

NATIONAL DEBT AND PUBLIC EDUCATION IN JAMAICA:
“GLOCAL” CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a transnational case study, designed to capture how structural adjustment and austerity have affected public primary schooling in Jamaica, and the response(s) of alumni associations in the Torontonians-Jamaican Diaspora to this phenomenon. Using ethnography, auto-ethnography and semi-structured interviewing qualitative methodologies, data were collected in a rural primary school in Hanover, Jamaica in order to ascertain the ‘everyday experience narrative’ of structural adjustment. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted in the Greater Toronto Area in order to determine how and why members of the school’s alumni association support the school through group “educational remittances.” Framed by an anti-colonial discursive framework, this study explicates the “transnational-diasporic” nature of public schooling and draws attention to the Government of Jamaica’s inability to provide an adequate and appropriate public school program, as well as its controversial tendency to claw back funding from schools who have active alumni associations abroad. This dissertation also provides a window into the efficacy/inefficacy of non-financial educational remittances which, although well-intended, are, sometimes, more harmful than helpful to their recipients. In contrast to this, the everyday tenacious hope that exists at the poorly resourced primary school that was selected for this study is illuminated.

Keywords: Anti-colonialism, austerity, Caribbean, colonialism, diaspora, education, Jamaica, remittances, schooling, structural adjustment

DEDICATION

To my parents, Earl and Edris Thompson,
thank you for *everything*.

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Although this was, at times, a difficult journey I persevered with the understanding that I am a descendent of West Africans who were enslaved in Jamaica, for whom the system of education was not intended. My maternal and paternal grandmothers, who were born less than one hundred years after Emancipation (1838), were denied the opportunity to further their studies upon their completion of Basic and primary school because of their race, complexion, class — and most certainly, because of their gender. Their positionalities pre-determined that they would contribute to society as domestic workers. Grandma Clarke and Grandma Strachan, as they are affectionately known, performed this labour fastidiously, but also with a keen understanding of the responsibilities of motherhood. Their meagre wages put my parents through school, which allowed them to reject the options that relative poverty set before them.

I am reminded of Grandma Strachan's words: "If mi fada was alive, I wudda kick im to hell fi top mi frum guh school" [If my father was alive, I would kick him to hell for denying me the opportunity to finish my studies]. She often said this jokingly, but I could always hear the sense of longing and regret in her voice. As the first person in my family — the first woman — to earn a doctoral degree, I have made an attempt to reconcile this. Although Grandma Strachan did not live to bear witness to this moment in time, this PhD is as much hers and Grandma Clarke's as it is mine. As the matriarchs of our family, I honour them.

Mummy — my first professor — thank you for making my ethnocultural experience rich by introducing me to the poetry of The Honourable Louise Bennett-Coverly, "Ms. Lou," teaching me the lyrics of "Jamaica, Land We Love" and for buying as many VHS tapes that were available about Jamaica during the 1990s. When Nelson Mandela was released from prison in 1990, you parked my siblings and me in front of the television so that we could see him emerge

from 27 years of imprisonment with a raised fist. You were mindful of who you were raising — two Black girls and two Black boys — and intentional about how you were raising them. Daddy, who, by any means necessary, makes things happen, and from whom I learned persistence and tenacity. You migrated to Montréal, Québec at the age of 17 to attend university with a suitcase and your aspirations in-tow, and built the infrastructure for our family. Thank you for prioritizing us. To say that you are “good” parents is an injustice. It’s simply asinine. Untrue. Fully acknowledging my distinct bias, I say that you are *the best*, and I would not be the woman that I am today without both of you.

Nicole, Elliott and Pierre, my siblings, you have contributed so much to my becoming. The sibling bond is *real*. Unparalleled. Unmatched. When I told you that I was going to pursue a PhD, you responded by helping me to fund my applications. Thank you for consistently having my back.

To my in-laws; especially, Aesha, my friend from childhood, thank you. To my nieces, Jasmyn and Savannah and my nephews, Princeton, Canaan, Cameron, Logan and Kendrix-Levi, Auntie Giselle loves you. Thank you for informing my work by teaching me about the worlds of childhood today. I look forward to reading your dissertations in the future, Drs. Grant and Thompson!

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I was fortunate to have, what I refer to as, a “Sociology, Education and International Development Trifecta” for a dissertation committee. Beginning with Dr. Carl James, thank you for agreeing to be the chair and for allowing me to, truly, be the architect of this project. Our many conversations stretched me intellectually, and I am a better scholar because of this. Thank you, Drs. Karen Robson and Andrew Dawson, for your tremendous contributions to this work and for your unwavering support and invaluable advice.

Thank you to my colleagues, York’s Department of Sociology and the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) for your support. I would also like to thank the Lukkari and Taylor families for furnishing the Pavvo and Aino Lukkari Human Rights Award, and the Grace and David Taylor Graduate Scholarship in Caribbean Studies, which I, humbly, received in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

Finally, to the members of the Nyerere Junior Academy school community in Hanover, Jamaica, and the members of the Nyerere Junior Academy Alumni Association in Toronto. Your voices and experiences made this study possible. I am indebted to you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

PREFACE

I have tried in this [dissertation], as in all my writing, to keep a sense of voice present. I want readers to know that this author is a human being and not some disembodied abstraction who is depersonalized through linguistic conventions that hide [her] signature. This approach is more honest. Hence, I make no apology for the personal tone that I hope comes through these pages. Although my words were prepared on a computer, they were created by a person. I want that to show.

— Norman K. Denzin

This dissertation is a transnational case study, designed to capture how austerity has affected public primary schooling in Jamaica, and the response(s) of alumni associations in the Torontonians-Jamaican Diaspora to this phenomenon. The Nyerere Junior Academy in Hanover, Jamaica and its Toronto-based alumni association were selected as the objects of investigation.

Explicitly, I admit a bias towards Black Jamaican primary school aged children who do not come from elite families and communities. According to Evans (2001) and Miller (1999), these are the country's "marginalized majority" for whom the State struggles to deliver an accessible and equitable public primary school program, in addition to other social services, due to its enormous debt that is held, by-and-large, by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

I acknowledge that the coming pages do not represent the educational experiences of all Black primary school-aged children in Jamaica in the current era of structural adjustment (1977-present). Nor does it capture all of the reasons why Jamaican Diasporans, who are members/supporters of school alumni associations give individual and collective "educational remittances." But, I suspect that the voices, with whom the readers of this dissertation will

become acquainted, will provoke much pensiveness — and perhaps action — on the subject matter.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
BOP	Balance of Payment
CEE	Common Entrance Exam
CFF	Compensatory Fund Facilities
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISTET	In-service Teacher Education Thrust
JLP	Jamaica Labour Party
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFAFT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEYI	Ministry of Education, Youth and Information
NET	National Education Trust
NJA	Nyerere Junior Academy
NJAAA	Nyerere Junior Academy Alumni Association
NWC	National Water Commission
PATH	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
PEP	Primary Exit Profile
PNP	People's National Party
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION:

“WHAT [I] SAY IS ALWAYS ‘IN CONTEXT,’ POSITIONED”

... The ‘I’ who writes here must also be thought of as, itself, ‘enunciated’. We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always ‘in context’, *positioned*. — Stuart Hall (1990)

Introduction

My first education on “diaspora” was derived from attending Jamaican school alumni association fundraising dinners. Ritualistically, in these spaces first, 1.5 and second generation¹ Jamaicans gather and sing two anthems: “Jamaica, Land We Love” in memory of, and in homage to, their country of birth or ancestral origins, and “O, Canada,” in acknowledgment of, and in thankfulness to, the country that offers them the freedom to hold such an event. Following this, the Master or Mistress of Ceremonies, usually, formally welcomes and thanks patrons for being in attendance. Therefore, underscoring the event’s reason for existence, which in the words of Devin Miller² (2017), President of the Nyerere Junior Academy Alumni Association (NJAAA) is to raise needed funds for “the educational development of students in Jamaica.”

Because the pertinent sociological question, “Why do Jamaican schools require transnational-diasporic support?” burns so deeply in my mind, the pursuit of an academic

¹ First generation immigrants are the first in their families to migrate and settle in a host country, and are over the age of eighteen. Their descendants, who are born in a host country, are understood to be the “second generation” of their parents national, ethnic or racial group. According to Rumbaut (2004), 1.5 generation immigrants enter a host country as children (before the age of 12) and eventually become adults in this society.

² All first names and last names, in addition to the name of the rural primary school and its Toronto-based alumni association, which were the units of analysis for this dissertation, have been assigned pseudonyms.

understanding of diaspora became necessary, leading me to ascertain that the word is commonly used to describe groups of persons who live outside of their country of birth (Brubaker, 2005). A common Google search will iterate that historically and etymologically speaking, diaspora originates from the Greek term, “diaspeirein,” which means to “disperse.” A phonetic breakdown indicates that “dia” means “across” and “speirein” means to “scatter.” Originally intended to describe the migratory patterns of the “classical” Jewish Diaspora,³ Brubaker (2005) argues that, today, diaspora is a widely proliferated and inclusive term. Diaspora exists as both a noun denoting a collective of individuals or a state of being/condition, and an adjective describing the attributes of diasporic citizenship, consciousness, identity, imagination, nationhood, networks, culture, religion and selves (Brubaker, 2005). Notwithstanding these definitions, Brubaker (2005) makes attempts to undo the substantiality of diaspora “by treating it as a category of practice, project, claim and stance, rather than as a bounded group” (p. 13). Although I disagree that national/ethnic “groupness” (p. 13) can or should be separated from diaspora,⁴ I support Brubaker’s (2005) suggestion to conceptualize diaspora as a verb. Diaspora *as* or *in* action rewrites the prototypical “victim diaspora” (Cohen, 2007) narrative. And, as such, a new story about a reclaiming of agency and an articulation of ingenuity is written in response to the challenges that are presented by colonialism and global capitalism in their countries of origin.

Because of this, there is unity in shared experiences of calamity. And as such, economic,

³ According to Brubaker (2005), early discussions about diaspora were centred around a real or imagined homeland. The first group to be referred to as a diaspora is the Jewish Diaspora on the basis of Deuteronomy 28:25 in the Hebrew Bible, specifically the Greek Septuagint translation.

⁴ My disagreement comes from a strong sentiment that separating national/ethnic “groupness” from diaspora turns it into a “catch all” phrase that ultimately, catches nothing. In other words, taking nationality and ethnicity out of the diasporic equation is both delegitimizing and depoliticizing of the various historicities of oppression and economic precarity that cause individuals and groups to migrate. For example, according to Brubaker’s rationale the individual who moves from one home to another home in the same city, is diasporic. I find such loose regulation of this term to be problematic.

political, social, cultural and linguistic disenfranchisement can be exploited and used as a resource for mobilization within diasporas.

Research Questions

For this study, I examine the ways in which the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto⁵ — particularly alumni groups — respond to the under-prioritization of public education at the State level that is the result of fiscal challenges brought on by a deleterious composite of a steadily declining gross domestic product (GDP), increasing national debt, repayment obligations and austerity. My research questions are as follows: 1) How do fiscal challenges in public education affect educational experiences? 2) How are alumni associations in Jamaican diasporic communities helping to alleviate fiscal challenges in education in the age of austerity (1977 to present)? And, 3) What are the local and transnational implications of these fiscal challenges to Jamaicans at home as well as its diasporic community? I address these questions through an analysis of the Torontonians-Jamaican Diaspora.

Positioning Myself and Getting to the Heart of the Matter

I am the daughter of Jamaican diasporic professionals. My father moved to Montréal, Québec in 1972 and my mother would join him in 1976 shortly after their wedding in Kingston, Jamaica. Their matrimonial home would be in Toronto, Ontario. Like many of their contemporaries, they perceived that “foreign” (Canada) was a more favourable place to live, study and start a family. Although my siblings and I were born in Canada, much like Tannis-Johnson’s (2016) Vincentian-Canadian home, our home is an extension of the Caribbean. In fact, it “is as much a transplanted version of [Jamaican] life in all of its aspects” (p. 204). Augmenting this reality, was the in-home presence of our maternal and paternal grandmothers. I too can say

⁵ By “Toronto” I mean persons in the City of Toronto, proper, as well as persons who reside in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and surrounding areas.

that, “throughout their diasporic journeys, my parents took earnest metaphorical steps never to leave their ‘home,’ regardless of where they physically resided” (p. 204). As such, our home is representative of Jamaica artistically, culinarily and linguistically. However, one of our first educations—outside of basic literacy and numeracy skills—was about the nature of and reason for our parents’ immigration to Canada. As Senior (2012) puts it, emigration is a form of activism against the effects of slow social metabolism.⁶ My parents engaged in a collective response to this by leaving Jamaica in an era where high migration rates were indicative of the national perception of the state of the economy (Levitt, 2005).⁷ Thus, their transborder crossing was for a “better life” that would transcend rural farmhouse and urban tenement yard⁸ living.

My siblings and I understood that we were more materially fortunate children than our parents had been. This understanding created the intellectual context for their trips to Western Union, organization of clothing that we had grown out of, and packing of barrels and suitcases that contained anything from non-perishable food items to apparel to small appliances to car parts to furniture and other essentials to send to Jamaica in order to assist family members who could not otherwise acquire these items due to “tough times.” I would later come to understand that tough times were less idiomatic than I perceived them to be during a visit to Jamaica with a delegation of social service worker students from a community college in 2008. Self-reflexively speaking, although we were ardent, my fellow students and I fit the derisory “development

⁶ By “social metabolism” I mean slow and uneven development, characterized by high unemployment rates, inequality and poverty.

⁷ This rate of migration is called the “dissatisfaction index” that was calculated using Jamaica’s annual net migration as a percentage of its natural population increases (Levitt, 2005). By these metrics dissatisfaction was determined to be approximately 54 percent in the years leading up to, and immediately following, the People’s National Party’s ascent to power in 1972.

⁸ The Caribbean Dictionary (<http://wiwords.com>) describes a tenement yard as “a multi-family housing arrangement consisting of many substandard dwellings packed closely on a single plot of land. Dwellings often share resources such as running water and toilets.”

tourist” (Schafer et al., 2017) profile. Even though our non-Jamaican professors tried to give us a historical-contextual education about Jamaica — by showing us the documentary film *Life and Debt* (2001) during a pre-trip weekend shut-in — I cannot help but feel as though, in all too common social service worker/social work manner, we pathologized the communities that we would serve prior to boarding our flight to Jamaica. And, as such, we would be making them the “targets, subjects [and] objects” (Schafer et al., 2017, p. 7) of our “First World” help.

However, I credit this experience for its distinctiveness in my life because, unlike previous trips to Jamaica, I was not accompanied by, nor did I stay with, a family member. As a result, my experience of Jamaica was vastly different. Moreover, I had the opportunity to become acquainted with what, at the time, seemed like a multitude of school-aged children in Kingston who would wait patiently — as though they anticipated a Messiah of sorts — in the mornings for us to emerge from the other side of the fence that stood guard around the convent that accommodated us. They were eager to play with our mobile phones and pose for pictures of which they would never receive digital or print copies. Upon our return from our “community practice”⁹ in the evenings, the children greeted us at the gate again, ready to repeat the morning’s events until we were ordered to return to the convent so that the gate could be closed, and the guard dogs released for our protection.

In hindsight, and observing the principles of positionality and power (Schafer et al., 2017), our trip was more of a learning experience/vacation for us than it was beneficial for the two communities that we visited in Jamaica. However, it stirred me intellectually, and as previously mentioned “tough times” took on a new, literal meaning for me, particularly when I was invited to tour both of the tenement yards that bookend the convent. These are the

⁹ “Community Practice” is the name of this course. I opted to enrol in the course section that travelled to Jamaica instead of fulfilling this course credit in the Greater Toronto Area.

communities that the children who visited us at our temporary residence come from. I began to ponder why these children were not on their way to and from school during the morning and evening hours that they anticipated us at the gate of the convent. However, after speaking with several of the residents of these communities, it became apparent to me that not all of the families could afford to pay school fees due to precarious work and low wages. As a result, many children were not enrolled in school, including many of the ones that I encountered.

Although I cannot speak definitively about the exact number of children in these two locations who were not attending school at the time of this particular visit to the island, I became curious about the macro and micro barriers to accessing basic public schooling. As a result, memories that were embedded in my subconscious emerged about my grandmother purchasing material for her friend's children to have their school uniforms made and sitting on her suitcase in an attempt to help her close it after she had packed the material (among too many other things), and my father sending money to "country" to pay his younger cousins' school fees. Albeit simple, these acts of benevolence were necessary, and vital, to the participation of these, and other, children in schooling.

As a student of the sociologies of global development and education, my curiosity led me to examine why this could be. Therefore, for my master's thesis, I researched state finances in Jamaica and collected data from archives and semi-structured interviews with Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI), School Feeding Program, Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ), and International Monetary Fund (IMF) personnel. I gained keen insight into the historical phenomena that created Jamaica's insurmountable debt to the IMF and other international financial institutions (IFIs) (which I discuss in the coming sections) and its impact on education spending and the attendant consequences.

As I completed my master's degree, and as if it were a domino effect, I began to contemplate the number of Jamaican alumni association fundraising dinners that I have attended in my lifetime and began to ponder the connection (if any) between diasporic-alumni association giving and fiscal challenges in public education in Jamaica. I surmised, albeit presumptuously, that alumni groups (and friends of alumni groups) support schools in Jamaica for reasons that transcend organizational identification and school pride (Meal and Ashford, 1992). Although, I did not doubt that these entities are highly contributory to their giving when I decided to undertake this project.

In an idiomatic sense, this dissertation seeks to get to the "heart of the matter". But, in order to do this, the matter, itself, must be identified; and, more importantly, its root. Macrosociologically, I have ascertained that IMF structural adjustment policies induce fiscal austerity in public education spending in Jamaica (Thompson, 2014). As a result, I thought that I had identified the matter through extensive library research on Jamaica-IMF relations and semi-structured interviews with academics, politicians, philanthropists and politically-aligned professionals in Jamaica. However, the dissertative experience has taught me that there is a fundamental difference between what one identifies and what one discovers. Definitionally, to identify means to establish or indicate; whereas, discovery is the act of finding. Previous data collection allowed me to engage with academic literature and expert opinions about the financial state of Jamaica's public education system from which I determined the following: 1) structural adjustment policies have compromised Jamaica's post-Independence educational objectives for public schooling (Thompson, 2014; Miller, 1999a); 2) Jamaica achieved universal primary education (Millennium Development Goal 2) by the year 2015; however, Jamaicans are dissatisfied with the significant number of illiterate and unskilled persons, inadequately qualified

teachers, high student-teacher ratios, and ineffectual school administration (Gilbert-Roberts et. al., 2015); 3) The efficacy of United Nations education goal setting needs to be challenged; 4) debt placation and economic growth are at the forefront of the Government of Jamaica's agenda; and requires education, and other social spending to be curtailed; and 5) the attendant social consequences are understood and accepted as inevitable occurrences (Thompson, 2014).

Albeit, the data that I collected for my master's thesis are valuable; however, I *did not* identify "adjustment with a human face" (Cornia et. al., 1989). Therefore, I *did not know the matter* from an experiential perspective. This absence of truth led me as though I were an attorney preparing for trial to make arrangements for Discovery,¹⁰ where I, the researcher, would come to see and know the human face of structural adjustment in the school environment. (In the Methodology section of this dissertation, I outline and justify my use of the ethnography, auto-ethnography and semi-structured interviewing qualitative data collection techniques.) At the urging of my doctoral supervisor to abandon my preconceived notions and "let the data speak," the coming pages are a presentation and analysis of both the matter and its heart. Keen observation, active participation, and empathetic listening were my strategies of choice, and I am indebted to the students, parents, principal, teachers, cook and janitor at the Nyerere Junior Academy (NJA) in Walking District, Hanover, Jamaica for welcoming me into their community where the first portion of Discovery took place. The second half took place in the GTA with members of the NJAAA, and friends and supporters of the Association, who entrusted me with

¹⁰ I capitalized the "d" in "Discovery" because from here on I use the word as a proper noun to name my personal research journey. I view my dissertative research process as a search for full disclosure on the state of public primary education in Jamaica in light of austere conditions. As an attorney uses discovery to prepare for trial, my research equipped me with the requisite information to address this study's questions.

their stories. These individuals added significant value to my Discovery and helped to transnationalize this research.

Significance of the Study

From the perspective of Émile Durkheim (1956), one of the founders of modern sociology, education is a social fact, and is a process that prepares individuals and collectives physically, intellectually and morally for social and political life. Phenomenologically, the classroom is understood to be the primary location in which this process can take place. However, it can be argued that learning, which is central to the process of education, can occur anywhere and by any means. This dissertation fully acknowledges the latter. However, it is concerned with the former, seeing that formal schooling is a fixture of most, if not all, modern societies. Moreover, questions concerning the accessibility and quality of education are vital because the United Nations declares, “everyone has a right to education” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26, Section 1), especially, children/individuals at the elementary school level, as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Articles 28 and 29. Nevertheless, I would like to point out that rights, as in civil, cultural, economic, political, social (United Nations, 2018), and, as the term pertains to this study, educational rights, are not universal. No experts are needed to substantiate this claim — a simple look at one’s local and global surroundings will suffice.

It is important to point out that there is a substantive difference between the enactment of policies and their operationalization. For example, in a conference session entitled “Global Declarations and the Promotion of Child Rights in the Western Hemisphere” at the Caribbean Child Research Conference in Trinidad and Tobago in 2018, former Provincial Advocate for

Children and Youth in Ontario,¹¹ Irwin Elman described the UNCRC, and other United Nations grand schemes (Somé, 2010), as “aspirational documents.” In other words, they are proverbial global bullseyes. And, presumably, the intentions of their signatory nations are to, ardently, aim towards them. However, according to Pupavac (2011), rights-based nomenclature, particularly in reference to children, is too Pollyanna and Western-centric, and ultimately, does nothing to address the, too often, unequal and inequitable material existences of children in developing countries. Moreover, Pupavac (2011) describes this as perverse, and indicts “the prevailing sustainable development policies” (p. 307) for “punishing [and not enhancing] childhoods” (p. 307). Pupavac (2011) draws much needed attention to, what she describes as, the “interdependence between material progress and social progress” (p. 307) as it pertains to bettering young lives in a global context.

Public education, in relation to primary school-aged children being the fulcrum, my research echoes Pupavac (2011), and necessarily so. Because, if education is, indeed, a right and, therefore, free and compulsory at the primary level in every UNCRC ratifying state, it then follows that governments possess or will procure the resources to uphold this right. However, vehemently, I put forward that this is simply not the case (Thompson, 2014; Handa and King, 2003; Bradshaw et. al., 1993; Jolly, 1987), and direct your attention to two short “trailers” from my research findings that will be delineated throughout the coming chapters of this dissertation. Trailer 1 is derived from an interview that I conducted in the first two months of my Discovery at the NJA; and Trailer 2, from an interview that I conducted approximately two months after my

¹¹ Ironically, mere hours before the conference session, Elam — without the courtesy of an official notice — learned through media that the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007 would be repealed by the Progressive Conservative Government, and his office, closed, and, even more ironically, an office governed by the guiding principles of the UNCRC. Ergo, “the largest province in Canada has now become one of the only provinces without an independent child advocate” (Elam, 2018, para. 1).

return to the GTA. Consider Trailer 2 a prequel that highlights and provides historical context for the events in Trailer 1. Both trailers ontologically map out the phenomena that, I perceive, necessitate transnational-diasporic educational remittances.

