this means to go along with cultural norms: the language to be spoken in public, or which dances belong where.

Hoffa (1992) discusses the phenomenon of political correctness as it relates to arts education, arguing, “it is neither politic nor always correct” (29). He formulates alternative interpretations of the abbreviation of political correctness as PC, suggesting that PC could also mean “political coercion” or “political conformity,” both of which are antithetical to an arts education ethos (Hoffa, 1992). Hence, the notion of political correctness is dangerous to the arts as it involves criteria that are made not through knowledge but by political figures projecting their own agenda. While in education the idea of political correctness was derived from efforts to revise curricula in the humanities and social sciences to reflect the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of contemporary society, Hoffa (1992) argues that what is taught as literature, history or art ought to include more non-Western material to be inclusive as a multicultural phenomenon. In Jamaica, this diversity, especially in dance, would embrace the varied ethnic components

of our culture and reflect Jamaica's national motto: "Out of Many One People." The discussion around PC is relevant to this discourse as it is important to remain conscious of distractions of purpose by other national agendas where certain types of experiences are omitted.

Benefits of Dance Education

Dance Education in Jamaica is in dire need of research and scholarship to further the discourse towards a national dance education curriculum policy. In the absence of local literature I sourced the writings of dance education practitioners and scholars from the United States to support my advocacy platform. This section reviews these materials. Many authors extol the functions and values of creative dance for children, an important component of any holistic dance education (Benzwie, 2000; Bond, 2001; Bond and Stinson, 2000/01, 2008; Gilbert, 1992) According to Gilbert (1992), "...creative dance combines the mastery of movement with the artistry of expression" (p. 3). Further, through creative dance "people learn to solve problems, express feelings...gain an awareness of their own and other's cultures and engage in an activity that increases, rather than decreases, self-esteem" (Gilbert, 1992, p.4). Benzwie (2000) concurs, stating, "Creative movement releases the flow of energy to our fantasies, feelings and intellect...helping us to become in touch with our bodies, healing our spirits and connecting us to our feelings" (p. xiii).

Speaking to dance in general, Reedy (2003) asserts that, "Dance is the only means of knowing in which body, mind, and spirit come together *in action* [her emphasis]. This

integrative aspect of dance offers tremendous potential for learning and transformation” (p. 1-2). In this regard, dance can be considered an important mode of educating children from an early age. As McGreevy-Nichols (2000) notes, “Dance education, as do all the arts, provides a vehicle of learning for many children” (p. 35).

Inclusion of Dance Education as a discreet subject in the Jamaican early childhood, primary and secondary curriculum is one way of ensuring holistic education of the child. As a form of embodied cognition, dance education promotes learning across multiple domains - intellectual, physical, social and emotional. As noted by Paulson (1993):

It is easy to lose sight of the most fundamental issue at hand—that students need opportunities to develop all of their intelligences, including the kinesthetic, in order to be able to think and communicate in traditional systems and in artistic symbols. (p. 34)

In the same way the *North Carolina Essential Standards – Arts Education* (North Carolina Dept. of Public Instruction, 2008) support a quality K-12 dance program that addresses the learning needs of the ‘whole child, i.e. the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and aesthetic development of students in public education. Dance study allows for all learners to be successful as it accommodates various learning styles and intelligences. A premise of the present advocacy research is that students have the right to communicate in their own unique voices—to own their dance.

I argue that if Jamaican children are denied quality holistic education that includes dance education, then we are limiting their ability to create, to dream, to empower their lives and their society. Experiences in dance can “develop interpersonal management and teamwork skills, foster the understanding of competition, and promote the appreciation of

cultural diversity” (Hanna, 1999, p. 96), preparing students for a global society. I regret that my seven-year-old student described in chapter 1 had to find an extracurricular setting to express her dance – I wish Dance had been part of her formal primary education; my students at Franklyn Town Primary School deserved a dance teacher who was qualified and able to prepare them for meaningful dance experiences that go beyond the immediate moment. As noted by D’Amboise (1987):

Dance is the most immediate and accessible of the arts... When you learn to move your body on a note of music, it’s exciting. You have taken control of your body and by learning to do that, you discover that you can take control of your life. (p. 5)

What kind of world could be created if the next generation of Jamaicans are prepared to take control of their lives—their humanness and environment? Many of our youth feel powerless against the crime and violence that have become part of our everyday life in many Jamaican schools and communities. These experiences can lead to frustration and impair learning. Students need consistent opportunities to experience victories. Dance allows growth on a personal bodily level that may translate into an appreciation of self and feelings of empathy for others even if the individual’s interest resides in performance only.

In Jamaica, the JCDC Festival of Performing Arts dance competition promotes dance as performance, and, like Blaine & Bucek’s (1988) critique of the United States private studio sector (p. 38-40), some are concerned that sole focus on skill development and performance is devoid of the educational values and benefits of dance education and research. However, dance educators have written extensively about the value of dance

performance as an *educative* modality where the mind, body and spirit connect and transform beings. Kahlich (1990) writes,

In the moment of performance, what we know, who we are, and how we see ourselves (and thus the world) all arrive at a meeting point—a place where we both feel and appear whole, directed and unique through knowledge and choice. (p. 54)

He adds:

As a basic educational tool, dance performance will open the individual physically, intellectually, and emotionally to discover, accept, and adapt to realities of change which will be the shaping force of the future. Performance will aid students of all ages in creating self-trust, challenging the whole individual, and evaluating themselves and their work in a nonjudgmental atmosphere. (p. 55)

Hence, in this mode of education the student spends time reflecting and developing self. According to McCutchen (2006), performance teaches “students how to tap their inner resources and body systems to move expressively within the fullest range possible” (p. 150). Willis (2004) asserts, “Performance channels efforts of total focus and personal control” (p. 194). I believe that in dance performance the mover exemplifies dance as art; in performance the student is exposed yet remains in control and is able to take an audience to new discoveries of self and society. Performance belongs to the individual and becomes a personal voice through embodied interpretation even if the movements are externally derived. In dance performance the mover becomes empowered by expressing ownership of the movement experience. Jamaican society needs to be educated about the dance performance phenomenon as an educational experience beyond learning steps.

Arts/Dance Education Advocacy in Jamaica

Nettleford (1986) emphasized the centrality of the arts in an education grounded in process thinking, which he suggests is a necessary ingredient for national development.

If a child starts knowing that he or she can draw something, that he or she can paint something, that he or she can sculpt, carve something, that he or she can make up a little poem, four lines, that he or she can present a dance, that he or she can make up a song, sing that song and get appreciation for it, then you start teaching children some very important things, not least of all that sense of process which is so critical to the development of the region. So the Arts themselves are very important to education and need to be brought to the centre of education's concern rather than remain in the periphery. (p. 14)

Contrary to Nettleford's (1986) notion of education as process, in Jamaica there seems to be more emphasis on education to improve test scores and attendance at the primary level, and to reduce teacher to pupil ratio; the arts as a means to think and learn are often overlooked as possible contributors to these advancements. With the introduction of the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* in 2009, however, decision makers in Jamaica need to revisit policies in education with a view towards including the arts in future educational planning in particular and national development planning in general.

Vision 2030 Jamaica is built on the premise that education and training are universally established linchpins of any development process. The level of a society's education and training is a key indicator to determining the level of development of that society (p. 57). In this regard, *Vision 2030 Jamaica* needs to envision citizens whose education includes experiences in subjects like Dance that promote problem solving skills, heightened self-esteem, defining and valuing individual differences, cultural awareness, and lifelong learning capabilities.

Garvey (2009) asserts, "...it is by education that we become prepared for our duties and responsibilities in life" (p. 5). It is critical then for a 21st century society to ensure that schools provide total education – mind, body and spirit, to prepare youth for a world of rapidly changing social, economic and political realities. Hyman-Anglin (1994) supports Garvey when she claims that, "Schools and other institutions of learning play a very important role in preparing children for life and equipping them to play their part as members of society" (p. 58).

To allow children opportunities to compete at home and abroad, we need to examine how study of the arts/dance supports world-class education and training for all Jamaicans as promoted by the *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. In my view, schooling should ignite in all children an appreciation of self and purpose through opportunities to create new visions, including a sense of embodied ownership of their identity. Dance allows for these types of "in person" experiences. Bruner asserts, "One of the important lessons the arts teach is that solutions to problems can take many forms" (cited in Eisner, 1976, p. 132). With this in mind, in order to create the desired citizenry for Jamaica, it is important for every child to have the opportunity to participate in a mandated, developmentally designed dance education program with qualified educators.

If Jamaica is to be the place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business by 2030, and if the level of education and training determines the level of development of a society, then there needs to be serious consideration to transforming the current school environment (and thus the minds of individuals) of overcrowded classrooms, inadequate physical infrastructure, and untrained arts teachers, to name a few inadequacies. Our schools must provide the type of environment and thinking that is

geared towards world-class education and training for the educated Jamaican who will: “Love to learn and therefore be a lifelong learner; ...be able to adjust to different situations; speak a different language; be a productive citizen-worker in charge of his or her personal economic advancement; and contribute to national development ...” (Task Force on Educational Reform, 2004, p. 14).