Trailer 1

In the first two months of Discovery, I was conducting semi-structured interviews at the NJA and was immersed in ethnographic and, often, auto-ethnographic research. In this environment, I had to be methodologically innovative more often than not, and colloquially speaking, “get in where I fit in.” By this I mean, on the odd occasion I conducted sporadic interviews in somewhat obscure settings, with narrow time margins (this will be discussed further in the Methodology chapter); and, as a millennial researcher I relied on my iPhone X — my third arm — to record them.

In one instance, Mrs. Hamilton, Education Officer to the NJA and other schools in the parish arrived unannounced. She greeted me with a warm smile and a handshake at the front door of the school, while the principal reminded her that I was the researcher from Toronto that they were expecting. I then asked her if I could schedule an appointment to interview her in her office at the MOEYI in Montego Bay. She replied saying, “it’s hard to get me there because I’m busy visiting the rural schools.” She, then, offered me a near three-and-a-half-minute soundbite. I promptly accepted her offer. We transitioned into the principal’s office (which is also used as the boardroom, supply room, copy room, utility closet and pantry among other things), which is about three or four steps from the front door. Because the principal was sitting at her desk and my personal items were occupying the chair next to her, we stood. I officially obtained verbal consent, then pressed “record” on my iPhone X, and before I could ask her a question, curiously she said:

Okay. My name is Nevette Hamilton and I'm the Education Officer with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information. It's really a pleasure to be talking with Giselle this morning. Happy that she's here doing this study because from the Ministry's perspective, we just want persons to know that we are truly grateful for all the help that the schools receive from [the] Diaspora, from any organization as a matter of fact. *Because we are cognizant of the fact that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information cannot provide all the resources that our schools really need on a daily basis.* So, any help that we can get, any external help, is greatly appreciated.

Practically speaking, I cannot say that Mrs. Hamilton's statements surprised me because I quickly learned what "cannot provide all the resources that our schools really need on a daily basis" means. Case in point: although it was only my second week at the school, I had experienced *a lot*, serving as the impromptu floating supply teacher and break (recess) monitor. I had also been stung multiple times by wasps whose nests occupy, in significant volume, the entire perimeter of the school's roof (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2). I was made to understand that the wasps' nests would likely be removed when the most active members of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) come to do, what appears to be, their customary statutory holiday clean-up. Until then, the children and I would continue to be stung on a daily basis. However, I noticed that the children, overall, remained unbothered by this. By "unbothered" I mean, when one is stung, she/he only whimpered for a short period of time. After a swipe of hydrogen peroxide, applied by the principal in her/the school office, the child would simply resume their previous activity, which was usually, some form of play.



Figure 1.1 Wasps' nests



Figure 1.2 Close-up view of the wasps' nests

Admittedly, this, and other scenarios, seemed rather berserk to me. In a Canadian context “helicopter parents” would have bombarded the school and the MOEYI in droves, but at the NJA, that was not the case. I will not assume that parents are okay with wasps biting their children, but I will say, proverbially, that the school day continues. It continues even though the toilet in the one-stall staff bathroom has to be flushed using a bucket of water. It continues when

the water pressure is too low to wash your hands in this same bathroom and you have to walk outside to use the children's six pipe communal sink — only one pipe has reasonable water pressure. It continues even though what separates the already swelteringly-hot rear classroom from the kitchen stove is a make-shift wall. It continues with one set of mathematical manipulatives, one functioning television screen, one printer-copier-scanner, and no school-office computer. But, most notably, the day continues as the children play football on the stony, unpaved yard, often without shoes.

Our respective senses of what deprivation looks like are relative to our own positionalities (Gladwell, 2013); but, it is important to point out that my ethnocentric views originate from the same United Nations/developed country metrics that the Government of Jamaica is aspiring to achieve, and I find this rather paradoxical. As a self-described “developing country,” Jamaica has world-class ambitions that are outlined in the country's “Vision 2030 Jamaica - National Development Plan”.¹² According to the plan, one of Jamaica's Four National Goals is “Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential.” The national outcome for this goal is to achieve “world-class education and training.” However, based on Mrs. Hamilton's statements, this is a challenging feat for the MOEYI.

Trailer 2

Now, pressing the prefigurative ‘fast forward ’button, I invite you to ‘view ’Trailer 2. After surviving the dreaded GTA Friday afternoon traffic, my GPS led me to a charming high-rise condominium in Toronto's east end. After parking my vehicle, I called Mr. Winter, the man with whom I had scheduled an interview, to let him know that I had arrived, and to ask him which entrance to the building I should use. He cautiously invited me up to his unit because the

¹² Every country has a plan to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the year 2030.

room that he had scheduled for our session had been double-booked. (Given that we are living in the “#MeToo era,” I maintain much appreciation for Mr. Winter’s carefulness.) I accepted his offer, feeling comfortable enough to do so because I met him once before at a meeting of the Executive Board of the Alumni Association, which was held in the private residence of one of the Association’s founding members.

After riding the elevator to what seemed like the highest level in the building, I made my way to Mr. Winter’s front door, and knocked. In a few seconds I was greeted by the face of an elderly Black man with whom I was familiar. He invited me in, I removed my shoes and we sat in the dining area of his open concept condo. We then exchanged pleasantries and went through the standard informed consent procedure. Subsequently, I began recording on my iPhone X, and ever so slightly, Mr. Winter tapped a single piece of paper that lay in front of him on the table. I asked him if he had taken it out for our interview. He replied saying, “It’s just something I was going to show you.” Little did I know that that piece of paper’s backstory and content would give rise to the NJAAA in 1997.

Later on in our discussion, Mr. Winter would introduce the document as though it were an article of evidence. Naturally, I was intrigued since I view my dissertation research as Discovery.

He began with a story:

I went home [to Jamaica] one year, 1994, and one of my friends says to me, ‘Luke, have you ever gone over to the school?’ I said no. She said, ‘you should take a walk over there and have a look’ ... And so I went up there and it was in a very, very bad condition. It was awful ...

I saw the principal which was Ms. Campbell. And she says to me, is there anything you guys in Toronto can do to help us? And she showed me the needs - washroom, reading programs, more so sanitary conditions. And I said okay, if I go back to Toronto and say to the people that I know is in Toronto, the school, our school needs help, then they would just look at me and say: “What kind of help?” I said write me a letter...and I’ll take the letter up and I’ll contact the people that I know ...

And then she wrote me the letter [and I] take it down [to work] and I know Walter and I worked for the same company ... But then I got transferred from the place that he was at to another place so we lose contact for a while. And we get back together and I told him about the letter, and I showed it to him. I said, ‘We’ve got to do something.’

So, Carmen Andrews, Leslie Jacobson, Antonio Martins and [Walter Smith] we started.

Upon the conclusion of our trip down ‘Memory Lane’, Mr. Winter, then, handed me the letter, and we continued with our interview. The letter, which has been replicated and shared with the permission of the author, reads as thus:

Chairman:

Principal:

23rd November, 1994

Dear Fellow Past Student,

Greetings.

Your Alma Mater although still on stream is struggling for survival in many departments, and is in dire need of assistance. It is with this in mind that I write, doing so on behalf of the School and S.C.O.P.E (School and Community Outreach Programme For Education).

Among the many areas that need immediate attention are:-

1. Modern sanitary conveniences;
2. A Feeding programme, only to mention two.

The sanitary conveniences are in such a deplorable condition that the Public Health Inspector threatened to close the school. I need not explain the real necessity of having food and facilities to keep the children well fed and nourished.

As someone who has passed through these walls, and benefitted from coming here, I am sure you would want to see it continuing to be of help to the community and the wider world for centuries to come. It is therefore in this light that our arms here at [REDACTED] are out stretched, and fervently hope that you will assist us to remain 'alive'.

We are asking that you make a donation towards this worthy cause. An account is at the [REDACTED] The number is [REDACTED]

We really look forward to your assistance and pledge that it will be used as stated herein.

Yours truly,

[REDACTED]
Past Student.

[REDACTED]
CANADA

Mr. Winter's sentiments about the condition of the school, sadly, were to be expected, given that, to some extent, we share the same ethnocentric focal lens as Canadians (he, being naturalized in the late-1960s, before my birth in the mid-1980s). However, I find the tone of the letter which he shared with me to be rather gripping. In this desperate transnational solicitation for much needed financial help, the writer describes the school as "struggling for survival" and "in dire need of assistance."

Moreover, "the Public Health Inspector threatened to close the school" because its "sanitary conveniences are in such a deplorable condition." I find this particularly interesting because the integrity of the NJA's school environment — a public institution — was indicted by another public entity. The contradiction here is rather obvious. But, I would be remiss if I did not point out that the "outstretched arms" and "fervent hopes" of the school community are directed to its past students, who reside in the — albeit enigmatic — 'international community,' and *not* the GOJ.

I would also like to point out that this letter was written in 1994; three years after Jamaica ratified the UNCRC, which, as previously mentioned, underscores the child's right to education (Articles 28 and 29), among other economic, social and cultural rights. Signatories of the UNCRC also commit to ensuring that their "institutions, services and facilities ... conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety [and] health ..." (Article 3, Section 3). And, agreeing with UNCRC Articles also indicates states' legally binding commitment to uphold the child's right "to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health" (Article 24, Section 1), and their obligation to, "combat disease and malnutrition ... through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water"

(Article 24, Section 2 (c)). In addition, states are obliged to make education about, and access to, hygienic conditions and environmental sanitation available for the prevention of airborne illnesses (Article 24, Section 2(e)).

In the letter received by Mr. Winter, “among the many areas that need immediate attention,” the writer names “modern sanitary conveniences” and “a school feeding programme.” The absence of these entities points to clear compromises to the aforementioned rights, which, as outlined in the UNCRC, should be public purveyances. More broadly, there is a complex compromise of rights at play, which include educational rights, the nuances of which I discussed previously, in addition to health and safety rights that necessitate this request for donations to a “worthy cause.”

I submit that this severe lack of resources transcends the school itself. Larger historical, political and economic phenomena created the context for the ‘charitization’ of the NJA, and, likely, other public schools in the country who receive much needed transnational support from their alumni and other members and supporters of the Jamaican Diaspora in order to “remain alive.”

According to the NJAAA, its formation in 1997 is a “response to an urgent need to assist the school and its students” (NJAAA, 2019). Reasons for the three-year time lag between receiving the letter and organizing officially, are unknown. However, since its inception, the Alumni Association has donated approximately USD \$61,190.57¹³ for scholarships, breakfast and lunch programs, the music teacher’s salary and special projects. Special projects include paying for the installation of cupboards in the principal’s office, the purchase of a freezer, water tanks and stationary supplies, retrofitting the washrooms, painting the school’s interior and

¹³ The Association’s president reported this figure in CAD. I converted the amount to USD for the sake of being consistent with the dollar figures that I have presented thus far.

exterior, re-tiling the floors in the classrooms and replacing chalkboards with whiteboards. Used items such as computers, books and other school supplies have also been calculated into this dollar amount (see Table 1). The reason for this has yet to be determined.

Nevertheless, the Alumni Association responded to the easily discernible financial needs of its alma mater in 1997 and, today, is still responding. Mrs. Hamilton's statements, made in Trailer 1, make way for a proverbial, but, an indeed perpetual, transnational helping hand. Of course, the efficacy of the Association's benevolence will be questioned in concurrence with the economic and political phenomena that necessitate it in the coming chapters of this dissertation.

Table 1.1 Donations to the NJA - July 1997 to March 2019

Scholarships	\$14,130.99
Breakfast & Lunch Programs	\$13,789.40
Music Teacher	\$6,791.00
Athletics Program	\$4,485.31
Special Projects	\$19,597.86
Used computers, books, and other school supplies	\$2,396.01
Total	\$61,190.57

Why Public Primary Education?

Now, to answer the question: "Why public primary education?" In international development, political and economic contexts, public education is not the only entity that can be studied in Jamaica. However, I have elected it as an object of observation because, in addition to its being an inalienable right, education is also an enabling right (Pigozzi, 1999). More broadly, it positions individuals to access other rights. In the words of Dei and Simmons (2010), "education is about everything — knowledge, power, curriculum, and instruction, a coming to know, act [in] and engage [with] the world" (p. XIV). It is also "about the power to define oneself, to construct, validate, and legitimate knowledge and learn what is acceptable and not. It is about values, ideas, practices, as well as identities [race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, etc.] and how they link to knowledge production and social processes" (p. XIV). For the

aforementioned reasons, Dei and Simmons (2010) describe education as a necessary “power-saturated” (p. XIV) conversation. A power-saturated conversation that is, indeed, being had by several others. But as it pertains to the austere conditions that many public schools face in Jamaica, especially in areas where there is severe rural neglect, as with other heavily indebted countries (HICs), the conversation has been on mute for far too long. The result is a weakening of the capacity for education to transform, uplift and equip the most marginalized children, families and communities.

Therefore, expanding on Pigozzi’s (1999) list of phenomena that constitute emergencies in public education systems, which include natural disasters, civil unrest, poverty, homelessness and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, I add “financial emergencies”. Under neoliberal economic globalization, the inner workings of the market limit nation states’ ability to control their exchange rates and protect their currency from being devalued (Ohmae, 1995). As a result, they “become inescapably vulnerable to the discipline imposed by economic choices made elsewhere by people and institutions over which they have no practical control” (Ohmae, 1995, p. 12). For this reason, I submit that this dissertation is sociologically and anthropologically important. It examines how these phenomena are implicated in the compromising of school-aged children’s right to receive a primary school education, in a safe, comfortable and accessible public institution, with adequate and appropriate instruction. And, simultaneously, it seeks to ascertain how alumni associations in the GTA support public primary schools.¹⁴

This task is particularly vital at the primary school level. First, because, in the Jamaican context, Grades 1 through 6 are understudied. And second, because the number of Jamaican

¹⁴ Whether or not their contributions to their alma mater were viewed as a response to IMF-induced austerity in public education was unbeknownst to me prior to the interviews that took place in the GTA-based portion of Discovery. However, a collective understanding of the need for their benevolence was present in all of my interviews.

secondary school alumni associations in the GTA and other Jamaican-Diasporic centres (Montreal, Fort Lauderdale, Miami, New York, London and Birmingham) is disproportionately higher than the number of primary school alumni associations. This suggests that diasporic support for primary school institutions is significantly less; and therefore, requires further investigation in the future in order to determine this for certain.

Organization of the Dissertation

The remaining chapters of this dissertation are a combined articulation of transnational stories that are centred on and around public primary schooling in Jamaica. The glocal¹⁵ space in which these stories and experiences exist is shared by this study's participants and me because under-resourced schooling is a concern that transcends both time and space — as do solutions to this problem.

The most salient themes from my Discovery will be delineated in the following manner: Chapter 2, “Historical Considerations and Present Realities: Education, Economy, Diaspora and Remittances” unearths the history of education in Jamaica in three distinct eras: colonial rule (1655¹⁶ to 1953), populist government (1953 to late-1970s) and structural adjustment (late-1970s to present). This particular periodization of education history in Jamaica is informed by the work of Caribbeanist-educationist scholar, Errol Miller (1999a). Also in Chapter 2, I chronicle the challenges that austerity presents to public schooling today. Following this is a review of the existing literature about the Jamaican Diaspora and its transnational benevolence to family members and institutions ‘back home’ through the process of remittances, and the implications of this for increasing the accessibility of public schooling for poor children.

¹⁵ “Glocal” is a term derived from George Ritzer’s (2007) “glocalization” that was first mentioned in his book *The Globalization of Nothing*. Glocalization can be defined as a combination of the words “globalization” and “localization.”

¹⁶ Great Britain captured Jamaica in 1655 from Spain who previously colonized the island in 1494.

Chapter 3, is “The Methodological Map” of this dissertation, wherein I describe the complexities of my Discovery which took place in a rural primary school in Walking District, Hanover, Jamaica, and in the GTA in private residences, and on occasion, in restaurants and coffee shops. Chapter 4, “An Anti-Colonial Theoretical Approach” is a dialectical conversation with anti-colonialism, wherein I articulate it as both theory and “discursive framework” (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001), and subsequently apply it to education in Jamaica. Following this, I chronicle the physical, economic, political, social and cultural challenges that the NJA school community faces, and its subsequent responses to them in Chapter 5, “Dire Circumstances: “The Are Other Schools With Greater Challenges”.” Chapter 6, “Benevolence: “There’s Room For Improvement”,” is a discussion about transnational-diasporic giving that explores how and why members and friends of the NJAAA support the small rural school. The efficaciousness of this process is also taken up.

I conclude this dissertation in Chapter 7, “Musings On Hope: “We Can Help Ourselves”,” with a conversation about how hope is both experienced and operationalized on a daily basis at the NJA amidst austere circumstances. But, not before a scathing critique of how hope can be cruel (Berlant, 2011) because of the salvific manner in which IFIs present their loan agreements to developing countries, who eventually become indentured to high levels of debt and the demands of structural adjustment, and the United Nations insistence on implementing its global education policy framework in spite of its flaws and continuous failures.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PRESENT REALITIES:

EDUCATION, ECONOMY, DIASPORA AND REMITTANCES

Education in the Eras of Colonial Rule and Populism

The Era of Colonial Rule (1655 to 1953)

Today, we understand that the empires of the “New World”¹⁷ were built on the backs of Indigenous, African, Indian and Chinese people through the systems of slavocracy and indentured labour. But, it is important to note how education, more specifically, miseducation, was utilized to advance Triangular Trade. For example, plantation owner and abolition opponent, Bryan Edwards (1798) strategically organized the labour duties of the humans that he enslaved in order to avoid an intellectual cross pollination between those who had the ability to read and write, and those who did not. Edwards, and I would imagine other West Indian-based planters, feared that this ‘critical mix’ (Johnson, 2009) of enslaved individuals would inspire plots to overthrow the system of slavocracy. Therefore, these persons were barred from formal schooling.

However, prior to official Emancipation in 1834/1838,¹⁸ the fifth resolution that introduced abolition to the House of Commons stated that “His Majesty be enabled to defray any such expense as may incur in establishing an efficient stipendiary magistracy in the colonies and

¹⁷ In the study of international development, the term “New World” is often used to describe the historical formation of the Americas. I have used it here sarcastically in order to highlight how problematic it is. Because, Europeans’ arrival and, subsequent colonization of this region did not make it new. Inca, Aztec, Taino, Kalinago and several other people groups inhabited these lands first. Colonial regimes dispossessed these groups through the process of “primitive accumulation,” which Harvey (2005) describes as “taking land ... enclosing it, and expelling a resident population to create a landless proletariat, and then releasing the land into the privatised mainstream of capital accumulation” (p. 149).

¹⁸ The Emancipation Declaration, made on August 1, 1834 declared Africans who were enslaved in British colonies free. However, this Declaration did not take effect, substantively, until 1838.

in aiding the local legislatures in providing for the religious and moral education of the negro population to be emancipated” (Colonial Office Papers, Negro Education Series, 1833, quoted in Gordon, 1958, p. 140). From this resolution, we ascertain that the colonial understanding that education could be used as a mechanism for control had been expanded; and therefore, the Negro Education Grant was implemented for the purpose of assisting the Anglican, Moravian, Methodist, Baptist and other missionary bodies in their endeavour to school Black people. This endeavour began in the years leading up to Emancipation and took on the form of Sunday schools.

The Negro Education Grant was issued in yearly increments of thirty-thousand pounds. It was reduced progressively over a period of five years until the colonial government announced its cessation in 1841 even though the Grant was supposed to be available from 1835 to 1845. Naturally, this halted many of the churches’ school building and expansion projects; thus proving that “nothing resembling a universal education provision could result from the Negro Education Grant” (Gordon, 1958, p. 45).¹⁹

In his criticism of the Government’s late administration of the Negro Education Grant, Anglican Minister Reverend J. Sterling, noted that the social significance of these funds required expediency (Gordon, 1958) because Black people’s “... performance of the functions of a labouring class in a civilized community will depend entirely on the power over their minds” (quoted in Gordon, 1958, p. 143). Moreover, “if they are not so disposed as to fulfil these functions, property will perish in the colonies for lack of human impulsion” (p. 143) With this understanding, I submit, emphatically, that educational access was extended to Black people for

¹⁹ We see here that the delivery of adequate public education has been problematic since its colonial and systematic inception in Jamaica. In subsequent chapters I discuss how, ideologically, this is no different in a present-day context.

the purpose of maintaining the existing colonial social hierarchy. As such, literacy and numeracy were taught in rations that were proportionate to the needs of the plantation economy, which the British elite hoped would continue in the post-Emancipation years. According to Gordon (1847), it was suggested that schools “teach the mutual interests of the mother country and her dependencies, the rational basis of their connection and the domestic social duties of the colored races” (quoted in King, 1999, p. 28). And, critically important to this process was the bifurcation of the elementary school system in this era. According to Davis (2004) children of the gentry attended preparatory (‘prep’) schools; and publicly funded primary schools were the domain of the working class. As a result, “this dualised system became entrenched into the social fabric and for more than a century education functioned as the most powerful gatekeeper of the status quo (Davis 2004: 41, quoted in Mayne, 2014, p.49). Secondary schools, which were loosely operated by the Schools Commission, followed this same pattern and catered to White elites, stymieing the prospect of upwards social mobility for free Black people until the end of the 19th Century, and well into the early 20th Century.

The Era of Populist Government (1953 to late 1970s)

According to Miller (1999a), the achievement of adult suffrage in 1944 made the importance of a politically informed citizenry apparent. As such, national curriculum committees that were comprised of various stakeholders created curricula that were reflective of Jamaican history, culture and civic responsibilities. Miller (1999a) describes this as the “Jamaicanizing” and “Caribbeanizing” of the existing school system. Although he does not occupy himself with questions that concern the soundness of the decision to alter, and not replace, colonial-style schooling, Miller (1999a) points out that:

There was not a fundamental break with the past but rather corrections with respect to who exercised control and [the] size of the provision [of schooling].

Implicitly the judgement was that the colonial creation was inherently good and sound but was under alien control and was not large enough (p. 226).

Therefore, guided by a colonial paradigm, as detailed in Chapter 4, populist era education reformers expanded access to schooling at all levels. Early childhood education (otherwise known as 'Basic school 'in Jamaica) was significantly expanded to children between the ages of four and six. Primary schooling was universalized, and understood to be inclusive of all children who were between the age of six and twelve. Secondary access increased from 5 percent to 60 percent for those who were between the ages of twelve and seventeen; and access to tertiary level education increased from under 1 percent to 5 percent for persons between the age of eighteen and twenty-four.

However, adjoined to the progress of the era of populist government were complicated social and economic hurdles. For example, the spatial distribution of secondary and tertiary education did not match that of Basic school and primary school. In addition to the rigorously academic traditional high school model, whose foundations were laid in the colonial era and mainly served the children of elites and the upper middle class,²⁰ populist reforms introduced four additional kinds of secondary schools. The first being technical high schools which were established by a grant from the Carnegie Foundation in the early 1940s, and intended for students who were slightly older than the average high schooler. These schools served as trade training centres. Second, was the implementation of the comprehensive high school. Students with

²⁰ In many instances, children from poor families who scored high on the-then Common Entrance Exam (now the Primary Exit Profile) which is the national high school entry test, in Grade 6 were given entry to traditional high schools on a meritocratic basis.

diverse abilities and competencies, who were from varying social classes (Lindsay, 2002), could attend these schools. Only six such schools existed by 1978. Third, was the vocational school. These institutions mostly catered to rural dwellers who had already completed Grade 9. Its curriculum was focused on agricultural labour. Only two such schools were created. The final and largest secondary school reform of the era of populism, designed and funded by the UNESCO and the World Bank, respectively, was the implementation of the new secondary school. By 1978, eighty-thousand students were enrolled. And, as the island-wide 'neighbourhood school,' new secondary schools attracted non-elite people, making it the most accessible form of secondary schooling; its enrolment surpassed that of traditional high schools, which sat at approximately fifty-thousand students in 1978. Prior to this, just eight-thousand elites attended traditional schools.

The Grade 6-leaving Common Entrance Exam (CEE) (now the Primary Exit Profile (PEP)) was implemented on the basis of merit. In other words, test scores would determine high school placement, and not parents' ability to pay exorbitant tuition fees. However, knowing that some poor students' exceptional exam scores would qualify them for entry to traditional secondary schools that their families could not afford, the government absorbed 50 percent of the tuition costs for two-thousand students, paying out grants in aid to a selected few high schools. Still, with this financial assistance, some families could not pay their half of the tuition, in addition to uniform, lunch and transportation costs. As a result, many prospective high school students declined these offers.

High scores on the implemented Technical Entrance Exam (TEE), guaranteed older primary school leaving students a tuition-less place, furnished by the Government, in a technical high school. Technical schools did not attract the same attention as traditional schools because

they were perceived to be limited in their ability to garner upward social mobility, so there were no significant barriers to entry. However, when the government began financing two-thousand free spaces in comprehensive schools using results from the CEE in 1957, the historical-colonial preparatory-primary divide in elementary school education surfaced. The majority of these free spaces were occupied by wealthier students who attended prep schools, which tended to be better resourced than public primary schools (Mayne, 2014). Strong opposition to this accumulated; the main argument being that it defeated the zeitgeist of populist era educational reforms because the ‘system ’worked in the favour of those who could afford to pay both tuition and auxiliary fees (Miller, 1999a). As a result, the 70:30 policy was implemented in 1957 that required 70 percent of the two-thousand spaces to go to primary school leaving students, which meant that some prep school students, who would have qualified for free tuition based on their CEE test scores, would receive grant positions. Primary school students who would have received grant positions previously, would now receive free tuition. According to Miller (1999a):

While the 70:30 reform was predicated on the basis of equality of opportunity, it attracted widespread criticism and resistance on the grounds of being discriminatory. The question around which the criticism centred was, if selection to high school should be on merit, why should those meriting free places not receive them? This question highlights a major deficiency of the 1957 reforms that confounded the principle of merit as the basis of high school selection with financial assistance to children of merit who could not afford to pay for their education. If 4,000 students were to be elected annually to high schools on the basis of merit, why should free tuition be granted to the first 2,000 if the

intention is to ensure that poor students selected on merit are able to benefit from the education for which they are selected? (pp. 217-218)

The fundamental weakness of the 1957 reform went unaddressed, and the 70:30 policy was a failed attempt at remedying it; and it remains as an education policy conundrum until this day (Miller, 1999a).

Perhaps the most significant reform made to education in the era of populist government was People's National Party (PNP) Prime Minister Manley's "free education for all" declaration in 1973 in which he promised the removal of "all school fees in secondary schools in Jamaica." Tertiary education was also made free. According to the Manley Budget Speech, 1973, where the pronouncement was made, the PNP did not believe students should have to pay for the development of the skills that the country would need in the future. But Keith (1978) postulates that the effect of this declaration is parallel to that of the 70:30 reform because it "enlarged the marginal educational benefits to the working class without altering the elite bias of the secondary grammar schools themselves" (p. 47). Keith (1978) argues that there are certain "limits to the degree to which the state can both co-opt and deceive the masses in terms of pseudo rather than real educational reforms" (p. 47). Moreover, the broadly defined "secondary school" nomenclature does not eliminate the social chasm that exists between traditional high schools and the rest; nor does it convince Jamaican parents that their children will receive a valuable secondary school education (Keith, 1978). Needless to say, in 1989, due to new thinking on the matter, the re-elected Manley, determined that those who have the means to pay school fees should, so not to burden "the budget and the economy" (Burke, 2012).

All of this being said, the newly revised colonial education system of the era of populist government was challenged to address issues that pertain to skin complexion, race, class, gender

and disability— colonial stratifying mechanisms — within a tiered system. According to Miller (1999a), such educational inequities were not dissolved; they, actually, worsened during this time.

Moreover, despite steady economic growth, the fact remained that the Government's finances were still too limited to, independently, fund all of the aforementioned reforms. As such, funds from the international donor community were solicited, beginning a new dependency — or reincarnating an old one — at the time of the country's rise to independence (Miller, 1999a). Still, of the quantifiable successes in education in this era, donor assistance can be credited; post-Bretton Woods aid payments were intended to be utilized for these purposes.

Education in the Era of Structural Adjustment (Late 1970s to Present)

To date, only Miller (1999a; 1992) and Thompson (2014) have grappled, specifically, with the adverse effects of IMF economic policies on education in Jamaica. For reasons unknown it is an obscured subject in the literature. Therefore, in this dissertation it is necessary to document educational reforms in the era of structural adjustment because Jamaica has existed in this time-space since the late 1970s. Thus, every facet of its society is affected by the conditionalities that are laden within the country and the IMF's sixteen agreements, signed between 1963 and 2018 (see Table 2.1). However, before I outline the impact that these agreements have had on the public education system, I will provide an overview of the IMF and its use of structural adjustment policies (SAPs), and the imposition of these policies on the Jamaican economy. Following this, I will outline the educational reforms that have come about in this era.

The IMF and Structural Adjustment

In a global context, national debts are, by and large, held by the IMF, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Typically, out of desperation, governments solicit the help of these international financial institutions (IFIs) to placate their debt, increase domestic savings, attract capital to return from abroad, and finance development projects.

Finding itself in the all-too-familiar ‘post-colonial debt trap,’ particularly due to the oil-shocks of the 1970s, Jamaica also accrued a debt that it could not pay. As such, the country retreated to the IMF for much needed financing in 1977, marking the country’s third agreement; and thus, beginning the era of structural adjustment.

Guided by the terms and conditions of a one-year Standby Arrangement²¹ (SBA), IMF officials dispensed SDR²² 19,200 (approximately USD \$26.6 million) for the purpose of slowing the country’s increasing level of indebtedness to foreign creditors, supplementing its declining GDP and reducing capital flight (Downes et. al., 1993). But it must be noted that these funds were distributed with tremendous limitations on public spending, and a short payback period. Nevertheless, without another option, an IMF program was, perhaps, the most viable.

Table 2.1 shows that between 1977 and 1992, the GOJ seems to have made borrowing a frequent practice, receiving seven SBAs and four Extended Fund Facilities (EFF).²³ With each loan, both the principal, as well as the interest rates increased, as did the restrictions on spending.

²¹ The IMF describes this as its “workhorse lending instrument for emerging and advanced market countries” (IMF, 2019). It is designed to meet immediate needs for liquid cash.

²² “SDR” is the abbreviation for “special drawing rights.” SDRs are an international reserve asset that were created by the IMF as supplement to its members/recipient country’s reserves; and its value is based on the a currency basket comprised of the U.S. dollar, the euro, Chinese renminbi, the Japanese yen, and the British pound (IMF, 2019).

²³ According to the IMF (2019), “compared to assistance provided under the Stand-by Arrangement, assistance under an extended arrangement features longer program engagement—to help countries implement medium-term structural reforms—and a longer repayment period” (para. 1). More simply put, the EFF is another loan with additional structural reforms, but a longer payback period.

Having inherited, what the late Prime Minister Manley called, “tremendous social pressures” (Thesimplethetruth3, 2011) from the colonial period, the GOJ was already challenged to meet its independent development goals. But, these challenges grew more profound under IMF-enforced economic policies that necessitated the existence of a neoliberalized ‘lean’ state (Albo and Fanelli, 2014). In this industrial complex, these policies, also known as conditionalities, are often manifested in the following forms: the raising of domestic taxes, restrictions on public sector wage increases, protectionist barriers to procuring bank loans, limitations on the domestic ownership of assets held in trust to the Bank of Jamaica, implementation of private sector pricing and operational liberalization, and consistent devaluation of the Jamaican dollar (Downes et. al., 1993). However, it is worth mentioning that loan recipient countries who adhere to these policies, often, find themselves in further instances of economic precarity; thus, making these policy instruments counter-productive, and responsible for lost decades of would-be development on account of low and negative growth (Desai, 2017; Peet and Hartwick, 1999; Stiglitz, 2003; Levitt, 2005).

Table 2.1 History of IMF Lending in Jamaica as of July 31, 2017

Facility	Date of Arrangement	Expiration Date	Amount Agreed	Amount Drawn	Amount Outstanding
Standby Arrangement	Jun 13, 1963	Jun 12, 1964	13,829,000	0	0
Standby Arrangement	Jun 01, 1973	May 31, 1974	36,646,850	18,323,420	0
Standby Arrangement	Aug 11, 1977	Jun 09, 1978	88,505,600	26,551,680	0
Extended Fund Facility	Jun 09, 1978	Jun 10, 1979	276,580,000	96,803,000	0
Extended Fund Facility	Jun 11, 1979	Apr 12, 1981	359,554,000	117,546,500	0
Extended Fund Facility	Apr 13, 1981	Apr 12, 1984	660,611,330	557,032,120	0
Standby Arrangement	Jun 22, 1984	Jun 21, 1985	88,505,600	88,505,600	0
Standby Arrangement	Jul 17, 1985	Jul 16, 1986	159,033,500	57,528,640	0
Standby Arrangement	Mar 02, 1987	May 31, 1988	117,546,500	117,546,500	0

Standby Arrangement	Sep 19, 1988	Mar 23, 1990	113,397,800	56,837,190	0
Standby Arrangement	Mar 23, 1990	May 31, 1991	113,397,800	113,397,800	0
Standby Arrangement	Jun 28, 1991	Sep 30, 1992	60,363,580	60,363,580	0
Extended Fund Facility	Dec 11, 1992	Mar 16, 1996	150,908,960	107,520,480	0
Standby Arrangement	Feb 04, 2010	May 03, 2012	1,134,669,450	749,255,220	0
Extended Fund Facility	May 01, 2013	Nov 10, 2016	851,009,000	772,667,720	780,337,470
Standby Arrangement	Nov 11, 2016	Nov 10, 2019	1,652,980,370	0	0
Total			5,877,539,340	2,939,879,450	780,337,470

Derived from World Bank Data, and converted from SDR to US dollars.

Further, it must be noted that during his tenure at the World Bank as Chief Economist and Vice President, Joseph Stiglitz remained critical of the IMF's policy prescriptions which he discusses in great detail in *Globalization and its Discontents* (2002) and other works. According to Stiglitz (2002):

The Fund believes it is ... promoting global stability, [and] helping developing countries in transition achieve not only stability but also growth. Until recently it debated whether it should be concerned with poverty ... but today it has even taken that on board as well, at least rhetorically. I believe, however, that it has failed in its mission, that the failures are not just accidental but the consequences of how it has understood its mission.

Many years ago, former president of General Motors and secretary of defense Charles E. Wilson's famous remark to the effect that "What's good for General Motors is good for the country" became the symbol of a particular view of American capitalism. The IMF often seems to have a similar view — "what the

financial community views as good for the global economy is good for the global economy and should be done” (p.195).

Stiglitz’s words, which are derived experientially, provide insight into an important discourse about the effectiveness of Washington Census politics. Such discourses are important. Moreover, their social implications, which are often undermined or blatantly ignored, must be weighed.

Michael Witter (2012), Professor Emeritus of Social and Economic Studies at the University of the West Indies, Mona, argues that the momentum of IMF agreements has transformed the GOJ into an anti-social state because its attention has turned away from social development towards debt sustainability. It is in this vein that the austere educational reforms of the era of structural adjustment have flowed. Education spending as a percentage of GDP was roughly 1 percent higher in 1977 (6 percent) than in 2017 (5 percent) (World Bank, 2019). So statistically, no substantial difference. However, it is vital to acknowledge the weakened efficacy of the Jamaican dollar since early 1978, where the exchange rate was USD \$1 to JMD \$0.91. By mid-January 1978, forced devaluations reduced the rate of exchange to USD \$1 to JMD \$1.05.²⁴

It is important to note that this downward-currency spiral is part and parcel of a particular IMF-World Bank-World Trade Organization (WTO)²⁵ policy-cocktail that exists to promote economic integration and international trade in a global context. Kremmydas (1989) refers to this as the “cross-conditionality phenomenon,”²⁶ wherein the conditions to unlocking IMF financing are intrinsically linked to those of other development banks. In the case of Jamaica, in order to procure IMF assistance, the World Bank and WTO mandated the opening of the country’s

²⁴ Upon this dissertation’s completion in August 2020, the rate of exchange was USD \$1 to JMD \$150.08.

²⁵ Other regional development banks are involved as well (Kremmydas, 1989)

²⁶ Although the organizations involved have not formalized this terminology, the IMF and the World Bank’s Articles of Agreement outline their commitment to collaborations that are in the, perceived, best interest of heavily-indebted countries and the global economy, en masse (Kremmydas, 1989)

economy to foreign trade, with lowered tariff rates to importers. The reduced capacity of the Jamaican dollar increased the efficacy of foreign currencies; thereby, making the cost of doing business in Jamaica relatively cheap. But, to the continued detriment of local producers who are not equipped to compete against foreign big businesses for market share. According to Witter (2001):

Since our society is so heavily dependent on imported food, imported fuel, imported books to go to school, imported medicine ... when we devalue [our currency] the cost of those [things] we import go up to the citizens; and as a result, the economy today is much more under the control of foreigners — not necessarily through direct ownership, but through the mechanism of debt (*Life and Debt*, 2001).

“The mechanism of debt,” as Witter calls it has, regardless of their political orientation, made politicians impotent against the terms of global trade in the era of structural adjustment (Miller, 1999a). Because Marx informs us that the economy is the basis of *all* social relations, the subsequent spill-over from this boiling political-economic pot has affected Jamaica’s public education system. As such, it has been predicted that social conditions will continue to decline, and that the people of Jamaica will “find it even harder to send their children to school or to the doctor” (Johnson, 2012, para. 4).

In the era of structural adjustment, public education has undergone austere economic reforms in order to increase efficiency and boost educational quality. However, because fiscal conservatism still requires some spending, in several cases, attempts to accomplish these tasks fell short due to limited financing. For example, implemented as a reform to increase efficiency,

in 1982 the Ministry of Education (MOE) made primary school attendance compulsory, with the adjoining promise that there would be provisions made for uniforms and meals for non-elite children. The policy was presumed to be a failure because it did little to address the underlying socio-economic factors that are barriers to education, and proved to be more punitive to poor parents who could not afford to send their children to school (Miller, 1999a). Applying Somé's (2010) assessment of education policy and delivery in Africa to this scenario, it is plausible to argue that "the magnificent elephant that was promised showed up lame" in Jamaica as well.

As it pertains to the implementation of reforms to increase educational quality, many have been carried out in partnership with donor agencies, and private sector organizations. Noting a severe lack of textbooks in primary and secondary schools, the MOE collaborated with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (now, Global Affairs Canada), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNESCO, the Gleaner Company and other private businesses to provide Mathematics, English Language and Social Studies books through the Primary Textbook Project in 1983.²⁷ Similarly, with assistance from the British Development Division (now, the Department for International Development), the Book Rental Plan was implemented. USAID, UNESCO, as well as the IDB, have also made contributions to curricular and infrastructural development in education.

As it pertains to health and nutrition in the context of schooling, Nutrition Products Limited (NPL) was established in 1972, and partnered with the School Feeding Program to provide nutribuns²⁸ and fortified milk during the school lunch hour. However, the persistent problem of poor nutritional health prompted many schools to go beyond these provisions and

²⁷ Today this is still a regular occurrence, which I discuss in Chapter 5.

²⁸ Nutribuns are baked goods that have been fortified with vitamins and minerals, and are intended to be a full meal. Today, there is controversy surrounding their health quotient.

begin independent breakfast programs. This is, likely, due to the pervasiveness of food insecurity in several Jamaican homes. But, even with this understanding, Thompson (2014) notes that budget rationalization has led to a significant decline in the number of children whom the School Feeding Program serves. Further, the nutritional value of the meals has declined while still meeting the need of hunger, but not appropriately achieving the highest health quotient for growing children. The School Feeding Program also receives assistance from international charities and the private sector. In 2018, Restaurants of Jamaica (ROJ) donated \$4.5 million (approximately USD \$44,830) to the Program in order to feed one thousand five hundred students (Jamaica Information Service, 2019).

The teaching profession has become more unattractive because of its limits on pay, which are disproportionate to the rising cost of living. Moreover, reductions to government sponsored training made the cost of a Diploma in Education exorbitant and, otherwise, unaffordable to prospective teachers. Because of this, fewer teachers hold certificates and bachelor's degrees, which is why Miller (1992) argues that teacher education has been the most greatly devastated by fiscal rationalization.

Because the education budget accounted for 21 percent of the GOJ's recurrent expenditure by 1979 (see Table 2.2 for Education Expenditure Table), the unfettered hand of conditionality could not leave it untouched. Therefore, much of the populist era progress was undone. New education taxes were imposed in order to bolster the MOE's endeavours. However, tax payers have long questioned the income, general consumption and payroll taxes that are deducted; in addition to the user fees that are charged in "free" public institutions because, as noted in Chapter 1, Jamaicans are dissatisfied with the current provision of public schooling — even in the wake of the country's quantitative achievement of Millennium Development Goal

Number Two (MDG2), “achieve universal primary education” (Gilbert-Roberts et al., 2013; Miller, 1999a, 1999b).

As previously mentioned in this chapter, historically, education has been viewed as an escape route from poverty and the marginalization that accompanies it. Moreover, James and Davis (2014) determined that young people, particularly young men, in Jamaica, view accessible education to be vital to their survival because it deters them from participating in the often violent street economy (Rose, 2008). However, in the era of structural adjustment, the ability of education to facilitate social advancement for all has been compromised by the rising costs that are associated with it, unfortunately, leaving “much [illegitimate/illegal] work for idle hands,” as the adage goes (Thompson, 2017; James and Davis, 2014).

Table 2.2 Education Expenditure Table

Fiscal Year	Budget in JMD (\$)	Budget in USD (\$)	% of National Budget
1976-1977	173 million	190 million	no data available
1977-1978	175 million	186 million	no data available
1978-1979	205 million	128.9 million	no data available
1979-1980	228 million	128 million	no data available
1980-1981	298 million	167.4 million	no data available
1981-1982	352 million	197.7 million	no data available
1982-1983	390 million	219.1 million	no data available
1983-1984	463 million	201.3 million	no data available
1984-1985	482 million	109.2 million	no data available
1985-1986	512 million	90.6 million	no data available
1986-1987	644 million	117 million	no data available
1987-1988	734 million	116.8 million	no data available
1988-1989	736 million	133.5 million	no data available
1989-1990	1.25 billion	204.5 million	no data available
1990-1991	1.5 billion	197.3 million	no data available
1991-1992	1.7 billion	106.9 million	12
1992-1993	2.6 billion	114.2 million	10
1993-1994	5.5 billion	198.1 million	9.3
1994-1995	6.2 billion	1.8 billion	15.3
1995-1996	9.2 billion	2.4 billion	10.8
1996-1997	13 billion	3.6 billion	13.1
1997-1998	17.0 billion	4.7 billion	12.3
1998-1999	17.3 billion	4.6 billion	14.3
1999-2000	18 billion	4.4 billion	13.4

2000-2001	18.4 billion	4.1 billion	10.9
2001-2002	22 billion	4.7 billion	11
2002-2003	23 billion	4.6 billion	10
2003-2004	30 billion	5 billion	10.6
2004-2005	31 billion	5 billion	9.4
2005-2006	no data available	no data available	no data available
2006-2007	45 billion	6.7 billion	12.1
2007-2008	48 billion	6.8 billion	12.5
2008-2009	58 billion	7.5 billion	11.7
2009-2010	74 billion	8.2 billion	13
2010-2011	72 billion	8.3 billion	14
2011-2012	71 billion	8.2 billion	13.4
2012-2013	82 billion	9 billion	13.3
2013-2014	86 billion	8.2 billion	16.6
2014-2015	84 billion	7.4 billion	15.5
2015-2016	82 billion	6.9 billion	12.8
2016-2017	91 billion	7.1 billion	15.7
2017-2018	102 billion	7.9 billion	12.4
2018-2019	105 billion	8 billion	13
2019-2020	no data available	no data available	no data available

Source: Derived from Planning Institute of Jamaica and Bank of Jamaica Historical Exchange Rate data.

Diaspora and Remittances

As previously mentioned, structural adjustment has increased the MOE's historical reliance on the international donor community. In addition to this, the Ministry has been formally soliciting financial support from the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto since 2010 through the National Education Trust (NET).²⁹ (The most recent correspondences — to my knowledge — occurred in January 2018 and May 2019, wherein members of the Consulate General of Jamaica Toronto's listserv were asked to donate to the Organization so that it could provide Basic

²⁹ Here I am referring to pleas for financing that are received from the NET via email correspondences from the Toronto-based (and I would imagine other) Consul General's office. The NET works in tandem with the Government to resource public education in areas that are under-served by soliciting, not only the Diaspora's support, but financing from private donors, and bilateral and multilateral aid organizations. But, I do have it on "good credit" from two individuals who attended a private meeting with the, then, Minister of Education, Andrew Holness that the ideological premise of the NET was to pool all educational remittances in order to even the education playing field in the island since elite schools tend to receive more transnational funds than non-elite schools.

Schools in Zones of Special Operations (ZOSO)³⁰ with much needed learning equipment and financial support, and notify donors that the guidelines for making contributions had changed. See Appendix D for full letter)

From my perspective, the relationship between the Jamaican Diaspora and Jamaica is a visceral one. I say this because, in many cases, the pursuit of happiness is rooted in the obtainment of material wealth. Although I will expand on this in Chapter 6, suffice to say, this pursuit is, typically, ignited by social deprivation and economic inopportunity in one's 'home country'. However, procuring a better life in a 'host country,' is, often, accompanied by an inherent or ascribed sense of responsibility to the people and the place that one left behind.