McGreevy-Nichols (2000) states,

Early twenty-first century brain and cognitive research clearly demonstrate that children learn best while moving and creating. The need for creative problem solvers in the work force makes dance education essential to the complete education of all children. (p. 35)

Likewise, the 2001 Government of Jamaica policy document *Education: The Way Upward* mandates that, “Education and Training must not only be better but different. It must seek to create a literate, skilled, democratic and patriotic society. It must also create a productive workforce and functional and caring communities” (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 1). Education that is different prepares learners to be innovative, fosters inventiveness and confidence, and is creative in its methodology. The Jamaican Government, past and present, has a vision to prepare our children for a developing and viable workplace anywhere. The goal of the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* plan is to emphasize the development of people first, and in so doing foster individuals who are self-sufficient, knowledgeable, and trainable. Fowler (1996) posits that, “...corporations are looking for young people who, first of all, demonstrate a sense of responsibility, self-discipline, pride, teamwork, and enthusiasm and, second, an ability to learn, to solve problems, and to communicate well” (p. 21).

I believe that corporate Jamaica is clamouring for a labour force of secondary and tertiary graduates with a spirit of exuberance and a competitive edge. Dance education can support these criteria. The inclusion of dance education as a subject in the Jamaican national curriculum will not only foster skills necessary for a successful workforce, but through ownership of one's culture and identity the learner may develop an attitude for lifelong learning. Bond (2000) reflects on her personal experience with dance as a child, "I remembered dance as being full of feelings, images, personal stories, contagious rhythms, music, social excitement, and counting" (p. 8), demonstrating the capacity of this art to engage and reflect society and to achieve lifelong embodied learning potential to an individual. Bond's reference also reflects the value of self-acceptance and ownership of one's thoughts for not necessarily personal or immediate gain, but as a possible social development. Hanna (1999) notes, "Dance education can prepare students with knowledge and skills applicable to academic and lifelong learning, quality of life, and success in the world of work" (p. 90).

As outlined in the Jamaica Ministry of Education document, *Education: The Way Upward*, the foundation for the *White Paper* of 2001 (see chapter 4), "...Jamaica must provide lifelong learning opportunities and anytime anywhere training for the development of the intellectual capital required to secure Jamaica's competitive edge in the global knowledge economy" (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 8).

In order for Jamaica to sustain a developed country status after 2030, education and schooling must include situations for students' ownership of embodied knowledge, including Dance. Nettleford (1995) argues, "...exposure from an early age to creative responsibilities engenders in young people a spirit of independence, self-assurance, and a

sensibility of excellence” (p. 102). But how do we move a nation from vision to reality? How can Jamaican children be afforded the opportunity to utilize a discipline that is so much a part of their lives in a more effective way that will prepare them to contribute to the national vision?

Eisner (2005) challenges the thinking of decision makers, asking, “What conception of the arts do people who shape education policy have?” (p. 129) When one considers the place of dance in formal curricula in Jamaica and the foundation of the *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, this question provides critical rationale for the need for this research. My vision is that dance educators in Jamaica will find a voice in the foreground of educational decision-making, in shaping national dialogue on education, the arts and culture. General educators will partner with arts educators to review national plans for education to ensure incremental implementation toward the 2030 national development plan. Nettleford (1986) believed that for effective national transformation, the arts should be removed from the sidelines and placed centre stage in Jamaican education. If Jamaica is serious about educating for the future and transforming minds, then a systemic overhauling of the education system to include the arts is necessary.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature that advocates for Arts and Dance Education in mainstream educational curriculum. On the strength of the strong representation of the arts and dance in national curricula in diverse countries around the globe, I argue that if Jamaican children are denied quality holistic education that includes dance education,

then we are limiting their ability to create, to dream, to empower their lives and their society. I have carefully demonstrated that dance education in Jamaica is in dire need of scholarship to further the discourse for the construction of a national dance education curriculum policy. This provides a framework to understand the surveys and interviews of Jamaican educational stakeholders in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL DANCE EDUCATION POLICY: PERSPECTIVES OF JAMAICAN STAKEHOLDERS

“And while dance is a reflection of my country, my culture, and my history, when I get right down to it, in its purest form, dance is a reflection of me”.

—Danielle Robinson 17-year-old (daCi, 2006, p. 7)

Introduction

As discussed in previous chapters, dance education is a vital means to human development and may be a testimony of individual and community aspirations.

According to Clarke (2004),

...the purpose of Education cannot be merely to provide intellectual stimulation and to prepare citizens for the world of work. Education in general ... must go further by serving a wider human purpose. ... *It must assist in breaking down ethnic, religious, economic, class and political barriers*, by bringing people together in creative collaboration and cooperation (author's emphasis). (5)

Further, education can be transformative for the individual and of his or her world; dance in education can provide this additional thrust.

Brinson (1991) states that dance cannot be separated from other aspects of culture—sport, education at all levels, and ideas of politics, economics, and aesthetics (p. xiii). Brinson's (1991) context is the United Kingdom, but his premise applies equally to Jamaica and the wider Caribbean community. Chapter 4 surveyed literature on Dance as a means of cultural identity and preservation, personal and national development, and

economic advancement also as a view toward a national dance culture, specifically a national Dance Education culture. It also outlined the development of Dance in Jamaica since 1962 and its inextricable connection to the fabric of the Jamaican cultural existence. It is my view that since Dance is an amalgamation of education and culture, then the product Dance Education can only support quality education for personal and national identity consciousness and advancement.

This chapter extends advocacy towards the construction of a national dance education policy in Jamaica beyond literature and history to include an examination of current Dance in education values and practices in Jamaica. The purpose of this component of the study is to illuminate current perspectives and articulate a contextualized way forward. This chapter presents the results of questionnaires administered to teachers and principals from 12 of the 14 parishes in Jamaica. These two cohorts of education professionals are key educational stakeholders with in-depth engagement in the Jamaican school system. Questionnaires contribute perspectives from teachers who are practicing in the field of dance, a majority who have over several years participated in the JCDC Festival of Performing Arts competition in Dance, and whose professional lives are strongly affected by the state of dance in education in Jamaica.

As described in chapter 2, a snowballing strategy was employed when choosing teacher participants (Blaikie, 2009; Jupp, 2006). I contacted teachers with whom I had been acquainted for a number of years and they contacted other potential participants on my behalf. I did not hold any preconceived notions about participants' educational background, depth of dance experiences or their personal expectations from the survey. They were selected on the basis of their involvement in the teaching of Dance. Principals

were chosen because of their institution's engagement in Dance as a discreet subject in the prescribed school day.

Availability of participants was a confounding factor as the initial plan to distribute at JCDC workshops fell through, requiring a pragmatic approach. More than 50 individuals were contacted by telephone and in-person, and without coercion were invited to participate. 15 per cent of persons contacted were unavailable when it came time to receive the questionnaire. Approximately five individuals had limited ways of accessing the questionnaire; that is, they reside several kilometres away from the city and did not have the means to receive emails or facsimiles. This situation was challenging and two of these individuals did not complete the questionnaire after efforts were made to get it to them. I hand delivered questionnaires to several participants or some participating teachers gave them to principals. This type of direct contact to potential respondents was unplanned and improved the success of the questionnaire method.

The questionnaire consists of 22 items beginning with concrete factual information (items 1 to 10) as follows: age, gender, academic background, place of employment, role (teacher or principal), length of practice, art forms offered in the school, number of years dance has been in the school, time and length of classes, number of meetings per week, context of classes—discrete subject, after school, in physical education. Items 11 to 16 require more extensive description as follows: facilities for dance; awards won at JCDC competitions, dance background—in art and education, memorable experiences in the arts, and preferred styles of dance.

Items 17 through to 22 are open-ended, requiring more reflective responses, as follows: changes desired for dance in schools, whether Dance should be part of

mainstream curriculum, possible benefits to children from inclusion, respondent background as advocate for dance in mainstream curriculum, challenges to inclusion, whether there should be a national policy establishing Dance as a discrete subject in early childhood, primary and secondary education. Questionnaire items were the same for both teachers and principals. The questionnaire instrument is found in Appendix C.

The rate of response to questionnaires was high. Of the more than 50 surveys disseminated, 47 were returned—seven principals and 40 teachers. Data were garnered across 12 parishes representing three early childhood, 23 primary and 14 secondary educational institutions. The next section provides a narrative summary of questionnaire results.

Questionnaire Findings

Items 1 – 10: Biographical, Demographic, and Concrete Factual Information

The age range of teachers and principals falls across the range of questionnaire groupings established by the researcher: 14 were between 20 and 35 years of age; 15 were between 36 and 45 years; 14 were between 46 and 55 years; and four were 56 years and older. The nine males range across early childhood to secondary and include two Principals. The 38 females also cover the three cohorts and include five principals.

Academic qualifications vary: 24 persons hold baccalaureate and higher degrees, two hold associate degrees, 14 possess various types of diplomas, three hold two-year dance certificates, and four have high school diplomas. In addition, 22 teacher

respondents have completed a program at the EMCVPA, School of Dance. Other persons have attended JCDC workshops or short courses, several of which were conducted by lecturers from EMCVPA. Respondents teaching career span were as short as two years and as extensive as 40 years.

In addition to Dance, art forms that exist in schools include Speech and Drama, Culinary Arts, Music (band and choir), and Visual Arts (art and craft). The combination of forms varies, with the most common combination being Dance and Music. Of the 40 participating institutions, 36 offers three or more art forms, two have only Dance and two have other combinations. Dance has existed in institutions from as short as three years to as long as 38 years.