As it pertains to the relationship between the Jamaican Diaspora and the public school system, I am attempting to, metaphorically, draw lines that connect the dots between structural adjustment, austerity, migration, remittances and public schooling because their interrelatedness has existed in the shadows of obscurity in the education and international development literature for much too long. Because these are the central foci of this dissertation, it is appropriate that I provide a literature review of the terms/practices of "diaspora" and "remittances" now that a historical overview of education in Jamaica has been given. Once I have concluded this task, I will engage in a preliminary discussion about their combined articulation, and the implications of this before locating the objective of this research theoretically in Chapter 4.

³⁰ ZOSOs are areas that the Government of Jamaica have deemed unsafe and in need of social interventions. The main foci are "rampant criminality, gang warfare, escalating violence, murder, inter alia" (L.Wilks, personal communication, May 5, 2018).

What is “Diaspora”?

Intellectually, I have always been challenged by, what appeared to be, the inherency of giving back to Jamaica because, in an intuitive sense, it’s embedded in our community.³¹ Now, as an emerging scholar, it has become apparent to me that my true fascination is with the “Why?” question. Why is all of this barrel packing and fundraising necessary? And within the context of education, why do public schools in Jamaica require transnational support?

In a manner, which I perceived to be logical, I sought a definition for the term “diaspora” in order to ascertain answers to these sociological and anthropological questions because, according to my previously uninformed opinion, diasporas were groups of people living ‘abroad.’ I realize that there is much truth to this thinking because, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, “diaspora” comes from the Greek word “diaspeirein” which means to “disperse.” This term was, initially, ascribed to Biblical Jews, who are believed to be the original diasporans because of what King and Melvin (1999) refer to as their “archetypal dispersal.” However, today, what is/was the academic understanding of diaspora has broadened, resulting “in what one might call a ““diaspora” diaspora — a dispersion of the meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual and disciplinary space” (Brubaker, 2005, p. 1). Hence, diaspora has become all-inclusive, in many instances transforming the word into “an idiom, stance or claim” (Brubaker, 2005, p. 12). Although the ‘correctness’ of this new accommodating positionality will remain in the realm of subjectivity — I happen to disagree with it, as noted in Chapter 1 — Brubaker (2005) notes three constitutive features of diaspora that do not change. The first is the dispersion of people.

Brubaker (2005) describes this to be a widely agreed upon criterion, that is the result of some

³¹ I acknowledge that this is just my perception. However, it is informed by my immersive experience in the Jamaican-Canadian Diaspora, which includes large extended family and friend groups, and a Jamaican church community who, in some form or another, ‘give back’ on individual and collective bases.

form of trauma that forces migration across — or within — state borders. Preceding Brubaker (2005), King and Melvin (1999), frame dispersion as “ethnic communities divided by state frontiers” (p. 108); and Connor (1986), “a segment of people living outside of their homeland” (p. 16) (both, quoted in Brubaker, 2005, p. 5).

The second hardwired component of diaspora is its homeland orientation — be it real or imagined (Brubaker, 2005). According to Brubaker (2005), the homeland is viewed “as an authoritative source of value, identity and loyalty” (p. 7). Moreover, invoking Safran (1991), Brubaker (2005) emphasizes the saliency of a collective memory/myth about the homeland; second, the prospect of, or at minimum, the desire to return; third, the collective commitment to the homeland’s advancement and prosperity; and fourth, efforts to maintain personal and vicarious connectedness, that will continuously shape identities and promote solidarity within the diaspora itself. These maintain much criticality.

Brubaker’s (2005) third and final constitutive criterion of diaspora is boundary maintenance, which involves “the preservation of a distinctive identity vis-à-vis a host society ...” (p. 6). Brubaker (2005) argues that these boundaries are maintained deliberately through endogamy and other kinds of self-segregation. Boundary maintenance can also be the consequence of exclusion from the host society (Brubaker, 2005). Nevertheless, regardless of how it is established, boundary maintenance is a way in which a diaspora can be conceptualized as a community that is held together by distinctive attributes and an intense solidarity (Brubaker, 2005).

Notwithstanding these fundamental components, in order to beneficially analyze diaspora, it must be conceptualized as a practice (Brubaker, 2005; King and Melvin, 1999). This mode of understanding, in essence, transforms its descriptive capacity to active capacity;

therefore, making it a useful tool for the collective making of claims, the articulation of projects, the formulation of expectations, the mobilization of energies and diverse expertise; and finally, the procurement of present and future loyalties (Brubaker, 2005). According to Schuerkens (2005), in this context, the natural consequence of transnational migration — that leads to “diasporization” (Simmons and Dei, 2012) (I will expand on this in a historical anti-colonial context in Chapter 4) — is social transformation in a diaspora’s country of origin through various forms of transnational benevolence, which we understand to be “remittances.” This process facilitates the creation and implementation of development initiatives;³² and the repatriation of finances. According to de Haase (2007), we can pinpoint scholars’ fascination with this phenomenon to the 2001 boom in publications about remittances and their transformative potentialities. However, as with any other argument, this conception of remittances has many refutations that come from migration pessimists that include the following: 1) remittances lead to consumptive investments such as purchasing a home, and otherwise unnecessary spending (de Haase, 2007; Entzinger, 1985; Lewis, 1986; Lipton, 1980); and, 2) remittances create dependency at both the micro and macro levels of society because they expose rural dwellers to ‘better things,’ thereby, changing their tastes, and create a disincentive for domestic governments to act in the favour of their general populaces (Helmke, 2010; Lipton, 1980). For this reason, Helmke (2010) argues that remittances are more of a palliative treatment to the problem of underdevelopment than anything else.

I will further this discussion on remittances, but not before I outline who the remitters are, and their pathways to migration.

³² The copious amounts of money that cross borders annually, by far, outweigh official development assistance (ODA) and capital transfers (de Haase, 2007; Kapur and McHale, 2003). But, it is important to note that officially recorded remittances do not capture the true amount of global remittances because of hand-to hand and other “underground” transfers.

On the Formation of the Jamaican Diaspora

Although this dissertation focuses on Jamaican Diasporans who migrated to Canada during the late 1960s and 1970s, I acknowledge that these migrations occurred and are occurring out of a processual and forced formation of diverse peoples. A creolization of indigenous Taino peoples; enslaved Africans from the Continent's western region; Irish, German, Chinese and Indian indentured labourers; and Christian refugees from Palestine, Syria and Lebanon (Glennie and Chappell, 2010) has altered the historical trajectory of Jamaica's racial and ethnic heritage. Hence, the reason for the country's national motto, "Out of Many, One People." Although, it has been argued that "Jamaica, in spite of the claims made for its racial harmony, has, in fact, far to go before the sentiments expressed in the national motto become universally held" (Richardson, 1983, p. 163).

The roots of mass international migrations from Jamaica began with mass domestic migrations during the 1960s. Approximately 69,000 people from Jamaica's rural communities set out for Kingston, the island's capital and urban centre, and the suburban parish of St. Andrew. This is not an uncommon phenomenon in developing world contexts (Cooper, 1985). However, rural-to-urban migration leads to exceptionally high population growth rates in cities, which in Kingston was — and still is — a problem. Moreover, the absence of employment only compounded the issue; thus, making international migration, for many, the obvious choice (Cooper, 1985). But who are, and have historically been, the "many"? They are largely skilled and tertiary-level educated professionals (Thomas-Hope, 2017; Cooper, 1985). According to Cooper (1985):

The key to understanding why Jamaica has lost such a disproportionately large number of professional, technical, administrative and managerial workers on the

one hand, and skilled “blue -collar” workers on the other, seems to lie far more in the legislation of foreign government than in the policy orientation of domestic administration” (p. 724).

Conversely to the explanations for who exactly Jamaican migrants are, is the argument that Prime Minister Manley was overzealous in his endeavour to create a socialist Jamaican society, wherein high taxes and redistributive policies were the order of the day (Cooper, 1985). With his re-election in 1976 and a sure economic crisis on the rise, Koslofsky (1981) argued that this led to a “middle strata migration” (p. 30); and a subsequent, and continuous, “brain drain” (Cooper, 1985). Cooper (1985) argued that participants in the brain drain “voted with their feet, and the vote registered “nay”” (p. 728) to the Manley Administration. As such, these dissatisfied persons would depart with their dependents, or ‘send for them ’upon their arrival to, and establishment in their chosen host country. Although not known for certain — especially because there are no reliable data for illegal immigration³³ — dependents are considered to account for 50 percent of the Jamaican migrant population.

According to Thomas-Hope (2018), the outward migrations that occurred between the 1970s and the 1990s are marked by continuous flows of people to the United States and Canada — but more so to the United States, as previously noted. By the 2000s, the flows remained consistent, but at lower-rates, however, with the same skill and labour composition. Table 2.3 is a depiction of the net migration rates from Jamaica since 1955, which are calculated by subtracting the rate of outflow from the rate of inflow (Thomas-Hope, 2018). The negative figures are the result of higher levels of outflow than inflow (Thomas-Hope, 2018). Today, it is estimated that over 1 million Jamaicans live in the United States, mostly in New York and South

³³ For this reason, it is also important to note that all official migration statistics can only be estimates.

Florida (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013), and approximately 800,000 are presumed to live in the United Kingdom, particularly in London, Birmingham, Luton, Nottingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield and Slough (International Organization for Migration, 2007). Over 300,000 Jamaicans are estimated to live in Canada, with over 200,000 presumed to live in Toronto and other cities in the GTA (Statistics Canada, 2016). And, interpreting *how* and *why* these individuals remit to Jamaica, specifically, the country’s education system — directly or indirectly — is vital to this study.

Table 2.3 Net Migration Rates for Jamaica

Years	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Net Migration	-5.1	-19.0	-17.5	-18.7	-10.7	-11.0	-7.4	-13.8	-9.3	-5.8	-5.8	-7.4	-5.8	-5.6

Source: World Bank, 2017; Thomas-Hope, 2018.

Returning to the Discussion on Remittances: What Are Remittances and How Are They Related To Diaspora?

First, let me define what remittances *actually* are in their most basic form. Because of the work of international migration and development expert Dilip Ratha, we understand that remittances are private funds that are often sent through money transfer companies who have been known to charge high, gouging fees (Ratha, 2014; Ratha, 2005). Ratha (2014) contended that these fees “milk the poor” because on average a \$30 transfer fee is affixed to transactions up to \$500.³⁴ Ratha (2014) and Simmons et al. (2005) suggested that governments promote

³⁴ The global average cost of money transactions is 8 percent, and the average cost of sending money to the African continent is a minimum of 12 percent, and within Africa, over 20 percent (Ratha, 2014). Due to strict exchange controls in Venezuela, \$100 remittance payments can be reduced to as little as \$10 (Ratha, 2014).

competition amongst remittance companies, similarly to the telecommunications industry, so that the cost of remitting can decrease and become more affordable.

Simmons et al. (2005) ascertained that, in Jamaican households in Toronto, the remittance dollar amount increases with the level of income. However, in homes with earnings that exceed the CAD \$40,000 to \$59,000 range the amount of remittances declines (see Table 2.4). Simmons et al. (2005) postulated that this rise and fall pattern suggests that households with incomes that are below the poverty line have less money to send home, whereas more well-to-do households need not send remittances frequently, or at all, because their families at home are similarly wealthy.

Table 2.4. Yearly Remittances According to Household Income

Household Income	Remittance \$ Amount
Less than \$5,000/year	\$539
\$5,000 to \$19,999	\$1,025
\$20,000 to \$39,999	\$1,532
\$40,000 to \$59,999	\$1,869
\$60,000 and over	\$1,544

Source: Simmons et al. (2005) “The Remittance Sending Practices of Haitians and Jamaicans in Canada.” Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat.

*Note that the data for this study were collected in 2004. All figures in the above table are quoted in Canadian Dollars.

In spite of these barriers, remittances are hailed as an economic salvo (Senior, 2012) against the assaulting nature of poverty, and in a Jamaican context, are an integral part of a wider “set of cultural and personal commitments linking senders and receivers” (Simmons et al., 2005, p. 12). In the absence of a tangible human presence, the process of remittances means “to put back,” as the French *remettre* translates (Burman, 2002). But, as previously mentioned the processes of migration and remittances do have their fair share of naysayers, who perceive them

to be ineffective (Appleyard, 1989; Lipton, 1980 and Rubenstein, 1992). Nevertheless, there is much optimism concerning the potential of remittances to increase human capabilities (Sen, 1999; de Hasse, 2007) in the developing world. So, for this reason, governments are seeking ways to exploit these flows for international development (Martinussen, 1997) — and for good reason. The World Bank (2019) reports that the estimated remittance total to low- and middle-income countries was USD \$529 billion in 2018, and the total for global remittances, which includes transfers to high-income countries, is an estimated USD \$689 billion. Remittance inflows to the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region, where Jamaica is situated, totaled USD \$88 billion in 2018 (World Bank, 2019), and the island independently received approximately USD \$2.3 billion (Bank of Jamaica, 2019).³⁵

Recognizing the capabilities of the three million Jamaicans living abroad,³⁶ the GOJ has followed the international trend to formally engage its diaspora through the creation of the Diaspora Affairs Department (DAD) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT). Also under the auspices of MFAFT is the Consular Affairs Department to which the mandate to provide consular services to the Diaspora has been given through its twenty-three Jamaican Embassies, High Commissions and Consulate Generals, and eighty Honorary Consuls around the world.

In 2004, the GOJ hosted the first Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference in Kingston. However, the call for further engagement of the Diaspora led to the establishment of the Joint Select Committee of the House of Parliament on Diaspora Affairs in 2009. The purpose of the

³⁵ This figure was taken from the April 2019 Remittances Bulletin and listed as provisional amount, which suggests that BOJ economists are still uncertain about the true amount.

³⁶ This number is inclusive of second, third and fourth generation Jamaicans.

Committee is to promote the relationship between the GOJ and the Diaspora and advance the completion of a National Diaspora Policy. Also established in 2009 was the Jamaica Diaspora Foundation (JADF); and shortly thereafter, the Jamaica Diaspora Institute (JDI). JDI was founded as an extension of the JADF, and is housed at the Mona School of Business and Management at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. The JADF exists to strengthen “the links and support systems between Jamaicans residing abroad and those at home ... [and] seek funding for the operational and functional areas of the work of the Foundation and the Jamaica Diaspora Institute” (MFAFT, 2020, para. 1). The Jamaica Diaspora Institute (JDI) was established under JADF with the key objectives of “building and connecting Diaspora communities through the development of web portals and databases; facilitating partnerships between Jamaica and its Diaspora and conducting research on Jamaican migration and Diaspora issues” (MFAFT, 2020, para. 2). A Diaspora Advisory Board with representatives from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom was established to report matters that pertain to the Diaspora directly to the MFAFT Minister.

The formal engagement of the Diaspora is undertaken for the purpose of increasing Jamaica’s development as a nation. Therefore, in the spirit of patriotism, members of the Diaspora have established numerous charities and non-profit organizations for the purpose of raising funds and procuring much needed resources for their respective causes back home. As it pertains to education, the Toronto-based Alliance of Jamaican Alumni Associations (AJAA), which I introduced in Chapter 1, is one such organization, serving as the aegis for forty alumni associations in Canada. The AJAA’s constituent organizations have committed themselves to supporting their alma maters. Similarly, the New York-based Union of Jamaican Alumni Associations (UJA) is the umbrella organization that covers approximately thirty Jamaican

school alumni associations in the United States.

Taking note of the significant financial contributions of these organizations, the NET was established for the purpose of streamlining and stewarding transnational contributions for education. In addition, the Jamaica Diaspora Education Task Force (JDETF) emerged in 2013 after the fifth Biennial Conference, rolling out a Six-Year Plan in 2014 for the advancement of education in Jamaica. The independent and collective work of the Jamaican Diaspora in the area of education is encouraged and heralded by the MOEYI and the MFAFT. However, there appears to be no evidence of coordination or cohesion amongst these groups (which I will discuss in Chapter 6).

Although Jamaican Diasporans who earn higher incomes tend to remit to their family members less, Simmons et al. (2005) discovered that these individuals are involved with their school alma maters via their Toronto-based alumni association chapters who send “institutional development funds” (p. 16) to their respective communities. Therefore, Simmons et al. (2005) called for an analysis of this, and other, “broader social processes [of remittances] and their implications” (p. 16) for development in Jamaica because the most traditional mechanisms for remitting to Jamaica, which include money transfer agencies and ‘hand to hand’ transfers are not the only means. It is incumbent upon us as Jamaican/Caribbeanist scholars to pay closer attention to what Simmons et al. (2005) referred to as “transnational community links” through which schools, churches and entire communities are supported (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 Most Supported Endeavours Back Home

Transnational Project	Percent of Jamaicans Who Have Contributed
School Improvement	13.5
Community Project	16.0
Church Improvement	33.1

Source: Simmons et al. (2005) “The Remittance Sending Practices of Haitians and Jamaicans in Canada.” Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat.

Note that Simmons et al. (2005) sample size was two-hundred and eighty-eight in total, including one-hundred and thirty-eight Jamaicans.

Educational Remittances

I submit that this dissertation responds to Simmons et al.’s (2005) call for an assessment of group remittances that are earmarked for education.³⁷ Even so, the efficacy of group educational remittances in a Jamaican context must be interrogated. I perform this task comprehensively in Chapter 6. However, for now I offer a truncated review of the small body of literature that exists on this subject that captures remittances and their effect on receiving households’ decisions concerning schooling (Edwards and Ureta, 2003). None grapple with collective giving to public educational institutions, hence, the requisite nature of this research.

I begin with Edwards and Ureta (2003) who argued that their study on the relationship between remittances and education — specifically human capital formation at the primary and secondary school level in El Salvador — was the first of its kind. Edwards and Ureta (2003) found that the income that was received from remittances increased the monthly budget of a

³⁷ Also, this is important because the unofficial total for Toronto-based Jamaican alumni association benevolence was CAD \$675,000 (JMD \$57,375,000) in 2010. This figure was determined using the results from an informal online survey that was conducted by the AJAA in 2010. Thirty-four associations were invited to participate, and only twenty-two completed the survey, which suggests that more money was sent to Jamaican schools. The person who disclosed this information to me via email would like to remain anonymous, and the survey no longer exists online. No such data collection has been done since this survey was administered.

household and removed the financial constraints that prevented some families from sending their children to school. Edwards and Ureta (2003) also found that remittances had a significant impact on school retention. Nguyen and Nguyen (2015) found similar results in their examination of data from Vietnam. Nguyen and Nguyen (2015) credit remittances for the significant role that they play in increasing the number of grades that school-aged children complete.

According to Edwards and Ureta (2003), measuring remittances' effects provides a clear estimate of the impact of a household's budget on school retention because they have a more significant impact than other forms of income on school retention — 10 times more in urban communities, and 2.6 times more in rural areas. And, irrespective of the amount, the hazard of leaving school prematurely is reduced by remittances (Edwards and Ureta, 2005). In addition, remittances raise the level of girls' attendance to school, and significantly increase the likelihood that children will attend high school (Bouoiyour and Miftah, 2016; Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo, 2010; González-König and Wodon, 2007; Calero et al., 2009).

In their study on the impact of remittances on education in the Dominican Republic, Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo (2010) argued that their positive effects are reversed when the receiving household is also a migrant household — a household with a family member living abroad. They also found that the school attendance of children who resided in non-migrant households was positively impacted by the receipt of remittances at a rate of 69 percent. Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo (2010) also noted the contemporaneous and opposing impact that migration and remittances have on children's schooling in the Haitian context. For example, although remittances alleviate budgetary constraints and raise the likelihood that children will be able to attend school, household out-migration creates a void and foists a financial burden on

those who remain in the household, thus, reducing the chances of children being schooled (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo, 2010). However, in rural Pakistan, Mansuri (2006a; 2000b, cited in Fleury, 2016) noted that parental migration, on a temporary basis, resulted in a 54 percent increase in education for girls and a 7 percent increase for boys. Dropout rates also decreased in Pakistan when remittances were received; 44 percent and 55 percent for girls and boys, respectively (Bouoiyour and Miftah, 2016). Even in the event that a family member had emigrated from Pakistan, remittances allow boys to complete one additional grade, and girls, two (Mansuri 2006a; 2000b, cited in Fleury 2016). Evidence from Morocco, presented by Bouoiyour and Miftah (2016) also suggested that remittances reduce dropouts.

During and after the 2008-2009 global economic crisis, many Mexican immigrants reduced the amount of remittances that they sent home, or stopped remitting altogether (Alacaraz et al., 2010). This negative shock caused a notable decrease in school attendance, and significant increases in child labour as a coping mechanism for the economic hardship caused by reductions to household income (Alacaraz et al., 2012). Although difficult to capture because most parents will not admit to sending their children to work, González-König and Woodon (2007) suspected that this was also the case in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, based on data that indicated when children were not in school. Conversely, findings from Bouoiyour and Miftah's (2016) analysis of Moroccan data, indicated that remittances reduced children's participation in the labour market because their earnings were no longer needed by the family.

This brief overview of education-remittance literature suggests that there is a relationship—both positive and negative — between these two entities. But again, I should point out the gap in the existing literature about the collective dimension of remittances that are geared towards schools themselves so that they may operate and deliver adequate instruction, and quite

realistically, increase the efficacy of developing states' provision of public schooling. That said, perhaps remittances that are directed towards education can be conceptualized as an extension of what Levitt (1998) calls "social remittances," which are "the ideas, behaviours, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving- to sending-country communities" (Levitt, 1998, p. 927). In Chapter 6, I will further elaborate, but for the time being, I recommend this paradigm shift so that we, as social scientists, in our study of macro-economic trends do not "talk past" (Levitt and Lamba-Nieves, 2013, p. 11) the important granular details of the lived experiences of 'remitters' and 'receivers' (Levitt and Lamba-Nieves, 2013). It is incumbent upon scholars to formulate more nuanced questions about *who* both parties are because they are not always individuals/families who are transacting in a transnational giving and receiving relationship.

Conclusion

I conclude this chapter and literature review by summoning new knowledge about collective givers, diasporic alumni groups and other nonprofit/not-for-profit organizations, and institutional receivers, public primary and other schools, in educational and developing world contexts. Because, the economic and political realities of our time — which are the result of the juggernaut of globalization — shape the lived experiences of people (Levitt, 2001), and in the case of public primary schooling, the everyday worlds of childhood. For this reason, we must seek to understand how the transnational "loyalties and participatory energies" (Levitt, 2001, p. 5) of diasporic villages can be more advantageously mobilized for the purpose of "giving back to the future," which I will unpack in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 3

THE METHODOLOGICAL MAP

Infrastructure

I embody a second generation ‘Jamaican-Canadian-ness,’ which I outlined in Chapter 1, that inspired this research study and continuously informed its development, and its completion. As such, its methodological mapping and data analysis were very intentional and reflexive processes, wherein I constantly negotiated my motives and objectives for conducting this study. Although I had visited Jamaica several times prior to the dissertative process, it was necessary for me to be deliberate in my use of a culturally relevant lens. In so doing, I was able to view myself and social location in accordance with the customs, mores and standards of the people and places that I studied. As such, epistemologically and ontologically, the data that I collected were more nuanced, and their presentation in this dissertation, more honorific of their stories.