There are wide differences in the amount of time allocated to dance sessions. Class duration ranges from 30 to 150 minutes per session on weekdays to 180 minutes per session on weekends, with 150-minute sessions taking place in after-school settings. In seven primary education institutions (approximately one third of schools surveyed), all grades from kindergarten to grade six experience dance once per week with meeting times ranging from 30 minutes for younger children to 45 minutes for upper school—grades 5 and 6. Classes meet from three times per week to occasionally, the latter related to preparation for specific events including school activities and participation in the Festival competition.¹⁹

Sixteen primary and secondary institutions have discrete programs where Dance is part of the school's mainstream curriculum and timetabled into the regular school day. In four institutions—one secondary and three primary, Dance in mainstream curriculum is offered as modular units under Physical Education (PE).²⁰ Two secondary teachers

mentioned the use of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) curriculum for grades ten and eleven.²¹

The remaining items in the questionnaire, 11 to 22, are presented and discussed individually in order to connect the voices of respondents and to highlight key findings using their own words. My intention is to present a Jamaica-wide chorus of voices that articulate teachers' and principals' personal experiences with dance in their institutions. Participants have given much thought to the problems and possibilities of dance in their schools and the nation. Their experiences, viewpoints, and values give a contemporary context for considering a national policy for dance education in Jamaica's early childhood, primary and secondary educational institutions.

Item 11: Describe the dance space (facility) in your school.

The physical facility for dance is an area of concern for many schools. More than 60per cent of participants provide dance in makeshift facilities, that is, rooms designated for other activities and with concrete flooring or asphalt. Three schools conduct dance classes in outdoor veranda locations, while one respondent wrote that she teaches dance in "any available spot on the school compound" (female, primary, teacher). Independent of the location (urban or rural), there seem to be extremes to the availability of spaces where dance classes are facilitated, ranging from no specific location to large extensive facilities in shared spaces:

There is no designated area...oftentimes students are relocated to an empty classroom, thus disruption of general classes. Most times the class is held outside in the schoolyard. (female, primary, teacher)

Dance classes are also held in auditoriums, but are sometimes shared with other sport or arts activities like drama or music simultaneously. (female, primary, teacher)

Dance class is taught in a regular classroom after the desks are tucked to the corner, or outside at any convenient spot. (female, primary, teacher)

A large room with concrete flooring that is inappropriate for dance. (male, secondary, teacher)

Two respondents described the inconvenience of trying to find an adequate space to facilitate the dance classroom:

The stage in the auditorium is used for dance, which is not very convenient because most times the auditorium is rented. The netball court is sometimes used or the back of the auditorium. (female, secondary, teacher)

There is no specific dance area allocated for dance and the locations vary. We use a section of the school's auditorium, the music room, netball court and the school's quadrangle. (female, primary, teacher)

There is not a set space (facility) at the school for dance so available classrooms and the small hall (used for classes) are used. (male, primary, teacher)

Respondents' descriptions are sometimes vague: e.g. "a very big hall – adequate space is provided" (female, primary, principal); "an open space with wooden floors" (female, primary, teacher); an open area outside used for devotion and concerts" (male, early childhood, teacher).

All institutions with a discrete dance curriculum have a designated facility for dance. Some of these spaces, however, may be described as ill equipped with poor ventilation, concrete flooring, or out-of-the-way locations: "The space provided for dance is woefully inadequate as it is small and is also used for storage. The ventilation is not what it should be" (female, primary, teacher).

Only four teacher respondents (two primary, two secondary) make positive statements about their school's facilities for dance.

The school has an activity room where the different art forms meet. It is a sizeable and comfortable area with mirrors on the wall to reflect students' spatial awareness. (female, primary, principal)

The above primary principal went on to elaborate about her space—its purpose and benefits, suggesting that it was given much thought when it was being constructed.

Another respondent with a dedicated space was not as satisfied with her space: “It's a small area (room) that is designed for dancing, but proper flooring is needed” (female, secondary, teacher).

One secondary school principal described what could be called a ‘premium’ space for dance in any context: “a room dedicated to dance; high ceiling, well ventilated, 35' x 20'; wooden floor (male, secondary, principal). Another secondary school respondent described her space as adequate, but in need of dance paraphernalia: “The dance space is quite conducive: wooden flooring, barres, but we are desperately in need of a mirror” (female, secondary, teacher).

It would be useful to follow up schools with a specially designed space for dance to see how this was accomplished, e.g. through a supportive principal, a school board that believes in dance as art and education, or the availability of funds in a particular institution.

Item 12: List no more than four JCDC awards your group has received in any art form

The reality of poor physical facilities has not thwarted schools' participation in the JCDC Festival of Performing Arts competition. More than 75per cent of the respondents participated and received multiple awards in a range of visual and performing arts categories including Music (drumming, choir and school bands), Speech and Drama. Awards cited include: Best Overall Community Drama, Best Overall Speech Group, Best Overall Class 2 Dub Poetry, Most Outstanding Male Performer in Music, Best Costume and Most Outstanding Teacher, among others. Both teachers and principals showed pride of achievement, listing as many awards as they could in the space provided. I found it quite inspiring to read about Jamaican schools' many achievements in performing arts areas other than Dance.

Item 13: List any JCDC awards received in Dance in the last three years

Several of the participating K-12 public institutions have won multiple medals of gold, silver, or bronze at the dance festival competition. Categories of awards include: Best Contemporary Dance, Most Outstanding Popular Dance, Most Outstanding Small Group, Most Outstanding School and Community Group, Best Folk Dance, and Best Quadrille, among many other awards. Respondents were quite open about the awards status of their schools: "2009 awarded – 3 gold, 7 silver and 4 bronze medals, including the Marcus Garvey Award for Excellence." Of the 47 responses from teachers and

principals, only one school had not received an award from the JCDC or possess a history of entrance to the festival competition.

For the next three items, respondents are asked to reflect on their own experiences with dance. Exposure to the form, memorable experiences, types and styles of dance most enjoyed provide us with data that give us a better understanding of the Jamaican teacher of dance.

Item 14: Describe your exposure to and experience with dance as art and/or education

Respondents' exposure to dance varies. 60per cent started in primary school and approximately 20per cent in church, while 20per cent started in private studios or in secondary institutions. 80per cent had some connection with the JCDC and the EMCVPA between childhood and adulthood.

I am a member of the Stella Maris Dance Ensemble and have performed in Festival Competition in high school. (male, early childhood, teacher)

Member of high school dance group for two years; participate in the arts in education program at the Edna Manley College; participate in the JCDC workshops. (female, primary, teacher)

Dance from primary level to adulthood. (female, primary, teacher)

When I was a student at primary school and we entered a JCDC Competition. (female, primary, principal)

I attended JCDC Traditional Forms workshops. I also danced in Physical Education at college. (female, primary, teacher)

I performed with the National Dance Theatre Company (NDTC) of Jamaica as a singer; worked with college lecturers in preparing student teachers to perform authentic forms of dance. (male, primary, principal)

I currently choreograph for and perform with the National Dance Theatre Company. (male, secondary, teacher)

I started at Church then moved on to a dance group. (male, secondary, teacher)

Choreography course at the Edna Manley College, choreographer and artistic director to the dance society at the high school where I work. (male, secondary principal)

A large number of respondents became involved in dance because of JCDC. Also, those respondents who went to teachers' training institutions were exposed to dance as a component under PE.

Item 15: Describe a memorable experience with any art form.

These responses were quite descriptive. They ranged from personal experiences, to 'aha' teaching moments, experiences related students' discovery of dance, and participation in the 2009 Dance and the Child International (daCi) Conference in Jamaica.

A memorable experience I had was performing on stage in the JCDC dance competition. It was an African dance, using all the energy your body could possess as was advised by the choreographer to give the picture of real Africans. In the middle of all this frantic gyration, the top half of my costume became loose on stage. As the crowd roared we thought it was at our performance, however, it was as a result of dancing for a few seconds without the top half of my costume. Nonetheless, we got the gold, and as a child I was really very proud. (female, primary, teacher)

My most memorable experience is when I entered the JCDC Dance Festival Competition and won the Ivy Baxter award with my community group. (male, early childhood, teacher)

A memorable experience for me was teaching dance to a group of hearing impaired children. Their natural inclination to move and the enjoyment displayed through movement was invaluable. (male, secondary, teacher)

A memorable experience is when a student or students are negative towards the subject or they have no self-confidence and have never danced before; but after experiencing the art form and being able to perform for an audience, a sense of achievement and pride is seen on their faces and in their performance. The end result is that they will want to continue dancing because they never thought there was so much to gain from simply, dance! (female, secondary, teacher)

Attending the daCi Conference at the Edna Manley College in 2009. (female, primary, principal)

The most memorable experience gained is performing at Jamaica House for Queen Victoria on her state visit to Jamaica. (male, primary, teacher)

A memorable experience in dance was the year when the group won the Joyce Campbell Trophy for Most Outstanding Traditional Folk Form in the Island. (male, secondary, teacher)

One respondent described a negative experience with a group of children she was preparing to participate in JCDC national finals.

July 2012, two students did not show up to perform with the group at the National Finals (National Competition). Their parents did not send them. So I had to choose two students who didn't practice to replace them and because of that the performance was poorly done and we did not get an award for that dance.

(female, primary, teacher)

Item 16: What types/style of dance do you enjoy most?

The most commonly cited reported styles were Jamaican and Caribbean folk forms and Modern Contemporary. Other styles listed include Praise dance, Jazz and African. Many respondents listed names of particular dances in response to this question,

for example: *Gerreh, Quadrille, Maypole* and *Revival*, among others. These named dances also attest to the types of dances students may become exposed due to their teachers' experience in these forms.

The next series of questions require some reflection from respondents' as they are asked to comment and make judgement on the state of dance in their institution and the country generally.