Having already determined that the hand of structural adjustment has created an austere climate in Jamaica’s public school system (Thompson, 2014), I set out on a journey to ascertain the local, ‘everyday experience narrative’ of structural adjustment at the primary school level, and, the response(s) of GTA³⁸-based Jamaican diasporic alumni associations to this. My pursuit was directed by the following queries: 1) How do fiscal challenges in public education affect educational experiences? 2) How are alumni associations in Jamaican diasporic communities helping to alleviate fiscal challenges in education in the age of austerity (1977 to present)? And, 3) What are the local and transnational implications of these fiscal challenges to Jamaicans at home as well as its diasporic community?

³⁸ “GTA” and Toronto will be used interchangeably.

Design and Rationale

In order to carry-out this research, I immediately turned to my familial ties, and contacted my uncle who is an alumnus of the NJA, and an active member of the NJAAA (Canadian Chapter). He then connected me to the sitting president and the school's current principal. Both agreed to write letters of support for the study, which I presented to York University's Office of Research Ethics as accompaniments to the "TD1: Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal" and "TD2: Research Ethics Protocol Form for Graduate Student Thesis, Dissertation, or Pilot Project" forms. I received Ethics Approval in February 2018 and solidified plans to do fieldwork at the NJA in April and May 2018.

I fairly regularly attend fundraising dinners for schools in Jamaica — which suggests that the frequency of these events points to bigger political-economic phenomena. However, the NJA is distinctive because it is a site of familiarity and accessibility to me. I became acquainted with the Association because my father is a founding member. He did not attend the school, but when asked, supported his cousin's endeavour to give back to his primary school alma mater. His engagement with the Association throughout its twenty-two-year existence has allowed me to witness its maturation process, 'graduating' from backyard barbecue fund-raisers to formal dinner and dance events; the majority of which I have attended.

For this reason, I chose the NJA and its Toronto-based alumni association in order to perform a case study that is both local and global — "glocal" (Ritzer, 2007) — in proportion. According to Yin (1994), case studies are best employed when "how" and "why" questions are being asked, and they help researches to examine phenomena as they occur, and in the context of real-life (Yin, 1994).

Qualitative Research

I elected to use qualitative research methodologies because they “capture and re-present ... the authentic, original voices heard, seen and felt in the field setting” (Denzin, 1997, p. 32). Eisner (1991) argues that such a task requires an “enlightened eye” that will, ultimately, help the researcher “to use language to reveal what, paradoxically, words can never say” (p. 3) about what they saw and perceived in their research encounters to a broader audience.

As the architect of this dissertation, I am mindful that in studying the transnational-diasporic nature of public schooling in Jamaica, I am inherently studying people. Therefore, qualitative research is most befitting because it honours the lived experience of actual “flesh-and-blood individuals” (Denzin, 1997, p. 33) in any social setting. Although quantitative research, has its merits, qualitative research tells a story, not only through what is seen and said, but also through what goes unseen and unsaid (Denzin, 1997). Hence, my decision to craft a bifurcated qualitative study that was inclusive of local and diasporic experiences. This approach allowed me to gain an array of perspectives regarding the changes to public education in the era of structural adjustment (1977-present) in two locations: Hanover, Jamaica and the GTA.

Ethnography

Beginning my fieldwork in Hanover, I conducted an ethnography in concurrence with a series of semi-structured interviews. According to Spradley (1979) “instead of collecting “data” about people, the ethnographer seeks to learn from people, to be taught by them” (p. 4). So fundamentally, ethnography is the occupation of describing cultural experiences; and a researcher can only do this *after* she has made an attempt to understand the life of the native from the native’s perspective (Spradley, 1979).

The NJA, my first research location, is somewhat “on the map of my familiar” (Lal, 1996, p. 192, quoted in Davies (1999), given that it is located in the largely rural parish of my father’s birth, which I had visited several times before, specifically, Welcome District.³⁹ But, although I am well acquainted with this, and other areas in Hanover, as an ethnographer, I grappled with a unique sense of foreignness in Walking District where the primary school is located. Much like Lal (1996) in her native Delhi, India, I was aware of my dislocation in a place of familiarity; and as such, I negotiated this as a Western, and also, diasporic researcher throughout the duration of my stay. In several instances, I was researching myself (Davies, 1996) auto-ethnographically as an active participant in the school environment. Auto-ethnography is a type of ethnography that connects auto-biography to cultural, social and political contexts (Ellis, 2004). As such, I was able to immerse myself in a tangible and experiential world (Davies, 1999), in which I studied my surroundings (i.e. people, places and things) and myself in relation to these entities, as well as my thoughts and feelings about them.

The combined articulation of ethnography and auto-ethnography during my stay in Jamaica equipped me with a visual epistemology and a tactile epistemology that I would not have gleaned had I followed other research avenues (Davies, 1999). The merged technique broadened my intellectual understanding of the boundaries of the targeted research location that was, indeed, the NJA. However, in studying and experiencing the everyday life of the NJA, I was forced to consider the nature of my travels to and from the school on a daily basis. Unfortunately — or fortunately for research purposes — I experienced the sixth and seventh State of Public Emergency (SOPE) proclamations in the parishes of Saint James and Saint Catherine. The proclamations were implemented in an attempt to counter the rising level of

³⁹ Pseudonym used for the district that the NJA is located in. Reminder: “NJA” is also a pseudonym.

criminality in the country.⁴⁰ (St. Andrew and Westmorland are also under SOPE proclamations as of April 2019 and July 2019, respectively). Because my temporary residence was in Montego Bay, which is in Saint James, and the NJA in Walking District, Hanover, I encountered heavily armed soldiers and police officers at the SOPE checkpoint that is located at the border. There, my driver, Mr. Kare, and I were instructed to wind our windows down so that his vehicle could be visually scanned on our way to and from the research location each day. On one occasion, he was asked to open his trunk for inspection.

I cannot say that I found the soldiers and police officers' weapons and surveillance to be alarming or threatening because the sight of uniformed men with large guns is not unusual in Jamaica. However, methodologically, I interpreted this daily routine to be a part of my ethnographic experience; noting the many occasions that I saw school children's backpacks being searched for weapons and drugs in my fieldwork notebook, I wondered if any of 'my students' experienced this on a regular basis.

Another notable ethnographic/auto-ethnographic experience that was external to the NJA, were my weekly trips to a local supermarket, where I could put these words into context every time a cashier indicated the amount that I owed for my groceries: "I can only afford to buy three yogurts a month because it is so expensive." This comment was made during one morning break when Mrs. Carter-Morgan, the school's principal, noticed that I was eating yogurt. Naturally, an informal conversation about the overall cost of living ensued. Years of going grocery shopping in Jamaica have proven the reality of her words to me. However, on this occasion, and on my

⁴⁰ In the words of Prime Minister Andrew Holness, "under the state of emergency the security forces have been given "extraordinary powers." With ability to suspend rights, in some cases, the "security forces [have] also [been] authorized to search, curtail operating hours of business, access to places and ... detain persons without a warrant." Citizens are also subject to personal and vehicular searches at designated checkpoints.

subsequent trips to the grocery store thereafter, I pondered how the steadily decreasing value of the Jamaican dollar, in congruence with ever increasing rates of inflation, affected ‘my students’ and their families, as well as the school community on a whole. Moreover, I better understood the novelty of Corn Flakes and peanut butter in the school setting. (When the school Breakfast/Tea Program has these particular foodstuffs, they, very quickly, run out because these are the children’s favourite breakfast items, but they are seldom purchased due to their exorbitant cost.)

Semi-Structured Interviewing at the NJA

Returning to education as a basic unit of study, in *Inside Jamaican Schools* (2001), Hyacinth Evans, Professor Emerita of Teacher Education at the University of the West Indies-Mona, describes ethnography as a most optimal research tool because it enables one to view the school and classroom as socially constructed environments that are created by the individuals who interact in these spaces. As such, ethnography allowed me to ascertain “how teachers teach, how students learn and do not learn, the resources available and the perspectives of parents, teachers, and students” (Evans, 2001, p. 27), which are essential understandings for this dissertation.

Because my field research transcended mere observation, I rapidly assumed the following roles: substitute teacher, educational assistant, secretary/administrator, mediator, advocate, before and after school supervisor, and bottled water, pencil and pencil sharper sales representative. According to Spradley (1979), the many roles that one fulfills while doing research, “often obscures the most fundamental task of all field work—doing ethnography” (p. 3). I disagree, and argue that these simultaneous roles, albeit difficult to juggle at times, *is* ethnography. Had I not been thrust into the school environment, I would not have been made

privity to important nuances which, ultimately, have added both richness and depth to this study. Moreover, through my involvement, I became well acquainted with the entire school community, and formed warm professional working relationships with the staff, so much so that my name was added to the “Term 3 Devotion Roster.”⁴¹ I also accompanied the staff on their monthly community recruitment walks (upon which I will expand in Chapter 5), attended staff meetings, taught lessons, invigilated tests and exams, wrote letters of permission to parents for field trips, and various other administrative tasks.

The canteen prepared and delivered lunch for me on a daily basis along with the other teachers’ lunches. I also attended Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings and conversed with the Association’s most active members on a daily basis at the make-shift school tuck shop, located under a tree in the front yard (see Figure 3.1).



Figure 3.1 School Tuck Shop

⁴¹ The Devotion Roster is created at the beginning of each school term, and indicates which teacher will be leading morning devotions with the student body. Since I arrived shortly after the third term began, Mrs. Carter-Morgan added my name since I participated in the daily life of the school as a staff member.

Having been ‘adopted’ as a teacher, I met all one hundred and forty-six students, and enjoyed many interesting and entertaining conversations.⁴² However, I did not realize how strong the teacher-student bond had become until a Grade 5 student approached me in the school yard and indicated that she overheard another girl in her class’s plan to stab a boy in Grade 6 at the front gate after school. Pointing to a tree on the fence line between the school yard and the adjacent property, she said, “The knife is right there, Ms. Thompson. She hid it behind the tree. I saw her.” I, then, thanked her and approached this student and asked her if she was hiding something. Very anxiously, and rather obscurely, the student linked arms with me and led me to the tree, where, to my surprise and horror, she retrieved a large knife with serrated edges and placed it in my hand. Sparing the remaining details of the story, because the near-crisis was averted and the student was reprimanded, I present the following surmisation: the absence of a relationship between the students and me, in this instance, may have resulted in a dramatically different outcome.

Forging the above-mentioned relationships made the process of soliciting candidates for participation in the semi-structured interviewing process less difficult. This supports Davies’ (2001) claim that “ethnographic interviewing” (p. 95) — semi-structured interviewing in an ethnographic context — necessitates a “relationship between participants beyond simply what is said” (p. 95). Because relationships of trust were built, I perceive that participants felt comfortable to expand on their responses, digress, go off topic and inject their own questions and

⁴² The natural curiosity of the children led them, on a daily basis, to ask questions about my native Canada. I also declined to answer questions about my age and marital status. Other, slightly more uncomfortable, questions pertained to my ‘long’ hair and ‘light’ complexion. Given the tensions surrounding these particular phenotypical indicators of Blackness amongst Afro-descendant people, I often deflected these conversations, so as not to entertain or promote discussions that degraded ‘short’ hair and ‘dark’ skin, and glorified the opposite of this because I observed that the children tend to tease one another along these racializing and polarizing lines.

concerns into the interview session (Davies, 2001), making for a more efficacious discussion. In total, I interviewed twenty-eight people in Hanover (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Interview Participants (Walking District, Hanover)

Parents	Teachers	Administrators	Students
13	7	2	6

Because principals are critical determinants of school success and improvement (Leithwood and Montgomery, 1982), I invited the NJA's principal and a Regional Education Officer to participate in the study. Their perspectives are vital to this study because they serve as administrators, and as overall school managers who supervise teachers, students, support staff and program/curricular development. (Notably, the Education Officer carries out these tasks as the overseer of twenty-two schools in Jamaica's western region.) Both are also tasked with balancing limited Ministry issued budgets.

According to Reeve (2006) teachers facilitate an environment that promotes or impedes students' learning. Therefore, by interviewing teachers, I ascertained how they teach, how students respond, how they confront challenges, how they navigate school administration and how they engage parents and guardians. Seven of eight teachers volunteered to be interviewed for this study.

In the context of Jamaica, Handa (1996) reported the following: 1) parental education and income are important determinants of secondary school enrolment; 2) parental income is the sole determinant of enrolment in elite high schools; and 3) cost-sharing is disproportionately only affordable to wealthier parents. With this understanding, I interviewed parents because I wanted to ascertain, first-hand, how they interpreted fee structures by discussing the financial barriers to making payments, if any. Moreover, their, overall, experiences as parents of school-aged

children were important to understand because parents who are meaningfully involved in their children's schooling have a significant impact on their learning outcomes (Comer and Haynes, 1991). Also, their insight and knowledge are complimentary to schooling staff's skills, and help to strengthen the learning and social environment (Comer and Haynes, 1991). In total, thirteen parents were interviewed. Some were recommended by Mrs. Carter-Morgan because of her belief that they would be the most willing to participate in the study, and the others independently volunteered.

Certainly, students are the key stakeholders in schooling. Curricula, pedagogy and programs are created for their benefit. Van de Brandon (2015) describes students as the central ingredient in the fuel of education, followed by teachers, administrators and parents. Colloquially speaking, what Van de Brandon (2015) is saying is "no students, no school." For this reason, I conducted a group interview at a noisy roadside jerk stop⁴³ that is near to the school with four students from the Grade 6 class who were recommended for the study by their teacher. Our discussion was under twenty minutes because I was working within lunch hour time constraints. I had to forgo eating my lunch and 'cut to the chase' in order to ascertain their overall perceptions of their respective experiences of Grades 1 through 6, and the Alumni Association's support of their school. I also interviewed two students who recently graduated and are now in Grades 7 and 8: one in person at the NJA, and the other over the phone. Both shared their experiences as students at the NJA, and were recipients of one of the NJAAA's high school entry scholarships. Mrs. Carter-Morgan introduced me to their parents, whom I asked for permission to interview them.

⁴³ A jerk stop is an informal eatery that is, typically, located near a busy road that sells food items, mainly chicken, pork and fish, that have been marinated in jerk seasoning. Other side-dishes and drinks are available.

Semi-structured Interviewing in the Greater Toronto Area

I transnationalized this research upon my return to the GTA, and utilized the semi-structured interviewing technique a second time. Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of the NJAAA, including members of the Executive Board and members at large, and friends and supporters of the Association, in order to capture why and how these individuals have responded to the financial needs of the NJA (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2. Interview Participants (The Greater Toronto Area)

NJAAA Members	Friends & Supporters of the NJAAA
8	7

According to Page and Mercer (2012), Peter (2010) and Lindley (2009) remitting is intrinsic to the diasporic lifestyle and is a widely proliferated social practice due to the constancy of needs ‘back home.’ Although Page and Mercer (2012) argued that the necessity of remittances in countries in the Global South overrode the remitter’s preferences, this project required me to determine whether or not this rings true in a Jamaican context. Interviewing alumni, and other supporters, of the NJA helped me to comprehend the personal, intimate details of their transnational involvement, which appears to transcend organizational identification and school pride (Mael and Ashford, 1992), given that many of the Alumni Association’s members did not attend the school. Therefore, gaining these individuals’ perspectives, whom I interviewed in private residences and local coffee shops, was vital to this dissertation.

Reflections on the Data Collection Process

Hanover

When I arrived in Hanover, I learned that none of the Observational Consent forms that I sent to the school approximately six weeks prior to my arrival were returned. A ‘side-conversation’ with a staff member revealed that roughly forty-percent of the NJA’s parents have challenges with literacy and, as a result, did not complete the form. Others, the individual noted, did not understand the form or did not view the research to be important or relevant to them.

The staff-member’s ‘forty-percent illiteracy thesis’ was somewhat confirmed on occasion during the interview process, where some parents appeared to be completely or functionally illiterate. In these instances, I obtained verbal consent via audio recording, and for those who felt comfortable, I indicated the lines upon which they could print and sign their name. In both scenarios, I thoroughly explained the research using everyday-accessible, non-specialist language, which I realized was important in *all* interview encounters. As for the obtainment of Observational Consent, the Parent Teacher’s Association wrote a letter endorsing the study and offered its consent for me to conduct observational research at the NJA.⁴⁴

On the subject of the ethnographic interviews themselves, it is important to note that the researcher must be versatile, and, in many instances, carry out research that we are not trained to do, in locations that are not ‘ideal,’ and without optimal audio recording quality. For example, five of the seven interviews that I conducted with the teachers who volunteered, took place in their classrooms, where we contended with time and limited space, playful and noisy students

⁴⁴ I received approval to conduct the study from Ministry of Education prior to arriving in Hanover. However, I was advised to seek observational consent from parents by York University’s Office of Research Ethics

and other, frequent, interruptions, during the morning break or twelve o'clock noon hour lunch period. Some interviews had to be done in increments, and over a period of one to two days.

Because the Guidance Department and Music program do not have their own office and classroom, respectively, their staff members' interviews were conducted outside. Guidance Counsellor, Mrs. Reed's interview took place in the 'outdoor classroom,' which is a grouping of old and weathered desks and chairs that remain under a large and shady tree (see Figure 3.2). And, Mr. Thomas, who is the Music Teacher's interview was conducted on the stone wall that divides the unlevelled playing field (see Figure 3.3). We concluded our discussion moments before a deluge of rain arrived, which is typical in Walking District in the months of April and May.



Figure 3.2 outdoor classroom



Figure 3.3 stone wall that divides the school yard

Twelve of the thirteen interviews that I conducted with parents took place at the outdoor tuck shop or under another shady tree in the yard (see Figure 3.1 above). We either narrowly escaped rain, or sweated profusely due to the rising sauna-like summer heat that automatically shortened the standard sixty to ninety minute interview time, unless the parent was particularly engaged in the discussion. In these cases, both the parent and I endured the sun's powerful rays in a conjoint effort to make meaning of their own and their children's lived experiences at the NJA.

Also important to note is the stereotypical, but real existence of 'island time,' to which one must become acclimated in order to *actually* conduct research in Jamaica, and perhaps other Caribbean islands. As I am well acquainted with this phenomenon, its occurrence was not surprising to me when scheduled interviews, often, ran behind. This happened fairly regularly, and served as a reminder to be as adaptable and flexible as possible.

Finally, in a reverential manner, I found it necessary to acknowledge that a certain degree of privilege allowed me to undertake this study. The first being my ability to travel to Jamaica using my Canadian passport, which can be considered a form of currency in the global travel

economy. The average Jamaican has to apply for a travel Visa and wait for word of its acceptance or denial before they can make travel arrangements, whereas Canadians can travel to most countries without having to go through this process.

Also respectfully, and feeling somewhat guilty, I travelled to Jamaica, spending two months of the five month-long Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 3903 strike at York University in the island while performing “8th Line” labour duties on Twitter ⁴⁵ wherever I could find a reliable Wi-Fi connection. What I found particularly sobering about this experience as a researcher is that it, again, reminded me of my *very* Western social location as a teaching assistant at a public post-secondary institution. I acknowledge this in light of the fact that I arrived in Jamaica approximately one month after the Jamaica Teachers’ Association-sanctioned three-day sickout, which was a response to the Government’s offer of a sixteen percent wage increase over four years for teachers.

As a member of CUPE 3903, I will not say that our reasons for striking are invalid. In addition to much needed wage increases, institutional clawbacks for those graduate students who have been awarded scholarships makes it challenging to cope with the rising cost of living in the GTA. However, although these and other issues, such as a tuition indexation for international graduate students is vital, comparatively speaking, some of CUPE 3903’s demands strictly existed in the realm of “First World problems.” Our ability to strike for one hundred and forty-three days is certainly a privilege. Nowhere was this more apparent to me than in the field when members of the staff would ask the following question periodically: “Ms. Thompson, are you

⁴⁵ According to CUPE 3903, “Historically, York has had 7 gates into the university that the Union pickets. The “8th Line” is made up of members requiring accommodated strike duties.” Instead of picketing, 8th Line members perform various administrative tasks. I volunteered to be a part of the social media team, where we posted strike related information for the general public to view.

still on strike?”. On more than one occasion it was noted that such a thing would never happen in Jamaica.

Not only did I grapple with this as a researcher in a contextual sense; I negotiated it as an educator, and its implications for my own praxis. My time spent on the 8th Line during the strike, at least in the first two months, allowed me to immerse myself in this project, and receive a small amount of compensation for my Twitter duties; whereas, the Jamaica teachers’ strike ended as quickly as it began, leaving the teachers liable to make up three days of instruction at the end of the academic year without pay, and their demands unmet. Needless to say, there is an inherent privilege that is associated with Westerners’ ability to do field research in developing countries (Donahue Singh, 2016).

Greater Toronto Area

As one can imagine, conducting semi-structured interviews in the GTA was a vastly different experience than in Hanover. This endeavour was multi-spatial. By this I mean, I met with each interview participant at their leisure and wherever they determined to be their ‘turf’. In these sessions, I gained insight into “the work of conversation” (Turkle, 2015, p. 8), which is a tool that can be used for making sense of phenomena, and is most optimal in face-to-face encounters (Turkle, 2015). According to Turkle (2015):

When things go right, the social scientist’s interview becomes an open and easy exchange. This often happens after trust has been established, when the researcher’s notebook has been closed, when people who only a few minutes earlier had been “participants” in “your study” realize that there is something in this for them. Your question becomes their question as well. A conversation begins (p. 8).

Through these conversations, particularly with those whom I perceived to be elderly, I encountered a composite of history and experience. However, in order to zero in on these individuals' collective and personal investments in public schooling in Jamaica/their alma mater, my natural and intellectual ears needed to remain open and, often, listen for lengthy periods of time to, seemingly, irrelevant, but fascinating, stories about their families, childhoods, migration, employment, experiences of racism in Canada, community engagement and so on.

The individual whom I contracted to transcribe the recorded interviews noted their lengthiness, saying "these interviews are long, but you can tell that some of these people just wanted to talk and be heard." In "Interviewing Older People: Relationships in Qualitative Research" (2010) Robertson and Hale discuss the importance of researchers' maintaining the willingness to listen, arguing that story telling establishes a distinctive level of respect. And also woven into these stories, is pertinent information (Robert and Hale, 2011). Robert and Hale (2011) also indict traditional methodology courses for failing to teach active listening, hence, my reason for addressing this.

Reflexively speaking, many of the interviews that I conducted in the GTA required a high degree of attentiveness from me; and many a times, as an accompaniment to active listening I viewed family photos, sat for a home cooked meal or a cup of tea/coffee, and was given personal tours of entire residences. Although I was not conducting ethnographic research during this time, these experiences enhanced the interviews by facilitating a safe and comfortable environment for the participant to share meaningful information that contributed immensely to this study's findings.

Sampling

I was intentional about seeking out “information-rich cases for study in depth” (Patton, 2001, p. 230) through my use of purposive sampling in both Hanover and Toronto. Purposive sampling enabled me to identify interview participants, and subsequently, draw on their voices and experiences of intimate involvement in education in the era of structural adjustment.