Item 17: Describe up to three changes you would like to see in terms of dance in schools

This item illuminated teachers' desires for educational reforms related to dance, specifically the integration of dance into other curriculum subjects, broader teacher and parental understanding of Dance as a modality of learning and development, recognition of dance as a vehicle of culture, history and society, and broad student access to dance in schools.

I would like to see dance being integrated more in the curriculum; I would like other teachers to adopt and appreciate dance as an active medium for teaching and learning. Parents should also be cognizant of the fact that dance can be used to facilitate learning. (female, primary, principal)

Acceptance by all stakeholders that dance is an experience that helps in the holistic development of the child; teach dance as an important aspect of the Jamaican culture; use dance in core subjects such as reading, language and mathematics. (female, primary, principal)

Dance to be treated as important as English Language and Mathematics. (male, secondary, teacher)

More troubled/maladaptive students being enrolled into the art forms thus giving them a medium of self-expression; heightened self-confidence, building creativity and a level of discipline among them. (female, primary, teacher)

There needs to be an Education Officer with responsibility for Dance.
(male, secondary, teacher)

Principals also asserted belief in the importance of K-12 dance program content and delivery.

The inclusion of dance in the syllabus of all schools for all grades (optional for 10-11); to be seen more as a creative art and not as a physical activity; in upper (CSEC) grades more emphasis on the creative activity and less on knowing about the art form. (male, secondary, principal)

A primary school principal conveyed a personal national vision for dance, also connecting back to the facilities issue:

Each school should be assigned a trained dance teacher; the national curriculum has dance taught as a discrete subject; and facilities for dance should be part of school buildings. (male, primary, principal)

The following teacher also asserts the importance of specialist teachers to offer dance within the formal curriculum.

Yes, along with a teacher who does it, someone should be hired so that more pupils would be exposed to the art, thus having it done during school hours. (female, primary, teacher)

Both of the above educationalists also highlighted the Government's mandate to the EMCVPA to provide trained dance (arts) teachers to the nation, suggesting that the EMCVPA should be more instrumental in dialogue with the Government about dance in schools.

Respondents also noted the need for improved physical structure as part of the change that they would like to see.

The school needs to invest in a well equip dance room so that students can be adequately trained and not injure him or herself.
(male, secondary, teacher)

The dance facilities in schools require general improvement.
(male, secondary, teacher)

Item 18: Do you think there is a place for dance in mainstream schools?

Both teachers and principals offered sound justifications for the place of Dance in schools. Educators' perspectives on the place of dance in mainstream curriculum varied, with more than 50 per cent believing in the cause. A number of participants revealed a holistic perspective on the importance of dance for all children.

There is a place for dance in not only my school, but all schools' curriculum since it will develop the whole person, which is what education is about. (female, secondary, teacher)

Dance is the only subject that allows any child to operate in the three domains of learning in a direct manner consistently. (male, secondary, teacher)

Some mention that the act of dancing informs about self and culture, providing developmental benefits.

I see dance education as the base to experience culture and self-discovery, which seem to be a thing of the past in the development of our children.
(female, secondary, teacher)

Yes. Children need to learn self-confidence, self-awareness, and manners, and be able to depict/identify social dysfunctions. Dance/Drama are art forms that are excellent catalysts for these goals. (female, early childhood, teacher)

The following teacher reveals a student-centred perspective on the benefits of dance in mainstream public education:

...at school we find a lot of our students want to further their studies in the Performing Arts especially dance and if given the opportunity it will prepare them for it. Also, it will give you more time to work on pieces for

competition as you can use some of the teaching time to perfect a dance.
(male, secondary, teacher)

Some respondents expressed ambivalence, pessimism, or systemic/cultural deterrents. The first teacher quoted above qualified her positive response by stating, “The effort and vision is just not there.” (female, secondary, teacher) Another cited the school culture as an obstacle to mainstreaming dance in the curriculum:

My school is located in a Christian-based community where some parents might think we are imposing dance upon their children. We would have to first educate these parents about dance and show them the positive value it can have on their children. (female, primary, teacher)

The ambivalence of the next participant pointed to the structure of her school system as a restriction:

With regards to the shift system, I do not believe there would be enough time to accommodate a one hour/one and a half hour dance class on either shift in the mainstream curriculum. (female, primary, teacher)

Another seems to suggest that the current state is a fixed one:

Not in this current state, as it relates to infrastructure, human resource, and the government’s education policy. (female, primary, teacher)

Some participants simply value the status quo:

No, because it is a successful after school activity done by children who have an interest in the art form. The group remains small so there is better interaction and training. (female, primary, teacher)

Six of the seven principals surveyed favour inclusion of Dance in mainstream curriculum, all expressing strong beliefs about the place of dance in formal education.

Two female principals (one early childhood, one primary) wrote that Dance was already a subject in their mainstream school curricula. A secondary school principal who was responsible for establishing Dance in the curriculum wrote:

It became so during my tenure as principal. All subjects 'earn' their place based on the value they add to the children's education. By creative timetabling, by 'giving up' of some time spent on 'traditional' subjects, space can be found for inclusion. Even by adding an extra session on a day. (male, secondary, principal)

His response suggests that dance has earned its right to be part of mainstream public school education in Jamaica. Another principal advocated strongly for mainstreaming

Dance and wrote about the planning that would be required:

Excellent idea, as I endorse the arts program in my school. Students learn differently and the use of the multiple intelligences is important. Therefore inclusion of dance has its place in the mainstream curriculum. However, this move would have to be well planned in order for it to be executed properly. For instance, the timetable structure would be the greatest challenge. (female, primary, principal)

A primary principal highlighted the 'value-added' benefits of Dance:

Yes, there is a place as it provides a meaningful outlet to release 'pent-up' energy and give those talented in this area an opportunity to express this. (female, primary, principal)

The following also aligned the place for dance in mainstream curriculum with benefits to children:

There is place for dance as part of the curriculum. However, unless we address this issue contrary to its success, then it will not work. Many children love to dance and would benefit from its implementation. (male, primary, principal)

Qualitative responses provided data to support the inclusion of dance education in mainstream K-12 education in Jamaica, as well as dissenting viewpoints. Even those respondents who support a discrete dance curriculum seem to encounter personal ambivalence as to the place of dance in mainstream education. All but two persons responded positively to this need, but some who agreed in principle felt there were other factors to consider, including a united voice from government officials/policy makers,

before the discussion about dance in mainstream education could be broached. Other considerations for the place of dance in mainstream education include social, economic and cultural underpinnings that may negatively influence national dialogue and thus thwart widespread consensus.

Item 19: What are the ways children might benefit from the inclusion of dance in your school curriculum?

In many responses there is a logical connection between items 18 and 19—a place for dance and the benefits of dance in mainstream curriculum. One may assume that if there is a place, benefits can be realized or if there are benefits a place should be secured. Teachers view experiences in dance as beneficial to the individual. Benefits noted include the ability to express oneself, the promotion of self-confidence and self-esteem, discipline, cognition, improved physicality and discipline and, as noted above, dance's value in reinforcing other subjects in the curriculum.

One respondent summed up: “It builds good coordination; improves fitness and wellness; builds confidence and promotes positive self-esteem; and teaches respect for different cultures” (female, primary, principal). Another suggested that dance provides a direct link to cultural awareness and expression, providing students with the tools necessary to gain self-knowledge through cultural identity consciousness: “By doing the traditional dances they will learn about themselves” (female, secondary, teacher).

Dance also equips students with social skills, for example, for tolerance: “The greatest benefit I have noticed in my school is that dancing is a bridge for solving differences between students” (male, secondary, teacher). Further, dance is a subject for

serious discourse with its own body of knowledge and may therefore be acceptable as a professional option:

Students may grow up to appreciate Dance as a subject like Mathematics or Language Arts. See how important dance can be as a profession to pursue in the future as a career. They might wish to become choreographers, dance teachers, etc. (female, primary, teacher)

The questionnaire requires participants to query and reflect on their efforts, experiences, and discourse about dance in their schools. The final three items capture the current state of dance in schools from persons who in many instances are the custodians of dance, whether as art or education. Dance has been kept alive in educational institutions through the efforts of teachers and principals: extracurricular—after school, on weekends or in discrete manifestations.

Item 20: Have you explored any avenues in promoting dance (the arts) for inclusion in the mainstream curriculum of your school?

Four persons did not respond to this question and ten had a negative response. A number of participants felt that since dance was already offered in their school's curriculum, formally or not, they were promoting it. Participants associated promoting Dance with extending the allocated hours in school or increasing the number of performance opportunities.

Dance began as an 'extra' session, at '9th period.' As its popularity grew, space was found on the regular timetable. Discussions at staff meetings and PTA meetings prepared teachers and parents for this development. (male, secondary, principal)

I have spoken to my principal about the importance of it in the curriculum and how students are interested based on their performance in the various dance competitions. (male, secondary, teacher)

Promoting dance is also aligned to curriculum development:

Yes, I have written and implemented a dance curriculum for Grades 4 – 9.
(male, secondary, teacher)

Other respondents discussed their attempts to integrate dance with other subjects in the curriculum as part of their promotion efforts. They also alluded to discrimination in the school system.

Yes, verbally, but nothing has been documented as yet and I was once told that you will never get the opportunity to teach dance only, it has to be dance along with another subject. (female, primary, teacher)

Item 21: Are there challenges to the inclusion of dance in your school's curriculum?

More than half of questionnaire respondents were passionate in their responses to this question. A shared target of discontent was the Ministry of Education, as the Ministry is the regulatory entity for educational activities, which includes professional development, curriculum reform, and policy development. Some respondents suggested that dance is not being validated as an educational activity.