As noted above, while in Hanover, my ‘ethnographic immersion’ opened the door for me to recruit participants. Teachers printed and sent copies of the advertising flyer that I created to parents whom they thought would be best suited for the study. In addition, parents were encouraged to volunteer during a PTA meeting where I was asked to outline the nature of my research. Parents of students who recently graduated from the NJA were also contacted by the school, as well as individuals whom the staff knew would benefit from the JMD \$1000 (approximately USD \$7.40 today and \$7.75 in 2018) gift certificate-incentive to Fontana Pharmacy or to Sangster’s Book Store, where most Ministry required text books are sold. Interview participants were able to contact me on my local mobile phone in order to set-up an interview time.

I also utilized snowball sampling, asking participants to refer friends and family members. This non-probability technique is also known as chain referral (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981), and proved to be rather effective during my time in Walking District. Purposive and snowball sampling were also utilized in the GTA in order to garner interview participants. After making contact with a senior member of the NJAAA, I was invited to attend a meeting of the Executive Board that was held in a private residence, where I was asked to explain the study. At this meeting I asked board members to volunteer and refer individuals from their social and

familial networks. Following this, I emailed members of the Executive Board an advertisement for the study.

Participants were asked to engage in one sixty to ninety minute semi-structured interview (see Appendices A and B for interview questions), the tone of which was kept informal and conversational so that the participant felt comfortable to respond to my questions (Longhurst, 2016; Krueger and Casey, 2000). And, although, I approached each of my interviews with an interview schedule of sorts, the semi-structured interviewing technique enabled the interview participant to co-create the interview as it progressed, freeing both of us to pursue lines of discussion that were organic and unplanned, many of which yielded groundbreaking information that is vital to this study. Each session was recorded using iPhone X “Voice Memos,” and subsequently filed by date in iTunes and Google Docs.

Data Analysis

Ethnographic Data Analysis

Admittedly, the data analysis processes for this study were daunting because this dissertation’s bifurcated-transnational design embodies much complexity. However, I did not realize how much so until I returned to my regular academic life, where I was challenged to ‘write -up’ the data that I collected during my field research in Jamaica and Toronto. Unlike semi-structured interview data analysis, which I discuss immediately below, there is much debate about the systemization of ethnographic data processing (Jones and Watt, 2010). In other words, there is no definitive manner in which ethnographic data can/should be analyzed. Not to mention, “there just seems to be so much data and so little sense of order to it” (Jones and Watt, 2010, p. 159); thus, making the interpretive process elusive, and in many cases, slowing to the writing process.

Because explaining ethnographic data opposes positivist conventions (Jones and Watt, 2010), Bryman (2008) implores the researcher to let the data speak for itself, using the following skills: reading, reflection and exposition, in their examination of various kinds of data (Jones and Watt, 2010; Geertz, 1984). Heeding this advice, I read, and reread, *everything* from my Discovery. By “everything” I mean, my field notes, which I jotted down throughout the school day, and in the evenings when I returned to my temporary residence in Montego Bay. Also, while I was in Jamaica, I collected other articles, which include an advertising flyer for school recruitment, the agendas from the staff and PTA meetings that I attended, letters of invitation to fundraising events, and correspondences between the school and the Alumni Association. I also ‘read’ the numerous photographs that I took of the school’s facilities and its people because images assist in shaping our knowledge of our worlds, cultures and selves (Salkeld, 2014). Digital media also remind us of our experiences (Salkeld, 2014), which explains why I found this technique to be both connective and transportive to time, place, and people.

‘Mind mapping’ (Jones and Watt, 2010), a process whereby I drew out themes using arrows, bubbles and other symbols on a large white board, in order to connect themes from the ethnographic data, was very useful. Although this, often, looked imperceptible to the outsider, I was able to decipher the information, and determine what was most relevant to the task at hand, which was this dissertation, and what should be earmarked for future work.

Qualitative Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data from the semi-structured interviews, I followed what Creswell (2007) describes as the general analysis procedures for qualitative data. These include drawing ideas out taking notes, coding (i.e. identifying them, reducing them to themes and counting their frequency), relating data that have been categorized to analytic frameworks found

in literature, establishing a point of view and displaying the data in the form of charts and diagrams. Respectively, these procedures contribute to Creswell's (2007) "data analysis spiral" that encourages the researcher to examine data in analytical circles as opposed to taking a static linear approach.

Echoing Dey (1993), Creswell (2007) argues that "we learn by doing" (p. 6); meaning, that data analysis processes themselves teach us, indicating what the data are pointing to. This understanding helped me to gain a deeper local and transnational understanding of the consequences of fiscal challenges to education and the subsequent responses to them from the perspectives of my interview participants. The recorded interviews were subsequently transcribed by an independent contractor who is of Caribbean descent, and was able to understand Jamaican patois, and English that is spoken with a Jamaican accent.

Once the semi-structured interviews were transcribed to text, I conducted multiple manual analysis spirals, and employed NVivo to assist me in the digital coding process in the event that I failed to identify any key patterns. Coding is most significant for effective data analysis because raw data need to be systematically organized in order to showcase important and groundbreaking findings for the reader (Basi, 2003). Therefore, the sometimes arduous process requires the researcher to devote significant time to creating labels and tags for "allocating units of meaning" (Basi, 2003, p. 144) to both descriptive and inferential information that is 'brought in' from the research field. The coding process allowed me to detect pertinent phenomena and frequent examples of their occurrences (Basi, 2003; Seidel and Kelle, 1995). As such, I noted similarities and differences, in addition to common themes (Basi, 2003). But most importantly, coding helped me to very carefully "condense" and "distill" (Tesch, 1990, p. 139) the data that are most meaningful to a broader audience outside of the research context.

Consequentially, and as noted above, some of the data remain unutilized (Creswell, 2007; Walcott, 1994).

Limitations of the Study

I acknowledge that this study would have been more comprehensive if I was able to work with multiple schools and their alumni who reside in the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto and other Jamaican Diasporic hubs such as the United Kingdom and the United States. However, as this is my doctoral dissertation, time and feasibility were important considerations. Bearing these in mind, I decided to focus on one school in order to create an infrastructure upon which I can build future research that pertains to national debt, public education and diaspora in broader Caribbean and developing world contexts.

Validity and Generalizability of the Study

My lived experience as a member of the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto consistently shapes my research about the island's precarious economic existence. Moreover, being a descendant of parents who emigrated to Canada in the immediate years leading up to the era of structural adjustment (1977) points to an important fact: Jamaica's turbulent economy influenced the decision that my parents, and others, made to come to Canada. By way of extensive library research since becoming a graduate student in 2012, I have historicized and contextualized my own inception and have concluded that the phenomenon of diasporization, which I will expand on in Chapter 4, is not without a colonial beginning point. Therefore, as Jamaican Diasporans, we do not exist outside of colonialism's continuous effects on our homeland. Our financial, political and social remittances are an indispensable factor in preserving the country and therefore, the people of Jamaica.

Albeit these are my sentiments, admittedly, they made it difficult for me to completely turn away from my inherent epistemological underpinnings while I was researching and analyzing data for, and authoring this dissertation (Creswell, 2007). Nevertheless, we all write from a particularized place (Hall, 1990), so constant and ardent attempts to compartmentalize my own preconceived notions about the data throughout the analysis and writing processes, in order to increase the validity of this study, were necessary (Creswell, 2007). That said, it is necessary to point out that this dissertation cannot be assumed to speak definitively for all Jamaicans at home and in the GTA about public education, national debt, migration and remittances.

Finally, on one hand, it can be argued that the outcomes of this dissertation are, to some extent, limited in generalizability because it is a case study. But, Stokes and Anderson (1990) argue that many less-developed/developing countries often exist in a constant state of “economic disarticulation” that distorts financial growth; and as such, limits states’ ability to provide adequate public educational opportunities to school aged children. Further, Edwards and Ureta (2003) and Lutreu and Teasdale (1993) highlight the importance of remittances in these instances.

Although each developing state is unique, in an ideological sense, debt and economic upheaval are not. However varied their manifestations may be, their negative effects on public education systems are apparent (Some, 2010; Edwards and Ureta, 2003; Lutreu and Teasdale, 1993; Bradshaw et. al., 1993; Jolly, 1987). With this understanding, I make a case, not for the generalizability of the findings from this study, per se, but for the theory that has been developed as a result of it, which can be extrapolated to other future case studies (Maxwell, 1998) in the Caribbean and other developing or heavily-indebted countries.

CHAPTER 4

AN ANTI-COLONIAL THEORETICAL APPROACH

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the theoretical frame of this research, which is anti-colonial theory. One must understand that in a Jamaican context, studying the institutions of public education and the economy and the phenomena of migration and remittances, one is inherently grappling with a very present and palpable coloniality. Outlining anti-colonial theory here is, indeed, an intellectual exercise, and is an attempt to indict colonialism for being imposing, dispossessive, destructive and unjust. But I do not stop there.

After outlining the central tenants of anti-colonialism, I will discuss how it, necessarily, transcends the realm of theory and is more broadly applicable to the subject matter of this dissertation. Therefore, the second half of this chapter is entitled “Applying Anti-colonial Theory to Education in Jamaica,” in an attempt to explicate how ordinary people encounter the colonial in their everyday lives. As it pertains to this project, these are the individuals who shared their time, space and stories with me in Hanover and Toronto.

What is Anti-Colonial Theory?

Anti-colonial theory is a response to any and all things colonial — past, present and future. In the words of anti-Apartheid activist Steven Biko (1978), it prompts us to ask: “Why is it necessary for us as colonized peoples to think and reflect collectively about a problem not of our creation i.e., the problem of colonialism?” (quoted in Dei, 2006, p. 1). According to Simmons and Dei (2012) anti-colonial theory has twelve central principles:

1. Anti-colonial theory is concerned with the inner workings of the colonial and neocolonial and their relationship to the ways in which knowledge is produced, interrogated and

validated; how Indigeneity and Indigenouslyness are interpreted; and how agency is pursued, resistance is articulated, and subjective politics are achieved.

2. Anti-colonial theory functions on the premise that knowledge must challenge colonialism.
3. The colonial must be understood as a dominant imposition, rather than as merely foreign or alien.
4. Conceptualizing the colonial in this manner broadens our understanding of its location that is often thought to exist only at the territorial/geographical level. However, to the investigative eye, its direct and indirect iterations can be seen in “post-colonial” society in education systems, technologies and other places in spite of mass attempts to achieve national decolonizations and restorations of political sovereignty.
5. Anti-colonialism theorizes the ontology of dominant-subordinate relationships.
6. The theory necessitates engagement with the following concepts: “colonialism, oppression, colonial encounter, decolonization, power, agency and resistance” (p. 75). It also champions the voices and intellectual capital of local people groups.
7. Anti-colonial theory must be analyzed intersectionally, and in an integrated manner, giving consideration to colonization, decolonization and imperialism. During the process of challenging colonial relations, understanding that their methods of operation may change, is important.
8. Anti-colonial theory values spiritual ways of knowing.
9. Epistemologically, anti-colonial theory belongs to colonized people because it captures our experiences as subjects of the colonial and neocolonial.
10. It puts forward a “literacy of resistance” (Kempf, 2010, p. 45).

11. Anti-colonial theory calls the colonizer to a place of consciousness that encourages them to acknowledge their complicity and take responsibly — through partnerships with colonized people — for the remediation of oppressive colonial systems.
12. Finally, it asserts that colonialism is transhistorical as opposed to historical because colonialism persists over time through various mechanisms.

Although anti-colonialism is, indeed, a theoretical orientation, Dei and Asharzadeh (2001) prefer the moniker “anti-colonial discursive framework” because within discursive discourse there is elasticity, transparency and fluidity, rather than the traditional fixation with/on “particular intellectual orthodoxies” (p. 299). Dei and Asharzadeh (2001) posit that this is necessary because, oftentimes, theories are too rigid and inflexible, making them ill-equipped to understand and explain the social realities of marginalized and subordinate people.

Anti-colonial theory is attuned with changing academic and political questions; thereby, making it a counter oppositional discourse to colonial oppression because it is derived from our experiences as colonized people. In doing so, it celebrates our “oral, visual, textual, political and material resistance,” and “entails a shift away from a sole preoccupation with [our] victimization” (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001, p. 301).

However, in order to achieve this, anti-colonialism requires a dialogue with the past so as to engage the historical determinants of the here and now (Simmons and Dei, 2012). For example, in their political description of the seismic activity in Haiti in 2010, Simmons and Dei (2012), call for an interrogation of “the necessary activities of the West given [its] governing imperial relationship with Haiti” (p. 85). Simmons and Dei (2012) posit that in order to understand Haiti and similar societies, a tracing of the historical-material conditions of its poverty is necessary because its genesis is in the colonial plantation enclaves of Eurocentrism.

Therefore, we must grapple with the historicity of colonialism that has been about the continuous racializing, classing, sexualizing and gendering of bodies from particular geographical regions (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001). These mechanisms of discrimination are part and parcel of a contrived science of poverty and wealth (Marx, 1978) — both of which have need of the other.

Nevertheless, authentic anti-colonial work subverts the colonizing tendencies of power because of its embeddedness in political, economic and cultural transformation (Dei and Lordan, 2016). Ergo, new perspectives and ways of theorizing ought to configure coloniality differently so as to bring about new methods to decolonial politics (Dei and Lordan, 2016).

Anti-colonial Theory and Post-colonial Theory Are Not Synonymous

It is necessary to point out that anti-colonial theory is not to be conflated with post-colonial theory. The two theories are often used interchangeably and their stark differences are ignored (Dei and Lordan, 2016). However, with due respect to its most notable progenitors, which include Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha and others, post-colonial theory is a poststructuralist interpretation of the Third World that does very little for colonized people because it is too abstract (Shankar, 2001).⁴⁶ Ahmad (1992) and Dirlik (1997) share similar sentiments, arguing that post-colonial theory is entrenched in Western scholastic history (Shankar, 2001), and, as such, is lacking in practical application.

According to San Juan (1998), post-colonial theory “mystifies the political/ideological effects of Western postmodernist hegemony and prevents change ... by espousing a metaphysics of textualism” (p. 22). In other words, post-colonial theory is the intellectualists’ sport, enabling its practitioner to demonstrate their prowess in the realm of theorizing about coloniality but,

⁴⁶ It is important to pay homage to these authors because they began a necessary interrogation of colonialism and its iterations. However, as noted by Shankar (2001), Dirlik (1997), Amad (1992), Dei Lordan (2016) the efficacy of post-colonial intellectualism is limited.

ultimately, doing little or nothing to remedy or alleviate the problems that are associated with its manifestations. Colloquially speaking, one might call individuals who engage in such activities “armchair revolutionaries.”

Ahmad (1992) and Dirlik (1997) argue that post-colonial theory’s entrenchment in Western scholastic history (Shankar, 2001) increases its inefficacy outside of the Academy. For this reason, San Juan (1998) asks the following question: beyond the abstractions of “Gayatri Spivak’s (1985) fetishism of “the archives of imperialist governance,” or ... Bhabha’s (1990) “analogous cults of linguistic/psychological ambivalence” ” (p. 22), what can post-colonial theory’s idealist frameworks do for the colonized? In *Beyond Postcolonial Theory* (1998), San Juan (1998) pushes for a more constructive theory for colonized people. Anti-colonial theory is the response to this push.

As noted by Simmons and Dei (2012), the “post” prefix in post-colonial theory is homogenizing, implicating all in the colonial project [colonial subject and colonizer]. Meanwhile, the “anti” prefix calls out the proverbial bad guy [the colonizer] and carries with it a scathing critique of historical and current colonial domination that mediates the lives of colonized people even in the face of our resistance to it.

Dei and Asharzadeh (2001) posit that interpreting anti-colonial theory discursively affirms that the global capitalist system is inherently colonial, thereby, challenging the notion of postcoloniality. In other words, the “post” prefix needs be buried because colonialism has not passed, nor will it ever pass; therefore, contestation towards it must continue.

Anti-colonialism: Decolonization and Delinking

Now that it has been established that anti-colonial theory and post-colonial theory cannot and should not be used interchangeably, it is necessary to point out that there is synonymy

between anti-colonial theory and decolonization. That is to say, when one talks about anti-colonialism, one is automatically talking about decolonial practice, which, according to Dei and Jaimungal (2019), has three main stances. The first requires one to consider the producers of dominant/mainstream knowledges within the contexts of history, social location, identity and politics. Second, because anti-colonial theory and decolonization are intrinsically linked, it must be understood that remedies to the problem of colonialism cannot solely be produced by Western, or other, academics; and third, we must accept that there is no panacea to fix the world's complex injustices. Therefore, multiple epistemologies need to be invoked in order to address them.

In the words of Dei and Jaimungal (2019):

Decolonization is about body, mind, soul and the transformation both within and outside. Decolonization is about developing and sharpening our thinking processes and pursuing politics for transformative change. Decolonization is also about breaking with dominant practices and resisting subordination in all its forms. Decolonization is about the ability to define one's own agenda for a new future, and to relate our endeavours to a collective future" (p. 1).

In order to achieve this, anti-colonial theory, functioning in its decolonial capacity, requires a delinking of knowledge from coloniality (Mignolo, 2013). Albeit difficult, this task is not impossible, but it is incumbent upon colonized individuals and collectives to draw on their creativity and imagination, as well as their dreams in order to conceptualize and create new, and hope-filled futures (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019; Todd, 2019; Dei, 2018).

Mignolo (2013) highlights the importance of understanding what are the political and epistemic foundations of decolonial thinking. Locationally and ideologically, he attributes this to

the Bandung Conference (1955), and to a lesser extent, to the Non-aligned Movement Conference (1961). At the Bandung Conference, a ‘third option’ to capitalism and communism was discussed by conference delegates within a decolonial paradigm. “Delinking,” as Mignolo (2013) called it, is the true legacy of the Bandung Conference. That is, delinking “from Enlightenment political theory (liberalism and republicanism – Locke, Montesquieu) and political economy (Smith) as well as from its opposition, socialism-communism” (p. 133). But, this begs the question, “once you delink, where do you go?” (p. 133). Mignolo (2013) argues that individuals and collectives must go to “the reservoir of the ways of life and modes of thinking that have [historically] been disqualified” (p. 133) because it is impossible to discover a way out of coloniality through “the reservoir of [Eurocentric] modernity” (p. 133).

Therefore, what Mignolo (2013) refers to as “border thinking” is necessary. For example, Fanon demonstrates border thinking when he says, “[O]h my body, make me always a man who questions!” Mignolo (2013) describes these words as a “biographical sensing of the Black body in the Third World” (p. 132), and an “anchoring [of] a politics of knowledge that is both ingrained in the body and in local histories” (p. 132). This bolsters Mignolo’s assertions that decoloniality, decolonial thinking and decolonization exist, more so, in the intellectual and practical ‘tool kits’ of Third World people who, more often than not, tend to be racialized.⁴⁷ And,

Once you realize that your inferiority is a fiction created to dominate you, and you do not want to either assimilate or accept in resignation the bad luck of having been born equal to all human beings, but having lost your equality shortly after being born, because of the place you were born, then you delink.

⁴⁷ Although, Mignolo (2013) argues that racialized bodies can think decolonially if they are willing to abandon coloniality.

Delinking means that you do not accept the options that are available to you (p. 135).

Hence, the emergence of the Dependistas' (Dependency Theorists) in Latin America, and the New World Group in the Caribbean who made efforts to debunk the myth that Third World countries are developmentally inept and to promote independent thought and economic freedom, respectively (Mignolo, 2013). In addition, the Dependistas and the New World Group did not obscure their arguments about the contrived ontological existence of the Third World (Mignolo, 2013).

At the heart of decolonial practice is a distinct "Who, what, where, when, why?" line of questioning that enables us to conceptualize and construct new global futures, but it requires an ideological shift from westernization to dewesternization (Mignolo, 2013). This means going beyond the existing disciplinary catalogue (i.e. sociology, anthropology, political science, education and so on) to renovate our conceptions of "what constitutes theory; who is theoretical; who is assumed to have discursive authority over/on the subject; whose knowledge counts; [and] how we should produce, interrogate, legitimize, and disseminate knowledge ..." (Dei, 2018, p. 123). Needless to say, our tendency as racialized and indigenous people, who are descendants of the Third World, to invoke the revolutionary theories of Karl Marx, without considering that, historically, Marxist theories are Eurocentric and non-inclusive of people of colour (and women), must come to an end (Mignolo, 2013). Instead of being "intellectual imposters," engaging in border thinking equips us with the necessary resources to carve out new decolonial pathways within the Academy where there is, currently, only marginal space for us, without fear of being labeled as "angry," or "sensitive" (Dei, 2018; Mignolo, 2013).

Dei (2017) implores African/Black scholars to “write back” to dominant power as a means of regaining our ancestral “anti-colonial consciousness.” From this position we can perform an appraisal of the colonial, and, in detail, outline its past and present injustices towards us and as such push back against the traditional narrative of colonialism that dominates mainstream consciousness. Simpson (2007) describes this as a form of “discursive wrestling” (p. 74); however, the terms of engagement are set by us (Dei, 2018).

In asserting Indigeneity/Africanness/Blackness/Third Worldness, we are engaging in forms of epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, 2013) and modern marronage⁴⁸ against historical, present and futuristic colonialism in all of its forms. But, “we cannot carry out the kind of decolonization our ancestors set in motion if we don’t create a generation of land-based, community-based intellectual and cultural producers who are accountable to our [respective] Nations” (Simpson, 2014, p. 13, quoted in Dei and Jaimungal, 2019). In other words, decolonization should be manifested in a tangible, visual, intellectual; and overall, transformational manner that honours our ancestors posthumously, and sets the course for the future times of our ethnic, cultural, religious and geographical nations.

Anti-colonial Theory and Education

As scholars, we understand that education/schooling are contested entities because of their Eurocentric origins. But today, the fact remains that they are needed in order to cultivate young minds and prepare them for anti-colonial and decolonial praxes (Dei, 2018). And, part of

⁴⁸ The Maroons of Jamaica are a of group African descendants who dwelt, mainly, in the island’s cockpit region in Trelawny and for over one hundred and forty years resisted slaveocracy through the use of guerilla warfare tactics against British colonialists. The term “marronage” is often used to describe their strategy. However, this truth does not negate the fact that the Maroons have a complicated history. Because the colonial state was not successful in its attempts to subdue the Maroons, it signed a treaty that granted them land rights and partial self-governance. In exchange, the Maroons supported the British military in its capture and return of runaway enslaved Africans, even in the years following the abolition of slavery.

the anti-colonial project is to reinvent education for this purpose, by creating modes of schooling that are counter hegemonic. And, it is on this foundation that Buchanan (2019) argues that “education should empower rather than restrain [and] lead to the flourishing of the group rather than the enrichment of only a privileged few” (p. 112).

Therefore, assessing education anti-colonially is important because colonial systems are implicated in the “high suspension and push-out rates, low teacher expectations, and inadequate and underresourced curricula sophistication” (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019, p. 6) that exist in school systems globally, which are particularly harmful to Black and other racialized students (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019). Within the colonial complex, education is ill-equipped to respond to the diverse learning styles and social locational identities of each learner (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019). However, in the face of this understanding, the anti-colonial intellectual journey explores the conundrum of education, as well as its possibilities (Dei, 2018).