I've explored in thought/principle the value of dance in the curriculum, but acknowledge that without the necessary facilities and teachers for the subject it will not materialise. (female, primary, teacher)

Teachers' responses allude to a sense of betrayal by the system, describing their struggles to make dance work for the few students they teach and waiting for the Government and the EMCVPA to affirm the subject and to reflect what they believe the benefits could be

to education. Respondents commented on the need for a specific space and time dedicated to dance, the need to educate stakeholders—specifically parents and teachers, and the seeming lack of interest from the Ministry of Education as direct challenges to overcome. Three participants described the Ministry of Education as one of the major obstacles to the inclusion of dance in schools:

The problem is that the Ministry does not necessarily see the need/benefits of dance becoming an integral part of the curriculum because of lack of knowledge concerning the art form. It is only seen as entertainment. In my school the challenge is student/teacher ratio where you cannot hire full time teacher because of the ratio of student to teacher according to the Ministry of Education. (female, secondary, teacher)

The Ministry of Education who governs needs to be sensitized about this art and realize that it is as important as other subjects in school. (female, primary, teacher)

Well yes. We would have to employ full time teachers in which the Ministry of Education would have to approve first and they may not due to financial constraints. (male, high, teacher)

Some teachers and principals believe the challenges are also internal. They are fighting with their own colleagues about the place of Dance in relation to other core subjects in the curriculum: “...because others (teachers and some parents) do not see the importance of dance and what it teaches the kids” (female, high, teacher).

More dialogue and documentation are required to increase the knowledge of dance in the society if meaningful discourse is to occur.

Yes, often dance is seen or viewed as an art form for competition in festival and entertainment and not education. Therefore, the schools pay little or no attention to the educational aspect. (female, primary, teacher)

Item 22: Do you think there should be a national policy establishing Dance as a discrete subject in early childhood, primary and secondary curriculum in Jamaica?

Responses from principals to this item were of particular interest. It seems to me that if more principals were amenable to the concept of a national policy for Dance in public schools, then they would be able to mobilize the Ministry of Education. Six of seven participating principals believe dance is a worthwhile activity and that every child should be provided with the opportunity in school.

Yes, it is an activity that all children enjoy and there are so many benefits, as listed before, including the physical and emotional aspects of the child's development. (female, early childhood, principal)

There should be a national policy, as it will also add to the total development of the child. Dance is a natural response to music and providing students with the correct steps as well as background to its development will have positive rewards. (female, primary, principal)

Many teachers were also passionate about establishing a national policy for dance in mainstream education, with eighty per cent affirming this direction.

Dance should be compulsory in all schools and not be discrete. No subject should be discrete since all subjects are related and can be integrated. (female, secondary, teacher)

There should be a national policy establishing Dance in the school curriculum to expose young minds to alternative means of obtaining knowledge. (female, primary, teacher)

Educators recognise that value is added to the individual's development when exposed to Dance. Ninety per cent promote the idea of dance being integrated more into the curriculum. Integration would foster the type of citizenry required for social and economic growth.

Absolutely, dance promotes holistic development, that is, it caters to the total development of the child thus producing well-rounded individuals better able to function in today's world. (female, primary, teacher)

Yes, there should be a national dance policy for all schools. The JCDC dance festival unearthed a large number of talented students each year and this is all done outside mainstream curriculum. Can you imagine what we would see if all students were exposed? (male, primary, principal)

Indeed our children need to have a greater appreciation of our culture and their future. Such a connection is definitely required as a means to transform education and to boost the literacy issues that we now face in society. (female, primary, teacher)

At the same time, there is concern that a national policy would need time and many resources. Some institutions are unable to provide a space for dance. According to one respondent, the need for a national policy is “debatable,”

...and would take a lot of consideration. However, based on how students learn we should cater to their needs and use the best possible medium be it dance or music to unearth their potential. A national policy would take time, money and resources. However, it is not impossible. (female, primary, principal)

Dance exists in many institutions because of the vision of the principals. A teacher wrote: “Yes, it should not be left up to the leadership of the school to determine whether dance is included or not.” (male, secondary, teacher) Without a national policy and curriculum to regularize its role and function, however, Dance resides under Physical Education, which is a different prescription for movement. As noted by a secondary teacher, “In most cases Dance falls under Physical education, and Dance ‘speaks’ a separate language.” (female, secondary, teacher)

Teachers' and principals' comments about dance in education point to the extensive discourse needed to establish dance in the formal school curriculum and the opportunity for every child to experience dance as part of mainstream education. It is

obvious that dance in education reflects diverse meanings and that the educator's background shapes the nature and interpretations of these meanings. A national policy would present opportunities for a national discussion surrounding relevance and therefore present arguments and justification from all stakeholders. Through national dialogue links would be made to national priorities, for example, national strategic plans and legislative frameworks that will inform the process of policy development.

Additional Voices Join the Chorus

Other voices chimed in on the question of a national policy for dance education. In addition to questionnaires, I conducted interviews with four key Jamaicans who have contributed significantly to the arts and education (see chapter 2). I asked Barbara Requa, Sydney Bartley, Phyllis Reynolds and Yvonne Kong the same national policy question posed in the questionnaire (item 22), and each perspective was different yet they all agreed by the end of the interview session that there should be a national policy establishing dance as a discrete subject in early childhood, primary and secondary education in Jamaica. These responses provided another perspective to this question as they were in professional positions to more likely influence curriculum development and planning.

Like Nettleford, Requa's voice is critical to this discourse; this dissertation takes pause to acknowledge her many contributions. In her eighth decade, dancing is still Requa's life and career, and dance education, especially for young children, is still her passion. According to Requa in our interview,

Dance has a lot to contribute to the way children develop. Dance adds another level of understanding, which is important to how we grow up and work with each other. I think when there are policies, to have them, we must look at all the ways children learn through dance and it must be structured so that the children will benefit from the practice...*And I mean both boys and girls.*

In addition to opening a private dance school for children in Jamaica and being a founding member of the NDTC in the 1960s, as well as one of three co-founders of the Jamaica School of Dance in the 1970s, Requa has worked with various national and international educational and cultural organizations including Dance and the Child International for which she served as National Representative for Jamaica and on the international Executive Board as Member-at-Large. Most pertinent for this dissertation research, Requa has lived a career founded on the belief that dance should be included in early childhood, primary and secondary mainstream school curriculum.

Requa has taught dance at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education in Jamaica and the Caribbean, including for persons with physical impairments. She has also worked with the JCDC as a facilitator and adjudicator since its inception 50 years ago. She believes in the vision and mission of this cultural entity – that it has been a very good cultural source for exposing the arts to our youth and the Jamaican population in general, even prior to 1962. She has worked with the JCDC not only as adjudicator and facilitator, but as a resource person assisting in development of the dance curriculum and syllabus. Her work with the JCDC has remained consistent over several decades, and she has served as Chairperson for the Dance Committee and Chief Adjudicator. Her association with the JCDC has been outstanding. In interview, Requa reflected for a moment, then expressed, “I congratulate the JCDC on what they have been doing over the years.”

All interviewees shared sophisticated perspectives on education in Jamaica. Requa expressed concern about the teaching and learning process for dance and questioned the ability of teachers to facilitate a structured process. She stressed that teachers should experience education *in* dance, as this would allow our K-12 cohort to benefit from the range of benefits and values of dance in school. Bartley embraced a national perspective and emphasized the need for artists' voices to be included in the dialogue. Reynolds outlined the role of policy to articulate what is to be taught and the frequency of curriculum revision, but Kong's perspective was not only different – she disagreed with the premise at the first instance. She did not see the relevance of dance being a discrete subject prior to secondary education.

As the only trained dance educator in the group, Requa's response was focused and revealed her depth of knowledge in the area of dance.

Barbara Requa

Barbara Requa was emphatic about the need for policy reform:

I definitely think that a policy is very important...dance has a lot to contribute to the way children develop. It is not the only way, but it contributes significantly to human development. Sports in a way provide generally for this kind of development, but dance adds another level of understanding, which is important to how we grow up and work together.

She further articulates her vision of a national policy for dance education:

The national policy would include research and discussion and develop programs that accept the process of educational dance; it is the way that it is structured, starting with working with the body before you develop the skills that you need for the art. I think in education that is the process that is important because it is not how good you are, but how you respond to each other and how you use your body and mind to work together.

Requa ended this section of the interview with a concern, commenting on the need for trained facilitators: “This development also depends on the way dance is taught in schools.” She suggested that the success of Dance in schools depends on the training of facilitators to augment the process. Her responses revealed a similar thought trajectory as that of Bartley, as it relates to ownership of the arts and specifically dance.

Sydney Bartley

Bartley’s initial response to the question was a firm, “I think so.” He then launched into a discussion about Jamaican cultural policy and the type of policy that would be of value to the development of the arts and the nation generally.

Jamaica has a national cultural policy. It has elements that suggest what needs to be done in the arts; it is clear on certain things for the arts and it mentions the arts as a very important cultural expression. But it is not an arts policy. And so there is the need for an arts policy – an arts education and arts development policy.

Bartley envisions this policy as a collaborative effort among the Ministries of Education and Culture and the EMCVPA as the institution with the mandate for training in the arts.

I believe, however, that the best way to go with it has to be to engage education as well. It is also best if it is a collaborative effort between education and culture to push an arts policy and it is a process for the EMCVPA to perhaps lead. A policy will highlight and address some of the challenges being experienced. Of course, one of the challenges of the EMCVPA which is also one of the challenges of the JCDC is that of what happens afterwards – after formal training/education, workshops and medals.

Bartley has many questions even as he supports a national policy for dance in Jamaica. He believes there is a gap in the process from schooling to the workforce and that Jamaican society is ill prepared to support the educated performing artist.

Is the society able to receive these individuals who are skilled in the arts? When an individual completes three or four years of college, what is their next step towards employment? Will this individual (if a dancer) become a member of the NDTC? It therefore means that this individual would have to find a job while he or she performs with the Company, because the NDTC does not employ (meaning provide a salary) for their performers.

He also provides recommendations for the future.

An arts policy would allow decision makers and curriculum planners to look at arts education and careers in more serious ways and force the artist to do the same. Jamaica should be moving towards securing meaningful professions in the Arts. That is where pantomime should be, where NDTC should be, where Stella Maris should be – in fact where all the dance companies and performing arts groups should be in their thinking so that people may earn a living similar to any other profession.

Bartley commented further on how the EMCVPA should position itself:

A policy would guide the EMCVPA to what it needs to do in Jamaica, including getting funding, because a policy will lead to funding as well. Once you define your role within a policy the funding should become a part of it.

Phyllis Reynolds

Like Bartley, Reynolds gave a national perspective. After having spent several years with the Ministry of Education, Reynolds' concerns were not just about the need for a policy, but to guard the curriculum process.

I think Jamaica needs an arts curriculum policy that will articulate clearly what is to be taught and how often a revision is to be done at all levels of K-12 education. If we are very serious about all the performing arts

(subjects) doing what they should do then Dance as a discrete subject should become part of mainstream curriculum.

She also highlighted the problem of physical facilities for Dance and how they may be at risk in over-crowded schools.

Money has to be found for facilities to make subjects like Dance possible. New schools were supposed to be built with a performing arts 'room/facility/component' – the room will get built and facilities put in but when a principal is faced with 2000 children in a 1500 school, the first room to get converted into a classroom is the performing arts room, resulting in the performing arts being once again put into the auditorium, drama under the tree or where ever there is space.

Reynolds alluded to the nebulous state of dance education is a reflection of where it resides as a subject:

If there is a curriculum policy it should say that each area should have its own place to play its own role in the curriculum. So far Dance has not been a discrete subject because it is part and parcel of Physical Education.

Yvonne Kong

The only structured dance curriculum in Jamaica resides as modules under the Physical Education (PE). The G. C. Foster College of Physical Education like the EMCVPA is the only institution of Physical Education and Sports in the English-speaking Caribbean and due to the place of dance in the national curriculum, teaches Movement Education and Dance. Kong was Principal of G.C. Foster College from 2004 to 2009. She admits to aligning the G.C. Foster's teaching content in these two areas with that of the EMCVPA School of Dance offering Movement Education and Dance where Movement Education is for the early childhood and primary cohorts only. The secondary

curriculum spans grades 7 to 9 and has some Movement Education concepts in grade 7 and Dance Education in grades 8 and 9.

Our interview session felt like a conversation where the objective was more for understanding than responding to questions. In our dialogue she mentioned how well students of graduates of her college performs at the JCDC Festival of Performing Arts Dance competition and even her own experiences attending these competition exercises with her students while she was still in mainstream public education. In her response to the question: Do you believe that Dance should be included as a discrete subject in the mainstream curriculum of early childhood, primary and secondary education? Her response also included a question to me.

I don't know if the curriculum at the primary or secondary level can have it as a subject in itself because they really don't need it at that level. Do you think they need to have it as a discrete subject at the primary level?

Kong invited me into the dialogue at this point. I reflected, "I believe they do especially due to the value of the arts in educating our children." She responded with an explanation of the primary education system:

What happens at the primary level now and at the early childhood level is what is called an integrated curriculum and you might find that when I teach Mathematics, I use some elements of Dance – same with English Language. So there is this kind of integration of subjects with the teacher for Dance. When you integrate the arts: dance, drama, etc. in the other aspects of the curriculum, we find that the children learn better. I would say that you could have Dance as a subject when you get to the secondary level but not at the primary or early childhood levels.

After much discussion on the state of dance in schools, Kong's resolve was:

But as I listen to you, I'm beginning to realize that I never gave it any thought that it could be a discrete subject at the primary and the early childhood levels as well.

This interview further concretizes the need for a public discussion on dance in education.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of a qualitative survey of a comprehensive sample of Jamaican teacher and principals in early childhood, primary and secondary education, including their views on the need for a national policy for dance education in Jamaica. There is ownership as to the place of Dance at each level by teachers, principals and also by interview informants Requa, Bartley, Kong and Reynolds who addressed issues, challenges and concerns from extended professional experience in dance, education, and government. Survey respondents wrote openly about their individual situations especially in questions that dealt with dance facilities and the place for Dance as a discrete subject in mainstream education. There were numerous shared sentiments as to the benefits of Dance, but there were several that resonated throughout: dance builds self, cultural awareness and physical fitness.

The relevance of the JCDC Festival of Performing Arts was underscored by all, Respondents wrote in detail about the various medals and outstanding achievements of their students in addition to professional interactions with the organisation. Several also spoke of their own experiences as performers in the JCDC Festival and how this had affected their lives positively.

In the next, concluding chapter, research questions will be discussed in relation to research findings.

¹⁹ Six respondents reported that the duration of after-school sessions depended on the availability of practice space as well as interested students. An additional three persons reported that challenges pertain largely to lack of physical facilities.

²⁰ However, my professional observation has been that exposure to dance under PE is infrequent as its facilitation is dependent on the teacher's ability to deliver the content and personal comfort level embodying the activity of dance. Where dance is a discrete subject in the surveyed secondary educational institutions, teachers design their own curriculum.

²¹ Teachers may also consult the Physical Education grades seven to nine Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) Physical Education curriculum for dance curriculum ideas. This type of curricular consultation is dependent on the level of dance teaching that the institution may require.

CHAPTER 7

DANCE EDUCATION OWNERSHIP – GIVING LIFE TO THE PROMISE: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

“Dance does help to differentiate and define cultures, whether it be Jamaica, China, Holland, India or others. It brings people together to open their mind to the world they live in and to be entertained while doing it.”

—Samantha Daley 17-year-old (daCi, 2008, 15)

Introduction

When I began this research, my intention was to highlight the paradoxical situation present in the Jamaican public education system, that is, the absence of Dance in K-12 education even though dance has long existed and continues to exist in so many ways in our society. My aim was to situate dance in the larger context of education and ownership. As mentioned previously, as a member of a postcolonial society the idea of ownership denotes certain common principles. We own things—material possessions, a car, or a house, but we are not as open to owning an identity or our education which is a somewhat abstract principle. The arts, and for this paper, dance, allows for ownership in terms of self and national development that may be attained for all our children through a clearly defined governmental position on the nature of the arts as a form of knowledge. In pursuing these aims, the following research questions guided the study: What are the historical underpinnings of dance in Jamaican society that inform the role of dance in the educational system? In what ways did dance individuals, groups, institutions and or

companies shape the dance culture in post-colonial Jamaica (1962-2009)? In what ways can children in early childhood, primary and secondary educational institutions in Jamaica benefit from the inclusion of dance in the formal school curriculum? How do education stakeholders in Jamaica view the need for a national policy for dance education in Jamaica? What factors have prevented the development of a national policy for dance education in Jamaica? In reviewing post-Independence government legislation and policies for education and culture (1962 – 2009), what is needed to support the development of a national policy for dance education?

To address these questions, I developed a research design grounded in five sources of theory and data: autobiographical and critical reflection; dance in Jamaica - historical development of dance and dance education (dance in public educational institutions – preK-12, teachers colleges); government of Jamaica policies and frameworks on education and culture; arts and dance education research and advocacy literature; and sociological inquiry: interviews and questionnaires with Jamaican education stakeholders. In this closing chapter, I discuss key findings and make recommendations towards the construction of a national dance education policy for public education in Jamaica.

Discussion

The study contextualizes Jamaica's vibrant dance performance culture in its long history of dance in Jamaica. In post-colonial terms, dance development has been supported by institutions like the NDTC, the JCDC, and the EMCVPA. The JCDC offers a platform to

unearth and showcase the talent of Jamaicans in the annual (since 1963) Festival of Performing Arts competition. The *Jamaica Festival Commission Act* (1968), later the *Jamaica Cultural Development Commission Act* (1980), concretised the need for education and training for the sustainable development of cultural activities as a way of improving the cultural lives of all Jamaicans. The *Jamaica Festival Commission Act* (1968) articulates clearly the idea of stimulation of these talents through training, workshops, and exhibitions among other types of engagement. This research indicates that of all the forms offered, dance and music are the most popular in the schools—a large number of survey respondents reported that there is a high level of participation in dance classes, dance is fun, and has the capacity to teach other disciplines to reinforce knowledge.

The *Jamaica Cultural Development Commission Act* (1980), with its definitions and mandate, is part of the historical underpinnings that significantly shaped the role of dance in the education system and has developed many performers who became members of school groups and dance companies. Questionnaire respondents were themselves exposed to dance through the Festival movement in their own primary and secondary education, church or community experiences. Teachers and principals indicated their exposure as participants in dance performance through the JCDC competition from primary school to adulthood. One respondent who mentioned being in her high school dance group for two years participated in an arts in education program at the EMCVPA and JCDC workshops when she became a teacher in a primary educational institution. Another mentioned that he started at church then moved into his secondary school dance group and then became the dance teacher for his school group. A number of respondents'

initial exposure to dance was through cultural experiences and competition/performance; their perceptions of dance have been framed by this reality. If left with only this limited view of dance in public education without formal education in dance, then the content of dance as an educative subject may be ignored or stymied.