An anti-colonial educational focal lens reminds Black/racialized scholars to be ever questioning of our moment in time; as well as the historicity of our struggle to this point (Dei, 2018). It necessitates that we become “intellectual activists” who transform educational institutions (Dei, 2018); not only for ourselves, but for future generations, because ‘old’ and ‘new’ forms of colonialism have been deterministic of our futures for far too long.

The anti-colonial educational focal lens also, with much criticality, examines the presumably well-intended, global education schemes put forward by the United Nations and its affiliates, and has determined that limited attention is paid to the scant financial, pedagogic, and infrastructural resources that some governments are faced with (Buchanan, 2019; Dei, 2019 and Jaimungal, 2019; Dei, 2018). As a result, Buchanan (2019) notes that access to public schooling is promoted over improving its quality; thus, universality is the smoke screen that detracts

attention from the real existences of inequality and inequity in schooling — particularly in African (Buchanan, 2019), and African-diasporic contexts. Anti-colonial theory identifies and introduces the elephant in the room that is ever-present in the ongoing discussion about education in the Global South by asking the following questions:

Who should be blamed for failed educational policies? Academics or politicians? Those of us who research? Or, those who implement? The imperialist or the ones who remain complicit in their daily intellectual colonization? “How should “basic,” “quality,” “universal” education be defined and by whom? Can “quality education” be achieved if it is implemented from a centralized source that cannot possibly account for all of the complexities and diversities of its vast population (p. 120).

There are insufficient answers to Buchanan’s (2019) questions in scholarship; and anti-colonialism points out the monolithic and white-washing tendencies of colonialism that dictate a standard model of instruction and learning that is, ultimately, designed to serve the needs of capitalism. Buchanan (2019) questions the extent to which this has been successful in alleviating poverty; and, therefore calls for an ideological decolonization in global education policy through the decentralization of the colonial model of schooling in order to accommodate Indigenous and other local modes of learning.

Applying Anti-Colonial Theory to Education in Jamaica

This dissertation is anti-colonial because it strives to capture the voices, experiences, resistances and attempts to reclaim agency (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001) in local and transnational Jamaican contexts in response to austerity driven challenges in public primary education. In order to complete this task, I engage in a dialogue with Jamaica’s past by examining its

“creolized formation” (Nettleford, 1989) that is similar to Simmons and Dei’s (2012) analysis of colonial/pre-earthquake Haiti, which I mention above.

Using a diglossic⁴⁹ (Devonish, 2007) lens, I look to Jamaican Patois. Patois, also known as “Patwa” or “Jamaican Creole” is a West African dialectical colonization of the English language (Cooper, 2016) that can be attributed to the historicity of colonialism, slaveocracy and resistance in Jamaica (Seeba, 1996). It was designed to disguise the conversations of enslaved humans so that their masters could not interpret their speech (Cooper, 2016). In Jamaica’s post-Emancipation years, the language would evolve because of the linguistic influences of Chinese, Indian, Irish and German indentured labourers, and Syrian and Lebanese refugees. In the same manner as its language, modern Jamaica is being configured by its colonial history and the present-day challenges of global capitalism. Because of colonization, we will never know what are inherently Jamaican governance, politics, economics and so on. But, the absence of a collective memory of indigenously Jamaican institutions points to an important reality—the colonial has shaped us. And, as such, it has positioned Jamaica for mimicry of the colonial society after decolonization (Bhabha, 1994).

Notwithstanding the most recent fifty-eight-year independence celebrations, Jamaica is the opposite of independent. And it has been argued that the failure of the West Indies Federation to unite Anglo-Caribbean territories as one sovereign state compromised Jamaica, and its regional neighbours’, ability to uproot colonial structures and thus, prevent the effects of neoliberal globalization (Edmonds, 2012).⁵⁰ Invoking African nationalist Kwame Nkrumah’s

⁴⁹ “Diglossia,” describes the social, economic, political and cultural conditions that produce language (Devonish, 2007).

⁵⁰ It should be noted that Jamaica was the first island to withdraw from the West Indies Federation in 1961 after voting by referendum, beginning the Federation’s certain dissolution. Although nine countries remained in the West Indies Federation, the then-Premier of Trinidad and Tobago, Eric Williams

(1965) theory of neocolonialism and Marxist-geographer David Harvey's (2003) concept of accumulation by dispossession, I argue that Jamaica exists under a new imperialism given that its 2016 debt total was 122 percent⁵¹ of its GDP, which translates to approximately USD \$17 billion (World Bank, 2017).

Nigel Clarke, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, has indicated that the debt-to-GDP ratio will fall to 96 percent at the end of the 2018/2019 fiscal year (Patterson, 2019), which should reduce Jamaica's debt to approximately USD \$14.4 billion.⁵² According to Clarke, "this is a national achievement of which all Jamaicans can be proud" (Patterson, 2019, para. 3). However, this steady, but slow, growth remains significantly lower than what is needed for the island to eradicate poverty, boost shared prosperity (World Bank, 2020), and remediate the overall negative effects of the era of structural adjustment.

Jamaica's need for international financial institution (IFI) financing is not the result of backwardness. It is a historical positioning. According to Bhabha (1994), "colonialism takes power in the name of history, it repeatedly exercises its authority through figures of farce" (p. 122). In other words, colonial power socializes its subjects through dehumanizing occupations of slavery and indentured labour so that they will conform to its objectives, thereby preparing the colony for imitation of the colonial state after official colonization has ended. Anti-colonial thought identifies the persistence of the colonial in modern Jamaica and its shaping of the lives and experiences of Jamaicans.

famously remarked, "one from ten leaves nought." In other words, without Jamaica's involvement, no Federation was possible (Wooding, 1967).

⁵¹ The debt to GDP ratio has been noted at 147 percent before (Jamaica Information Service, 2018).

⁵² It is important to note that I calculated this figure using Jamaica's recorded GDP for 2017 because the 2018 GDP is not documented in public record.

The dissatisfaction index, as mentioned in Chapter 1, is one of several indicators of this. Its steady increase has been linked to a declining GDP in the early 1970s (Levitt, 2005) which led Prime Minister Manley to sign the first IMF agreement in 1977, thereby, beginning the era of structural adjustment to which there is no foreseeable end — with among the most significant social dislocations being in the area of education. So now, with this understanding I invoke Dei and Lordan (2016) in order to ask the following: “How do we theorize education within the context of the colonial, colonized relations and the aftermath?” (p. VII). Moreover, “How are the experiences of Indigeneity, migration, post-migration, agency, [and] resistance ... informing our understanding of the colonized subject?” (p. VII). In light of these questions, I will discuss Indigeneity (from the perspective of Blacks in the post-emancipation era), migration, post-migration, agency and resistance within the context of Jamaican schooling and the pertinence of these to my dissertation project.

As noted in Chapter 2, the schooling process was central to the late nineteenth century colonial state’s efforts to orient the minds of the Black minority and formerly enslaved class towards British sensibilities, and maintain the plantation economy (Moore and Johnson, 2003). And, in the wake of the Morant Bay⁵³ uprising, formal schooling was viewed as the only way to

⁵³ Two Jamaicas emerged upon slavery’s end in 1838 (Moore and Jonson, 2007). One, white (and “coloured” assimilation aspiring) British colonialists and the other, formerly enslaved Blacks. Demanding equality and fair access to living wages, medical treatment and other social services, Baptist preacher, Paul Bogle led a collegiate of Blacks from Stony Gut to the courthouse at Morant Bay to submit a list of grievances. They were met with resistance and instructed by the custos to vacate the premises. When they refused, Baron von Ketelhodt ordered open fire into the crowd of protestors. Seven Blacks were killed. In retaliation, the protestors killed the custos which resulted in a mêlée between the two Jamaicas. Four hundred and fifty blacks were hunted and killed. Some were executed by the State. According to Moore and Johnson (2007), *inter alia* Morant Bay is representative of the Black majority’s struggle for equal personage under the law, pointing to the fact that a small white oligarchy was unfit to govern a growing black majority of formerly enslaved people. It is also important note that the Baptist Church—particularly the Black Baptist movement — has a distinct history of anti-colonial revolt in Jamaica (Dick, 2009).

replace “Black barbarism” and Afro-creole belief system with a particularized form of Victorian Christianity (Moore and Johnson, 2004).

The ramifications of the churches’ dominance in the educational sphere are difficult to ignore because Victorian Christian “colonial education was designed to mould a new type of Jamaican who would step out of the [perceived] ignorance that slavery had encouraged into “civilized citizenship” ”(Moore and Johnson, 2004, p. 206). Moore and Johnson (2007) argue that the churches used education as their main entrance into Jamaican society because “the church schools were expected to boost church membership ...” (Campbell, 1996, p. 223). Moreover, some church schools were only accessible to children who came from families who practiced the same denominational beliefs (Moore and Johnson, 2004). For example, Moore and Johnson (2007) describe a *Gleaner* report that tells the story of a nine-year-old girl who walked eight miles per day to school. Because she was from a Presbyterian family, the “minister told her to go to Presbyterian school” (Moore and Johnson, 2000, p. 90, p.109; quoted in Moore and Johnson 2004). In 1892, education policies were passed that prohibited this practice, albeit only theoretically (Moore and Johnson, 2004). Up until World War I, the church-state union remained a *fait accompli*, whereby the churches controlled the school system in order to mould the post-slavery moral culture.

Looking through the colonial gaze, Nyerere (1968) contends that education is inspired by a desire to implant colonial values and train individuals for life-long allegiance to the colonial state. However, this view conflicted with the sensibilities of free Black people who, according to Miller (1999), did not share the same sentiments. Black people viewed education as a means to achieve a Eurocentric lifestyle (Miller, 1976), “To amount to somebody in life,” “To become

somebody important,” and “To be able to get a good job and be respected” (p. 62, quoted in Walrond, 2009, p. 315).

According to Campbell (1996):

Whatever was done [by the church/state] for the welfare of the lower classes was done as cheaply as possible. Education for them was not to be overambitious; something was done, but not too much. These attitudes conformed to the essentially conservative function assigned to popular education. The purpose was to spread Christianity, literacy and, as always in education, social discipline preferably without social change. The maintenance of the colonial social structure and the labour requirements of the sugar plantations and sugar companies were compatible with an oversupply of illiterate or barely literate youths (pp. 273-274; quoted in Moore and Johnson, 2004).

According to Miller (1999a), the implicit judgment in maintaining colonial-style education in Jamaica is that it is inherently good. However, using an anti-colonial theoretical lens, Imoka (2016) implores us to uncover the sociological and anthropological phenomena that underpin colonial-style education, contending that a continuous “misunderstanding of the nature of colonization, its legacy [and] implications for education and nation building” (p. 114) are reasons for the maintenance of the social cleavages created by polarizing mechanisms that are deeply rooted in race, class and gender. And, as a result, contradicting the moral responsibility of schools to educate and engage students in the most humanizing ways in order to promote their involvement in nation building (Imoka, 2016).

According to the United Nations (2015), Jamaica achieved Millennium Development Goal 2 (MDG2),⁵⁴ “universalize primary school education,” by the targeted year 2015. However, in pointing out the inefficacy of the entire MDG agenda, as it pertains to MDG 2, Gilbert-Roberts et al. (2015) report that Jamaicans are dissatisfied with the significant numbers of illiterate and unskilled persons, inadequately qualified teachers, high student-teacher ratios, and ineffectual school administration. According to Miller (1999a), such problems on top of exorbitant school fees, further marginalize the Black majority and favour the light-skinned minority who, historically, tend to be more materially fortunate. Miller’s (1999a) sentiments lend credence to Evans (2001), who, using an observational perspective in *Inside Jamaican Schools* (2001), argues that the prevailing liberal view that education and schooling in Jamaica is emancipatory and equalizing is farcical. According to Evans (2001) society’s tensions are reflected in Jamaica’s classrooms, and in true anti-colonial manner she calls for a “radical reorientation” and “new consciousness” (p. 150) in education praxes that is critical of its colonial inception that is based in inequality.

I endorse Evans’ (2001) call, and also, indict structural adjustment and austerity for being the new iterations of colonialism in Jamaican public schooling (Thompson, 2014; Miller, 1992).

⁵⁴ One hundred and ninety-one United Nations member countries committed to achieving the following goals by the end of 2015: 1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2) achieve universal primary education; 3) promote gender equality and empower women; 4) reduce child mortality; 5) improve maternal health; 6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; 7) ensure environmental sustainability; and 8) develop a global partnership for development. These goals have been rebranded, since 2015, as the SDGs, which are the following: 1) No poverty; 2) zero hunger; 3) good health and well-being; 4) quality education; 5) gender equality; 6) clean water and sanitation; 7) affordable and clean energy; 8) decent work and economic growth; 9) industry, innovation and infrastructure; 10) reduced inequality; 11) sustainable cities and communities; 12) responsible consumption and production; 13) climate action; 14) life below water (conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development); 15) life on land (protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss); 16: peace and justice and strong institutions; and 17) partnerships to achieve the goals (United Nations, 2015).

Johnson (2009) argues that structural adjustment and austerity lower education expenditures per capita. Because of this, Jamaican students under-perform on standardized school-leaving examinations, there is uninspired teaching due to low-wages, and a lack of discipline in the classroom (Johnson, 2009).

My dissertation attempts to ascertain these and other consequences on the ground level and theorize the transnational-diasporic response(s) to fiscal austerity in education. However, in order to do so, I use an anti-colonial focal lens to zoom in and capture the phenomena of diasporization (Simmons and Dei, 2012). Simmons and Dei (2012) postulate that diasporization is the result of the “congeries of colonialism” that necessitates the movement of bodies for survival. Although diaspora is a widely contested term (Brukaker, 2005; Shuval, 2007; Sheffer, 2007 and Barkan, 2007),⁵⁵ it proposes a discursive politics that connects us to our homeland, through which we can understand our history, struggle and resistance to domination and control (Simmons and Dei, 2012). Simmons and Dei (2012) insist that an effective articulation of anti-colonial thought must take up how diasporic identities/ties influence a politics of social transformation in both domestic and transnational contexts. Diasporas can be viewed as multi-resource sites for finance, commerce, technology transfers, foreign direct investment and development assistance, which has led several nations to make efforts to officially engage their diasporas through policy mechanisms in the years following the “Diaspora Ministerial Conference,” organized by the International Organization for Migration in 2013 (Hulme, 2015).

However, as I interrogate the making of debt and its implications for education in Jamaica and its transnational implications for the alumni associations in the Torontonians-Jamaican Diaspora, my assessment of colloquial discourse within the Diaspora surrounding

⁵⁵ Diaspora is a contested term because there are multiple definitions and functions for it. See note number four.

“giving back”, “supporting”, and “investing” is often ahistorical. George (2015) argues that ahistorical knowledge is privileged by the mainstream, setting the proverbial stage for a “disengaged epistemological standpoint” (p. 31). According to George (2015), whether or not individuals and groups come to interpret the world objectively or subjectively is irrelevant to his central problem, which is the trend towards ignoring historicity in development discourse in the Global South. Notwithstanding the good intentions of Jamaican Diasporans and alumni groups, it is important to historicize and contextualize our conversations and by extension, our benevolence to the island, asking questions such as, what phenomena necessitate our economic, social and political engagement, and why do these phenomena persist? Anti-colonial thought and practice performs these queries in an attempt to identify and analyze the continuities and discontinuities of the colonial in everyday life (Rabaka, 2003) in and outside of Jamaica, and their impact on real people, especially school-aged children.

Anti-colonialism equips Jamaican Diasporans and residents of the island with the tools that are needed to repurpose education — a colonial conception that was intended to subdue and subordinate — to fight the colonial. It equips us to speak back to the problem of Third World indebtedness, which according to the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (1989), has led to an ideological and physiological malnourishing of too many of the world’s children. And, in the words of former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, “must we starve our children to pay our debts?” (Nyerere, 1986, quoted in Bradshaw et. al., 1993). The answer to this question is, unequivocally, no.

Jamaican Diasporans are key stakeholders both in and outside of Jamaica, and should be concerned with the socio-political and socio-economic realities of Jamaican society at large, and thereby, assume positions as agents of change (Pinnock, 2013). However, this should take place

in partnership with Jamaicans at home so as not to construct them into mere subjects of development, but, rather, as participants in development. Anti-colonialism propels my research beyond the paradigm of “diaspora philanthropy” (Newland et. al., 2010; Pinnock, 2013) to a praxis oriented community conversation — the community being Jamaicans at home, the Jamaican Diaspora and the Government of Jamaica — about how school alumni support, and can continue to support, education in Jamaica in the era of structural adjustment.

CHAPTER 5

DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES:

“THERE ARE OTHER SCHOOLS WITH GREATER CHALLENGES”

Introduction

One afternoon I walked in during Social Studies. There, on the school’s only multi-media screen, the 9 and 10-year-old students watched an animated video on YouTube about the universality of child rights, as outlined in the UNCRC. I quietly asked the teacher, Ms. Flanders, if I could stay because of my interest in the subject at hand. She agreed. Subsequently, and without warning, she asked me to share a few words. I obliged her and announced to the students that they have the right to play (Article 31, Section 1). Then one student said, “Ms. Thompson, Teacher tell us dat [that]we play too much!”. Of course, we all laughed.

For my next point, I emphasized the children’s right to feel protected and safe⁵⁶ at all times, even in the areas that they play in, and then immediately, another student remarked, “But the yard isn’t safe, Ms. Thompson. It’s stoney and the cars drive through.” The majority of the class agreed with this student, and Ms. Flanders and I looked at each other because we knew that we could not object. I took solace in knowing that, in a few minutes, the lunch bell would ring and end this awkward moment. Changing the subject in an attempt to conclude the lesson as optimistically as possible, I told the class that the GOJ signed the UNCRC in 1991, and in doing so indicated its commitment to uphold their rights. But I admit that I felt like an infomercial product salesperson who was not entirely convinced about the usefulness and durability of the items that the company sells when I said this.

⁵⁶ Article 2, Section 2; Article 3, Section 2; Article 8, Section 2; Article 16, Section 2; Article 17(e); Article 19, Section 2; Article 20, Section 1; Article 22, Sections 1 and 2; Article 25; Article 32, Section 1; Article 33; Article 34; Article 36; Article 38, Section 4

In processing this encounter I could not help but rehearse the commitments that plenipotentiaries made on behalf of their respective governments when they signed the Convention, which was adopted thirty plus years ago. Also weighing on my mind were the children's perceptions of their school environment. I assumed that because they played, and appeared to enjoy themselves during break times and physical education classes, the unsafe state of the school yard did not bother them. However, as we can see, when the subject was broached during Social Studies their thoughts were made known, and, apparently, the Grade 5 students are aware that the yard is hazardous, and they are concerned for their safety.⁵⁷ For this reason, it is necessary to point out the disconnect between the children's feelings about their personal security and the State's legally-binding commitment to uphold their rights.

Recall that in Chapter 1, I expressed the view that there are clear compromises of the rights of the child at the NJA when I introduced an unambiguous plea for help that was written on behalf of the school in "Trailer 2." I included trailers in Chapter 1 in order to draw the attention of you, the reader, to the central problem of this dissertation: the GOJ, and by extension the MOEYI, does not have enough resources to deliver an adequate and appropriate primary school program; therefore, "any help is greatly appreciated," as Mrs. Hamilton informed us in "Trailer 1." Now, as the 'film' plays in this chapter, you will see how the excerpts that were shown in Chapter 1 fit into the grand narrative of what are, overall, dire circumstances at the NJA. And, I argue that the pervasive hand of structural adjustment is implicated in this. Therefore, in this chapter my authorial voice will carry the teachers', parents' and students' voices, as they convey to you, the reader, the resultant physical, economic, political, social and

⁵⁷ According to Article 12, Section 1 of the UNCRC, States Parties are to respect the views of the child, and provide them with a venue to "express those views freely in all matters" that pertain to them.

cultural challenges and their responses to them, which will be analyzed using an anti-colonial theoretical lens.

Everyday “Pushing and Pulling”

“The Place Needs Up Keeping”

The current NJA school building was built in 1949. But, its mint green paint, complete with beautiful artistic renderings of the Jamaican Coat of Arms, National Fruit,⁵⁸ National Bird⁵⁹ and National Heroes⁶⁰ does not hide its well-agedness. Mr. Grey, one of only two fathers who volunteered to be interviewed for this study noted that “the place [the school] needs up keeping. It’s really poor.” Prior to our interview Mr. Grey visited his son’s classroom, and I noticed that he was visibly angry when he was expressing his opinion about the space. He said, “I was just in my boy’s classroom and the desks, just the desks, they’re pathetic, they really are absolutely pathetic, in these days. In Canada, they throw away things that are better than these. Throw away!” Wondering whether or not he made reference to Canada because he was aware that I am from Canada, I continued to entertain his comparative discourse because I also noted the distinct British-Jamaican tone in his speech. For this reason, I assumed that he had spent time abroad, which he later confirmed. Mr. Grey continued saying, “I mean, think about in Canada, a school around the same level as this ... think about how much better the facilities are there...I mean, it is not even 50 percent [here]. Fifty percent would be really good.” Another parent, Mrs. Lawrence

⁵⁸ The ackee is the National Fruit.

⁵⁹ Referred to as the Swallowtail Hummingbird or “Doctor Bird.”

⁶⁰ The National Hero’s include Nanny (circa 1600 to circa 1740), leader of the Maroons; Samuel Sharpe (1780 to 1822), leader of the 1831 Slave Rebellion; politician and advocate, George William Gordon (circa 1820s to 1865); Paul Bogle (circa 1822 to 1865), leader of the protest against inequality towards Blacks at the Morant Bay courthouse; Sir Alexander Bustamante (1884 to 1977), Jamaica’s first Prime Minister; Zionist-activist, Marcus Garvey (1887 to 1940); and Norman Manley (1893 to 1969), founder of the Peoples National Party.

shared her sentiments about the school's facilities when her, then, five-year old son, who was in Grade 6 during the time of our interview, was a prospective student. She said:

The first time that I came to this school and I saw the condition of the classroom, the Grade 1 classroom, it pains my heart. And I said my son cannot go to this school ... The class was so deplorable and ... Yes, it was so, it was, it was like a matchbox and you put up some sticks, and all that. It was terrible. Grade 1 class was so awful. I was like oh my God ... I said look where I'm gonna put ... my last son ... I said, no. Then I said okay, let it be.

Today, at the back end of the rectangular shaped school this "matchbox," as described by Mrs. Lawrence, still remains unchanged, and is the "swelteringly-hot rear classroom" that I mentioned in Chapter 1 that shares space with the canteen. A papier-mâché-like wall, that does not go up to the ceiling, keeps the kitchen stove and classroom white board separate. Ms. McNaught, the youngest member of the teaching team, who is now assigned to this classroom where the Grade 3 class convenes, shared her experiences with me in the following excerpt from our conversation:

Ms. McNaught: In my class, it is extremely hot. I mean...

Ms. Thompson: And not just because we're in Jamaica?

Ms. McNaught: Not because you in Jamaica but because my classroom is directly located beside of the cafeteria. Before, that classroom was set to be the lunchroom but due to the growth, right, due to the growth, I guess they thought they need to convert to a classroom. So, my classroom is very small, but homely.