The EMCVPA, on the other hand, is a tertiary level institution that offers teacher preparation in addition to discrete education in the arts – dance, drama, music and visual arts, to provide the nation with teachers, professional artists and cultural agents. The EMCVPA was founded 14 years after Jamaica's Independence and is the only arts college in the English-speaking Caribbean. The EMCVPA has educated 50 per cent of questionnaire respondents (teachers and principals) in the areas of speech and drama, music, visual arts and dance in either a full-time or an adjunct program. The remaining 50 per cent have at some point participated in JCDC training workshops as stipulated in the amended *Act of 1980*. Lecturers in Dance at the College have always assisted in the training of group leaders for the competition.

This type of collaborative work started with Sheila Barnett and Barbara Requa, two of the three co-founders (with Bert Rose) of the initial Jamaica School of Dance and founding members of the NDTC of Jamaica. Barnett was the first Director of the School of Dance and Requa formed a junior school for young people between five and 18 years of age. The Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts has also been instrumental in providing additional exposure in Dance to teachers whether as art or education like the Dance and the Child International conference in 2009, which one respondent mentioned as a most memorable dance experience. This ongoing interaction

with the EMCVPA has stimulated the discourse on dance in public education and facilitated a paradigmatic shift in support of the benefits of dance in education.

Teachers and principals surveyed view dance beneficial for two main reasons: its ability to develop self and to reinforce other subjects in the curriculum. However, self-development means more than promoting self-confidence, self-esteem, cultural awareness, and expression; respondents noted dance's role in promoting and developing physicality, discipline, and tolerance of their own and other cultures. The study also indicates that a focus on dance as a means to transmit knowledge across generations will provide students with oral history. Oral history is present in all African art and reinforces the existence of an ancestral continuum.

Respondents indicated that when children are taught traditional dances within the educational frame, an enhanced understanding of self is a common observation. Focus on dance as a means to promote cultural identity allows students to embody dance movement concepts reflecting how they move and why. Requa and Bartley both noted dance's role in holistic education as well as its professional career options. Dance as a discrete subject in public education would enhance the status of dance and dance study in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean, facilitating the development of new research and programs within the dance discipline and connecting dance to other disciplines.

Arts/dance education advocacy literature supports the value of dance in education locally and internationally. In addition, Jamaican policies, framework documents and stakeholders substantiate that dance is supported by state and school as a route to individual and collective cultural identity as well as national development. More than 75 per cent of the education stakeholders in this study view dance as a necessary factor in

national development and believe there should be a national policy to support its engagement both as a discrete subject for development of cultural consciousness.

Requa, as well as a number of teachers and principals, expressed concern about the teaching and learning process in the absence of a national curriculum to guide teachers. Reynolds, argued that a policy would provide the necessary structure for curriculum development. In the case of Kong, she became convinced during our interview that a policy would be beneficial to dance being taught well at every level, whereas prior to this she held the belief that dance existed under Physical Education and therefore a policy would be unnecessary. She thought that the dance module in the PE curriculum was adequate and met required expectations, mentioning also that PE teachers prepared students for Festival. Bartley is convinced that such a policy would require the combined efforts of the Ministries of Education and Culture and the leadership of the EMCVPA. The EMCVPA would provide the expertise required for national discourse and contribute the relevant data and scholarship to underpin policy.

Analysis of Jamaican government policies and frameworks indicates that decision makers have understood the need for arts and culture to drive our human resource. Since pre-Independence, Government officials have consistently mandated that we need to empower our people by enabling them to know who they are. The *1968 Festival Act* addressed the need for cultural exposure and education over a period of time. When the *Act* was revised in 1980, it was more explicit in its mandate to develop local talents by way of training and workshops among other activities. Cultural activities moved from being insular happenings in individual spaces to a national event with Government support. The *Education Regulation of 1980* was the operational guide to the *Education*

Act of 1965. This regulation document established the EMCVPA as a space for specialist training and development in the arts.

Education: The Way Upward, (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001) indicates a commitment for cultural development to prepare Jamaican people for economic and social advancement as a way forward for Jamaica. The Paper further prepared us for the *Report of the Task Force* (Task Force on Educational Reform, 2004), which also serves to maximise cultural awareness as an important factor in curriculum reform. Cultural development has always been at the forefront of national development. In fact, the *Report of the Task Force* (Task Force on Educational Reform, 2004) clearly recommends valuing the visual and performing arts as vehicles to strengthen curriculum development and delivery in public school education. The *National Cultural Policy of Jamaica* (Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, 2003) also underscores the premise that education and culture go hand-in-hand, postulating that learning must be purposeful and lead to better understanding of self.

It appears that had these considerations been adhered to over the years then dance in schools would now be an established component in producing well rounded individuals who are able to function in a competitive global environment. Dance in schools would help in developing self-confidence, physicality and cultural awareness and place Jamaica on its road to “World-class education and training,” an outcome of the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009).

This study identified factors that have prevented the development of a national policy for dance education in Jamaica. These include but are not limited to the need for:

- (a) an individual, organisation or institution to lead the charge of an advocacy platform for dance in education;
- (b) a regulatory entity;
- (c) schools with trained teachers of dance; and
- (d) proper physical facilities.

It should be emphasized that even though policies and frameworks have been in place to support dance in public education in Jamaica since 1962, the responsibility of dance in schools continues to be left to the discretion of interested teachers and principals. There is a growing concern in terms of where to go and who should be advocating for the inclusion of dance in schools. In the absence of such a voice situations like the need for proper physical facilities are neglected. As described by questionnaire respondents, dance classes are held in any and every type of space; Dance has been conducted outside in the schoolyard, on verandas, and in shared spaces such as auditoriums. In the absence of standards and regulations, and a voice for people to follow, dance will not find its rightful place in public education.

Recommendations

It remains unclear why a policy for dance education (arts education generally) has been omitted from Jamaica's formal national agenda for education in over 50 years of independence. Looking to the future, if dance is to be placed in formal education as a matter of policy, guiding principles must be articulated that are aligned with national strategic development. A policy would provide consistency of purpose—a clear vision,

interface with other national policies, and declare governmental commitment to providing facilities, training and research. In moving towards the construction of a national dance education policy in Jamaica, public education curriculum should also be placed under public scrutiny in view of cultural relevance in a post-colonial reality. The limited practice and initiative to implement agreements on cultural development highlight the need for more awareness building and dialogue with stakeholders, government officials, and particularly Ministers in Culture and Education, about the relevance of dance education to education and culture. Against this background, immediate recommendations from this study are as follows:

- (a) Develop a structure to review Arts policies, plans and legislation and create a support structure to implement these agreements.
- (b) Revise operational management in education and culture to allow a developmental structure in the arts.
- (c) Define the term ‘dance education.’
- (d) Further document the current status of dance in education in Jamaica.
- (e) Strengthen dialogue between stakeholders and government officials about the significance of dance education in the K-12 school curriculum.
- (f) Organize training programs to increase awareness of the importance of dance education to culture.
- (g) Remove Dance from under Physical Education.
- (h) Create a national curriculum for dance (the arts) outlining what every child should know and be able to do.

- (i) Create clear standards to facilitate dance classes in proper spaces and by extension eliminate inappropriate spaces used to conduct dance classes such as verandas, concrete surfaces, and uneven surfaces.
- (j) Initiate socio-cultural dance practices at the K-12 level.
- (k) Include a detailed section on Dance Education in a Jamaica cultural policy document.

Future Research

There is a dearth of dance research and scholarship emanating from Jamaica. The need for literature about Jamaican (Caribbean) dance is becoming more and more critical. The life and work of Jamaican dance pioneers, in addition to information about dance companies and institutions need to be captured. Future research should provide:

- (a) perspectives of further education stakeholders, specifically students and parents, on the role of dance in education.
- (b) mapping of the current situation of dance education among English-speaking Caribbean countries;
- (c) comparison of Jamaica's policy documents on culture with policy best practice from other countries; and
- (d) a tracer study on the challenges and opportunities of other art forms in Jamaica like drama, music and visual arts.

Conclusion

This dissertation research articulates clearly what is absent from Jamaican dance and dance education—national standards for curriculum development, which would establish what students should learn and be able to do in addition to trained teachers to facilitate a national curriculum plan that includes proper facilities. There needs to be an established rationale for including the arts, specifically dance, as part of formal education for early childhood, primary, and secondary education as this will provide deliberate action toward its place in schools.

Jamaicans have been reluctant in our change of attitude towards dance. The needed government policy document still has not materialised because of the unwillingness for government officials and policy makers to see dance as integral to its peoples' cultural development. I analysed Jamaican government documents in order to trace a national shared vision for the arts as a component of national development since Jamaica's independence in 1962, finding that the vision for culture and education as a way forward is clear. After all, what better way to provide sustainable development for the arts in a developing nation than through education? But in order for a parliamentary decision to be made, decision makers need to rethink the role of culture and the arts as significant contributors to economic development.

School is the place where socio-cultural heritage is transmitted and where preparation is made for restoration and transformation. It is at school that habits like appreciation and differentiation of arts and culture are formed, and where sensibilities and creativity are developed and encouraged. Eisner (2005) suggests,

We are born with brains, but our minds are made, and the shape they take is influenced by the culture in which that development occurs. For children, the school constitutes a primary culture for the development of mind. Therefore, decisions that are made about the school's priorities are also fundamental decisions about the kinds of minds children will have the opportunity to develop. (p. 129)

Stakeholders in the present study generally indicate that the link between education and culture hinges on the construction of systems of education aimed at the cohesive integration and or synergy of the two parts—education and culture/the arts. The role of education needs to be defined as well as the role of the arts in education, and for purposes of this advocacy study, dance in education. Stakeholders indicate that the inclusion of dance in education will provide for a K-12 educational system that is flexible in content and will allow the human spirit to be included in the process of education. Inclusion of dance may also enhance economic and sustainable development for national purposes; and even more importantly, the transformation of the thinking of the people themselves—attitude, self-expression, and identity.

It may seem from the many organised dance groups, stakeholders including the government of Jamaica, and cultural practices that Jamaican society is saturated with dance at every level and for every occasion, yet dance is not part of formal education in our public schools. Without a more marked position by decision makers, dance remains an experience for a few, and dance education only a thought. This research is one step closer to addressing this problem.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM



Department of Dance 062-63 *phone* 215-204-8710
1700 N. Broad Street *fax* 215-204-4347
Suite 309 *web* www.temple.edu/boyer/dance
Philadelphia, PA 19122-0843

CONSENT FORM

Participant's Name: _____

Date: _____

Title of Research: An Inquiry into the Need for a National Dance Education Policy for the Curriculum of Public Educational Institutions in Jamaica: A Step Towards Ownership of Dance Education for Jamaica's Children

Investigators: Principal Investigator – Luke Kahlich, Ed. D. (215) 204–6260
Student Investigator – Nicholeen DeGrasse-Johnson (876) 968-0027

Purpose of Research:

This research is conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of doctor of philosophy of the investigator Nicholeen DeGrasse-Johnson at Temple University. The purpose of the research is to present arguments and historical data that will provide a framework for a national policy for dance in early childhood, primary and secondary curricula in Jamaica.

Research Procedure:

There is no hypothesis to be tested. I will be asked to respond to a questionnaire on my experience as a principal or teacher who has implemented/facilitated dance in my school. No further experiments will be conducted. I will be asked to allow for 30 to 40 minutes for the questionnaire to be administered.

The procedures of this investigation have been explained to me by student investigator Nicholeen DeGrasse-Johnson. Any questions that I have concerning the study will be

answered at any time during the work day by calling Nicholeen at (876) 968-0027 or at e-mail: degrasse@temple.edu.

I understand that if I have further questions, I can contact principal investigator Luke Kahlich, Ed. D. of Temple University, Philadelphia PA by calling telephone number (215) 204-6260 or at e-mail: lkahlich@temple.edu.

I understand that the results of this study will be published with my identity disclosed. However, I may request anonymity anytime during the research procedure. Also, I understand that I may refuse consent or withdraw from the research project at any time.

Page 2
(Document Cont.)

Title of Research: An Inquiry into the Need for a National Dance Education Policy for the Curriculum of Public Educational Institutions in Jamaica: A Step Towards Ownership of Dance Education for Jamaica's Children

I understand that the data of this study will not be released to me until termination of the study. I understand that I will not be compensated by any means.

Questions about my rights as a research subject may be directed to Mr. Richard Throm, Office of the Vice Presidents for Research, Institutional Review Board, Temple University, 3425 N. Carlisle Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19140, phone # (215) 707-8757 or at e-mail: richard.throm@temple.edu.

I have read and understood this consent form and I voluntarily agree to participate in this research project. I understand that I will be given a copy of the signed consent form.

_____ Signature of the Subject	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Witness	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Investigator	_____ Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview with Barbara Requa

Co-Founder School of Dance
Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts
(Formerly the Cultural Training Centre)

1. Do you think there is a place for dance in the mainstream school curriculum of early childhood, primary, and secondary education? Please elaborate for each context.
2. What are some ways our children might benefit from the inclusion of dance in early childhood, primary, and secondary education?
3. Have you explored any avenues in promoting dance (the arts) for inclusion in the mainstream curriculum of early childhood, primary, and secondary education? Describe.
4. Have you given advice to the Jamaican Government with regards to inclusion of dance in mainstream education for early childhood, primary, and secondary education? Please elaborate.
5. Do you think that Jamaica has laid an adequate foundation for the inclusion of dance as a discrete subject in general education? What is this foundation as you see it? If not, what do you think is required at this time?
6. What are your views on the current state of dance education in Jamaica?
7. Does the state of dance education in Jamaica affect other Caribbean territories? If so, how?
8. Do you think there should be a national policy establishing dance, as discrete subjects in Jamaican early childhood, primary, and secondary curricula?
9. In your view, what factors have stood in the way of such a policy development?
10. Do you have any final comments or opinions to share on the subject of dance in schools?

Interview with Sydney Bartley
Principal Director of Culture
Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture

1. What are your views on the current state of dance education in Jamaica?
2. Do you think there is a place for dance in the mainstream school curriculum of early childhood, primary, and secondary education? Please elaborate for each context.
3. What are some ways our children might benefit from the inclusion of dance in early childhood, primary, and secondary education?
4. Have you explored any avenues in promoting dance (the arts) for inclusion in the mainstream curriculum of early childhood, primary, and secondary education? Describe.
5. Have you given advice to the Jamaican Government with regards to inclusion of dance in mainstream education for early childhood, primary, and secondary education? Please elaborate.
6. Do you think that Jamaica has laid an adequate foundation for the inclusion of dance as a discrete subject in general education? What is this foundation as you see it? If not, what do you think is required at this time?
7. Does the state of dance education in Jamaica affect other Caribbean territories? If so, how?
8. Do you think there should be a national policy establishing the arts (dance, drama, music and art) as discrete subjects in Jamaican early childhood, primary, and secondary curricula?
9. In your view, what factors have stood in the way of such a policy development?
10. Do you have any final comments or opinions to share on the subject of dance in schools?

Interview with Yvonne Kong
Immediate Past Principal
G. C. Foster College of Physical Education

1. Could you provide a brief history of the programs of the G. C. Foster College of Physical Education and Sport?
2. When and how did dance become part of the curriculum? Could you outline the specific history of dance in the curriculum at G. C. Foster?
3. What have been the major successes regarding dance in your program? What have been the major challenges?
4. Dance in the mainstream school curriculum exists under Physical Education. How are your graduates prepared for and how do they deliver this module?
5. Would you like to see any changes at your institution regarding dance / movement education?
6. From your observation, is there a difference between your male and female students in their attitudes towards teaching dance?
7. Do you see a role for the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, School of Dance in further facilitating dance education both at the G.C. Foster College and in the general curriculum of early childhood, primary and secondary education?
8. Do you believe that dance should be included as a discrete subject in the mainstream curriculum of early childhood, primary and secondary education?
9. Do you think there should be a national policy establishing dance as a discrete subject area in early childhood, primary, and secondary curricula in Jamaica?
10. Do you have any final comments or opinions to share on the subject of dance in schools?

Interview with Phyllis Reynolds
Former Assistant Chief Education Officer
with Responsibility for Curriculum Development
Ministry of Education, Jamaica.

1. In what year was the Primary education curriculum revised and what was the basis for the revision?
2. What was the process and protocol for changes pursued?
3. Who were key persons involved in the revision process?
4. Would you describe the change process as a revision or reform?
5. How was the new curriculum tested?
6. How were the arts viewed by the Ministry of Education at the time leading up to the new curriculum?
7. Have you identified any gaps in the new curriculum?
8. Can you identify three major concerns of stakeholders – teachers, principals, of this curriculum?
9. What is the schedule for these types of revisions and do you think that the arts will continue to be an important factor?
10. Do you think there should be a national policy establishing dance as a discrete subject in Jamaican early childhood, primary, and secondary curricula?
11. Do you have any final comments or opinions to share on the subject of dance in schools?

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS



Department of Dance 062-63 phone 215-204-8710
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QUESTIONNAIRE – FOR TEACHERS and PRINCIPALS

**Towards The Construction Of A National Dance Education Policy In Jamaica:
Public Education Curriculum And Ownership**

Questionnaire #_____

Date_____

1. Age: 20 - 35 36 – 45 46 – 55 56 and older

2. Sex: Male Female

3. Academic background / qualifications:

4. I work in: Early childhood Primary Secondary

5. Please indicate your current role: Teacher Principal

6. How long have you been a teacher/principal? _____

7. Describe the art forms that exist in your institution:

8. How many years has dance existed in your school? _____

9. How often does the dance class meet, when does it meet, and what is the duration of the class?

10. In what context is dance taught at your school?

As a discrete subject in the school curriculum After school Within Physical Education

11. Describe the dance space (facility) in your school.

12. List no more than four Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) awards your school group has received in any art form.

13. List any JCDC awards received in Dance in the last THREE years:

14. Describe your exposure to and experience with dance as art and/or education:

15. Describe a memorable experience with any art form – dance, drama, music, visual arts:

16. What types / styles of dance do you enjoy most?

17. Describe up to three changes you would like to see in terms of dance in schools:

18. Do you think that there is a place for dance in the mainstream curriculum of your school? Please elaborate.

19. What are the ways children might benefit from the inclusion of dance in your school curriculum?

20. Have you explored any avenues in promoting dance (the arts) for inclusion in the mainstream curriculum of your school?

21. Are there challenges to the inclusion of dance in your school's curriculum?

Please elaborate.

22. Do you think there should be a national policy establishing dance as a discrete subject in early childhood, primary and secondary curriculum in Jamaica? Why or why not?

Thank you for your participation!