Ms. Thompson: Very quaint.

- Ms. McNaught: Yes. But it's very hot. I can assure you of that.
- Ms. Thompson: So then, let's speak about that. How does that affect your teaching and your learning?
- Ms. McNaught: Well it impacts us greatly because at different intervals, if the chef decides to season his pot, I have to vacate the area for a little while because...
- Ms. Thompson: Yes, I was there the last vacation.
- Ms. McNaught: Right. Because being mindful that certain smells can impact my students. I have students who are asthmatic, so I have to take that into consideration ... [and] they tend to ask, 'is it lunchtime as yet?' But yes, it does impact, especially when it's afternoon time, the heat rises, the temperature rises. So, it's hotter in the afternoon. And if it rains, we can't go outside, we have to stay ...
- Ms. Thompson: Yes, I was also there on a day when it rained.
- Ms. McNaught: Oh, my classroom was leaking ... that's nothing a fault of the school because, of course, the Ministry of Education is in charge of that. So, of course yes, we could make some adjustments in terms of trying to see where the problem is but I think there is a building manager for each school. So, this would have been reported since I've been there.

As demonstrated in our conversation, the homeliness of Ms. McNaught's classroom does not take away from the significant challenges that she and her students experience on a *daily* basis. It is not unreasonable to conceptualize extreme heat, the constant smell of food, and a leaking roof as hurdles in the teaching and learning process. It is important to note that Ms. McNaught and her Grade 3 students are not the only inhabitants of this classroom. Termites who, ironically,

devoured the “Integrated Studies: Living and Non-Living Things in Our Environment” textbooks also occupy the space. These pests are also considered a threat to the structural integrity of the entire school building that is predominantly constructed of wood.

Another structural issue, that is directly influenced by the heavy atmospheric rain, is the old zinc roof. During downpours, the teachers are forced to raise their voices so that the students can hear them. As the floating supply teacher — the capacity in which I served most of the time because there are no provisions for a temporary replacement when a teacher is sick or has an appointment — I too had to compete with the rain. But, I quickly learned to assign independent work until it passed. That is, if the rain did not cause the power to go out which, of course, resulted in widely-diffused darkness in every classroom. Also, the somewhat cool air that the electric fans produced, ceased and the Wi-Fi connection evaporated. I now understand why the principal, Mrs. Carter-Morgan advised me to make sure that my mobile phone was charged at all times.

Although the children found ways to amuse themselves in instances where the power fled the building, valuable instruction and independent study/reading time was lost. And, because the drainage system is ragged, water pools and grows stagnant around the school during rainy season, inviting bullfrogs into the schoolyard. To my fright, one hopped into the middle of the Grade 6 classroom during a math lesson. Thankfully, one of the boys, bravely, removed the amphibian who, indeed, caused a disruption in the Grade 6 class, as well as the neighbouring Grade 5 class. A mere wooden partition that does not close separates the two grades, so noise and distractions are a consistent problem.

With only six classrooms that are designated by grade, a set of gendered “boy” and “girl” bathrooms, one staff bathroom, a kitchen, an office, and what I call a tiny ‘Miscellaneous

Room, 'every square foot of the school is occupied. As a result, and as mentioned in Chapter 3, there is no space for the Music Department at the NJA (which I discuss in detail in the next chapter) and the Guidance Department. According to Guidance Counsellor Mrs. Reed, the Department's most pressing challenge is a "lack of space" and a "need [for] a room for ... counselling sessions" since it was forced to vacate, what was once, a teachers cottage belonging to the Methodist Church next door that founded the school in the early 19th-century.

For the time being, the very small Miscellaneous Room houses the Guidance Department, as well as the school's Breakfast Program. In this room you will see a microwave and kettle that rest on a relatively small desk alongside the Department's administrative paraphernalia. It is where the children line-up outside the door in the narrow front hallway to receive their breakfast before the morning bell. The Breakfast Program's non-perishable food items are kept here, and its perishables, in the refrigerator in the Grade 5 classroom or the deep freezer in the Grade 2 classroom. No room is exempt from storing items. Neither are there restrictions on where Guidance classes are held. For example, I conducted Mrs. Reed's interview in the outdoor classroom (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.2) which she also uses to host grade specific lessons on a wide range of topics which include, but are not limited to, healthy eating, personal hygiene and bullying. Of course, when it rains the outdoor classroom cannot be used for these sessions; which causes a disruption to the teaching schedule.

Keeping in line with the current theme of space, the school structure cannot support a tuck shop. For this reason, at the beginning and the end of each morning break and noon hour lunch period, a make shift tuck shop (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.1) is constructed and deconstructed by Ms. Curtis, one of the school's support workers who is also the parent of a student in Grade 6. The food items that are sold are stored in the principal's all-purpose office.

Frustrated by the aforementioned spatial limitations, in 2017 members of the PTA began making plans to expand the existing structure themselves. Ms. Cargill, the immediate past secretary of the PTA describes how resolute their efforts were, stating “we come [to the school yard] and measure up.” But to hers, and the other parents’ disappointment, the building project was stopped by the Methodist Church’s pastor who was afraid that the Parish Council would intervene. According to Ms. Cargill, “we were trying to measure up the place and he come and ask us what we’re doing. And we tell him, and we go in a meeting and he said ‘the Past Students [the NJAAA] is gonna do it.’” Ms. Cargill insists that “if ... [the pastor] did just leave us, there would be [more] classroom, sick bay and all those things. Because parents in here that can build, we wouldn’t have to pay anything to build it.”

I ascertained from my conversation with Ms. Cargill that the PTA’s proposed building project was intended to be a temporary solution to, what has been, an ongoing problem for several years. Ms. McPherson, who is also an active member of the PTA, noted in her interview that she and her fellow comrades wanted to build the extension because the school “need more classroom ... it need a bigger kitchen. And like how the Tuck Shop is out there [*pointing in the direction of the tree that it is under*], I rather they would have the Tuck Shop inside a building. And they need a room for like the Guidance Counsellor.” This sub-group of the NJA’s parent community wanted to address these challenges, even if only in a temporary manner. “We weren’t going to use any concrete structure you know. It’s just for the...flooring. We were going to use concrete for the flooring and like ply board [for the walls] just to have something for a while,” Ms. Cargill remarked. Had the project come to fruition, I presume that “a while” would be an indefinite period of time given that the NJAAA committed to taking on the school expansion project — as noted by the pastor — over 20 years ago, and has yet to complete it (I discuss this

in Chapter 6). Also worthy of mention are the MOEYI's past promises to build new classrooms if the school's enrolment increases.⁶¹

Although their attempt was thwarted, the PTA's efforts can be viewed anti-colonially as a venue for the articulation of collective agency that counters indifference and passivity to the consequences of economic globalization (Simmons and Dei, 2012), which in this case, negatively affect the educational experiences of their children. So, taking matters into their own hands, and without seeking consent, the PTA drew from its creative resources to design what the State cannot provide — a centre of learning that is sufficient and safe. Together, with the principal and teachers, they engage in what Mrs. Lawrence, who is also the current secretary of the PTA, refers to as “pushing and pulling.” “Children need resources,” according to Mrs. Lawrence “but what I notice now is like we have to be pushing and pulling for these things to be. It should not be so.” Simpson (2007) would call pushing and pulling “wrestling,” which is an essential feature of anti-colonial struggle that is needed to bring about necessary change. So, until change comes, the school community pushes and pulls as it copes with unlevelled and hazardous flooring throughout its interior and immediate exterior, and wasps nests on the perimeter of its roof, as noted in Chapter 1 (see Figures 1 and 2), which led to a budding infestation of the Grade 1 classroom.

During my visit, Mrs. Singh, the Grade 1 teacher took matters into her own hands by purchasing a bottle of insecticide, spraying her classroom and removing the wasps' nests herself — without protective gear — because pest removal services are unaffordable to the school. The nests on the roof would remain until Mrs. Carter-Morgan announced another Work Day for members of the PTA to come and do landscaping and deep cleaning. The members of the PTA's

⁶¹ It is suspected that if the NJA was politically aligned that these promises would have been fulfilled by now.

willingness to participate in Work Day activities is vital for reasons that pertain to health, sanitation and safety, and also bolsters Ms. Josephine, the elderly custodian's, daily maintenance of the school, which for obvious reasons, can only go so far. In describing hers and other PTA members' involvement in Work Day activities, Ms. McPherson remarked:

We participate in everything. Any function ... any little thing, there's just a group of parents that ... they can call on ... we're very active at this school. Very, very active. Last minute call, yes, we are here. When they call ... Work Day, we always here. Cut the yard, 'crape [scrape] it up ... we come and other parents come and cut the lawn with the whacker, and we 'crape [scrape] it up, and all those things. And then we go in classrooms and we wipe the benches, wipe the floors, clean the windows, the fans, everything.

We can see here that parent-school partnerships (Kinkead-Clark, 2017) are needed at the NJA for very important manual tasks.

Similarly, in her case study on two basic schools in Kingston, Kinkead-Clark (2017) found that parental involvement was also necessary for their functioning. Kinkead-Clark (2017) determined that the schools' limited resources inspired parents to lend a helping hand through various forms of volunteerism; as is the case at the NJA. Parents are a fixture in the educational process, and are key contributors to the local-homegrown responses to educational austerity. On ordinary Work Days they serve as landscapers and custodians, and have also been excavationists and sanitary engineers, digging a pit to dispose of the 'school garbage heap' that was maintained at the rear of the building. They also constructed a garbage skip in order to facilitate more

efficient and safe waste management procedures (see Figure 5.1).⁶² In the examples below, you will also see members of the PTA contributing to the success of the school as professional fundraisers and cooks.



Figure 5.1 Garbage Skip

“The Water Problem”

What is often referred to by many in the NJA school community as the “water problem” is also a part of the daily push and pull. For starters, the toilets in all of the school’s bathrooms function poorly. Mrs. Carter-Morgan attributes this to poor plumbing due to the agedness of the building. She remarked that:

The piping for the whole property is old so now and again you’ll have broken mains ... You call him [the plumber] in Monday and by Friday you have to call

⁶² The decision to build the garbage skip was made because the garbage pile invited many small rodents and insects into the school yard. In addition to this, on one occasion when Ms. Josephine attempted to burn the garbage that had been accumulated for the week, which is a typical practice in the area, the fire grew larger than could be contained, nearly lighting the school structure ablaze.

him back again because pipe burst down there suh, something is broken in the bathroom, and then by the new week starting, oh, a [toilet] bowl is not working.

So, some of those things would be like old, and need to be replaced or repaired.

Add to this problem the surplus of unsafe drinking water that heavy rain produces during the months of April and May in Walking District. And because the National Water Commission (NWC) is stretched too thin, it often falls behind on treating the school and the surrounding community's water supply. As such, the children are instructed not to consume the water. But it should be noted that most still drink from the communal sink in the school yard (see Figure 5.2) where after using the restroom — and returning to their respective classrooms to receive a ration of liquid soap from their teacher — they wash their hands because the pipes in the Boys and Girls bathrooms are defunct.



Figure 5.2 The NJA communal sink

The water problem could not have been made more clear to me than when we experienced two days without any water at all. I learned that this too was not an uncommon

occurrence. Aside from the obvious health and sanitation issues, with this challenge comes the exorbitant cost of purchasing purified water at an approximate cost of \$20,000 (approximately USD \$148) per delivery. And depending on how long water droughts last, a water truck may service the NJA 1 to 2 times per week. From Mrs. Carter-Morgan's experience as the principal since 2013, "it costs money to keep doing these things over and over." Money that the school is hard pressed to locate in its meagre Ministry issued budget, which is distributed three times per academic year during the months of July, January and May in the amounts of \$150,000 (approximately USD \$1,119.44); \$120,000 (approximately USD \$895.55); and \$124,250 (approximately USD \$927.27), respectively. Explaining how the budget works, Mrs. Carter-Morgan said:

Take for example, for regular [first-term] grant [from the Ministry] ...would cover the janitorial pay, and ... you have to buy chemicals from that money also to clean the institution and any other maintenance that is to take place, you have to use it from that money. And also, if there's no water, we should buy water with that money also ... But it's normally not enough to take care of maintaining the campus grounds, building repairs ... pay whomever comes to do the repairs, ... [or] buy ink, paper and stationary.

In response to the question, "Does the Ministry know that it's not enough?" she replied "They know it's not enough ... Because when they talk with the financial controller, they know it's not enough. But it's what they have to work with ... to give to us." Mrs. Carter-Morgan also said that she is often told "We really can't do any better" and "There are other schools with greater challenges than you." In other words, the NJA should be grateful for the little that it receives. "I was telling the building officer [at the Ministry] once," she said "you know, there's a

little leak in Grade 5. And he said, ‘Oh Mrs. Carter-Morgan, that is nothing compared to what is happening at some schools’ ... So, I just went and I bought the stop leak ... just buy it out of my purse and go get it done.” She felt justified in doing this because, in her own words, she said “I need my children to be safe and I don’t want to be seeing them in water ... I believe it is uncomfortable for them [so] I make sure they are comfortable and happy.”

“I Would Personally Buy Them”

It is not uncommon for members of staff to use their own money and resources to support the school and the processes of teaching and learning. For example, having not received an instructor’s copy of the Language Arts workbook that the Ministry requires her to use, Grade 6 teacher, Ms. Bonnor co-opted her nephew’s and uses it to teach her students. He is now in high school and no longer has use for it. She scans the unused pages of the book and gives copies to students whose parents did not purchase it for their child so that they can complete in-class and homework assignments. After comparing her students’ joy of reading to the school’s deficit in storybooks⁶³ during our discussion, Grade 4 teacher, Ms. Plummer, shared her remedy for the problem with me: “I used to take my daughter’s books from home for them to read.” Her willingness to share her daughter’s books with her class was not sustainable, however, because after the birth of her second daughter she had to pass them on to her. “If I could afford it, I would personally buy them [books], to be honest. But I can’t,” Ms. Plummer remarked.

As you can see, the principal and the teachers are willing to use their own resources to support the school, as well as the teaching and learning processes because, simply put, they have to in order to do their jobs effectively. Somé (2010) blames a widely diffused obsession with the universalization of public primary schooling for overshadowing these kinds of issues. Today, we

⁶³ The Jamaica Library Service Bus visits the school periodically.

understand that increased access to schooling does not necessarily equal quality schooling (Deininger, 2003, UNESCO, 2007, Akyeampong, 2009 and Somé, 2010), and this is why Buchanan (2019), Dei and Jaimungal (2019) and Dei (2018), encourage global education scholars and practitioners to apply an anti-colonial focal lens to existing United Nations education praxes so that education and schooling empowers and does not further restrain marginalized groups.

“Necessity is the Mother of Invention”

The NJA runs consistent and aggressive campaigns to raise much needed funds to fill the wide financial gaps in its budget so that it may procure its most basic necessities. However, although it is vital to the life of the school, in many respects, fundraising has become a burden to the job of teaching, leading to, what I refer to as, fundraising fatigue’ amongst the staff.

According to Ms. Plummer:

The Ministry demands. The Ministry demands. It is so hard to work with this Ministry...Put it this way, I am frustrated and I am tired. They want the yard to be fenced. How is it to be fenced? Fundraising. They want the yard to be paved. How should you do it? Go do fundraising.

Judging from Ms. Plummer’s remarks, the MOEYI is notorious for making requests without resourcing them. Case in point: the paving of the school yard. The same yard that is mentioned in the introduction to this chapter. I would like to point out that anti-colonial theory implores us to use an investigative eye to examine the leftover colonialisms that permeate the everyday (Simmons and Dei, 2012). Therefore, I employ anti-colonial theory as a mode of inquiry to point out, what I perceive is, a problem that is hidden in plain sight, which, in sum, is a physical, political and economic challenge for the small rural school. Let me explain. There is a disconnect

between the MOEYI's lofty institutional expectations and its *actual* capacities. Still, the NJA is expected to function most optimally. The embodied experiences of austerity, over which the NJA's students, staff and parents have no control, do not appear to be taken into consideration at the ministerial level.

Note that Ms. Plummer also informed us that in addition to seeing the schoolyard paved, the MOEYI would like to see the broken fence that separates it from the Methodist Church graveyard next door, repaired. Until then, the NJA's grade in the area of "Student Safety, Security, Health and Wellbeing" will remain "unsatisfactory" (NEI Report, 2015), although it is understood that the school does not possess the capital to address this problem. Therefore, fundraising is one of the few arrows in the NJA's survival quiver, primarily because of the MOEYI's scant financing, but also because of the blurred lines that exist between the Church and the State as it pertains to public schooling in Jamaica. Let me explain.

In Chapter 2, I outlined the history of formal schooling in Jamaica, wherein I described the Anglican, Moravian, Methodist and Baptist churches' role in educating Black people in the years leading up to Emancipation in 1838. These denominational groups maintained sole charge over these institutions until 1936. According to Keith (1976), between 1936 and 1974, the government would assume the ongoing financial responsibility for many of these schools through an 'adoption' process; maintaining, for the most part, their religious relics. Today, the NJA is one of many schools that is historically colonial-Christian, but government leased/owned and operated,⁶⁴ with much influence from the churches. Hence, my supposition that the line between the Church and the MOEYI is somewhat blurred. If not by law, then in practice.

⁶⁴ The NJA is owned by the Methodist Church of Jamaica, and the land is leased by the MOEYI. The Ministry also pays the teachers' salaries. However, today principals who work for historically Methodist Schools are required to be practicing Methodists. This rule does not apply to the rest of the teaching staff.

Now, returning to the discussion on the unpaved yard and broken fence, I digress so that I may share a story that was told to me by Mrs. Carter-Morgan. Seeking support from the MOEYI for the problems of the unpaved yard and broken fence, she approached the, then, Chief Education Officer after a meeting in early 2018. To her disappointment, she was asked what the Church was doing for the school. Mrs. Carter-Morgan would later approach the Methodist Church for help. However, because her email correspondence did not observe the necessary presbytery protocols, her request was not considered. With an understanding of the administrative hurdles that one has to jump, the obvious question is, whose responsibility is it to pave the school yard and repair the fence? Is it the MOEYI? The Methodist Church of Jamaica? The local church parish? The school's Board of Directors? Or, is it the NJA staff and parent-volunteers? The answer is unclear, but the burden appears to be resting on the latter and, in my assessment, it seems as though there is a wide-spread institutional absolution of responsibility, poor information sharing amongst the named parties, a lack of financial resources or, all of the above. But it must be noted that this unsuccessful and, at times, confusing segmentation of institutional responsibility is part and parcel of the legacy of colonialism that affects the NJA today.

Anti-colonialism necessitates an acknowledgement of how the colonial is encountered in the “post-colonial” education systems of today so that they may be known, understood and remediated (Simmons and Dei, 2012; Dei and Jaimungal, 2019). And, it is for this reason that Dei and Lordan (2016) ask the question, “How do we theorize education within the context of the colonial, colonized relations and the aftermath?” (p. VII). This line of querying is necessary lest, the cycle of colonial-institutional counterproductivity continue. However, all things considered, according to Mrs. Carter-Morgan, the pushing and pulling continues with the

understanding that “principals ... and education officers, and teachers ... have to get to that place where we see beyond all that is happening, and see the success of [our] institutions [and] do whatever it takes to get to beyond what is happening around [us]” because teachers still must teach, the students, learn, and the school day, continue.

I submit that push and pull factors do not occur without the consequences of stress and tiredness, which are prevalent feelings amongst the NJA’s teaching staff. In spite of this Mrs. Carter-Morgan contends the following:

You have a responsibility ... You have a responsibility. And it might not be in black and white, these are some of what we call the “hidden agenda,” or the “hidden curriculum” or whatever, [but] you have to just do what you have to do to ... keep this place standing and just go. Continue ... Keep it moving ... keep it moving. It doesn’t make any sense you roll over and play dead. You have to just do what you have to do ... With or without the resources you have to get on. Look on creative ways how you can get this thing done ... You have to look on where you want our children to be in the next five or six years from now. And just get with it. You can’t sit around crying and playing dead. Yes, things are not the way you want it to be, but what can you do? What can you do? You can do something.

That said, in October 2019, I received word from Mrs. Carter-Morgan that the school began a fundraising campaign to pave the yard at the start of the 2019-2020 academic year. With the help of the members of the PTA, the teachers have been soliciting pledges for the necessary bags of cement to complete the job, while also pledging their own funds for the cause. Bags of cement are \$1,200 (approximately USD \$8.62) each, and the labour, free, because parents who are

skilled in concrete masonry — as well as some parents who are not — have volunteered their time to this ongoing project. To date (February 2020), the school community has raised enough funds to pave the front section of the campus, and efforts continue to garner pledges to pave the long driveway from the entry gate.

Examining Mrs. Carter-Morgan’s sentiments and the yard paving project anti-colonially, we can see that there is no spirit of inertia at the NJA. Both people and ideas are in constant motion, and in resistance to the political-economic externalities that affect the school so significantly. As such, the school community has generated, and is continuously generating, a subjective politics (Simmons and Dei, 2012), through its constant innovations, which are necessary for it to remain a functioning institution of learning. For example, one afternoon during my visit the school bell rang at 12 o’clock, and the students were dismissed early for the day. Mrs. Carter-Morgan then asked, “Ms. Thompson, did you bring your walking shoes?” I proudly showed her that I was one step ahead, and had already put them on, because on this particular day I would accompany her and the teachers on their “community walk through.” Because student recruitment is the responsibility of the school, the community walk through is vital to the maintenance of per pupil Ministry issued funding. Also, the MOEYI has made promises to build new, and much needed classrooms if enrolment increases. Teachers visit the districts that surround the NJA on select days in the late-Spring and early-Summer months and hand out advertising flyers (see Figure 5.3) that outline the criteria for registration and the school’s unique offerings.

On this particular day, seven of us set out, splitting up in to two groups of two and one group of three. Following Mrs. Carter-Morgan’s lead, I too, braved the prospect of being attacked by dogs, and encountered a significant number of goats and chickens, as I knocked on

the doors of private residences and businesses in order to endorse the school and leave a flyer. I encountered parents, and a significant number of grandmothers, who were tasked with raising their grandchildren in the absence of their parents, to whom I would recite the phrase, “Make the NJA your school of choice for your child” before concluding our discussions. Business owners agreed to display the flyer for the patrons of their establishments to see.

REGISTRATION IN PROGRESS FOR NEW STUDENT FOR THE YEAR 2018-2019

Item need for registration:

- ♦ A COPY OF THE PARENT ID AND THE ORIGINAL
- ♦ 2 COPIES OF THE CHILD BIRTH CERTIFICATE AND THE ORIGINAL
- ♦ A COPY OF THE CHILD IMMUNIZATION CARD AND THE ORIGINAL
- ♦ A COPY OF THE PATH REGISTRATION PAPER AND THE ORIGINAL
- ♦ TWO PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CHILD
- ♦ A COPY OF THE CHILD'S LAST REPORT WOULD BE AN ASSET
- ♦ MEDICAL INFORMATION IF THE CHILD HAS A DEBILITATING ILLNESS
- ♦ DEVELOPMENT FEE OF \$500.00, THE SCHOOL CREST \$500.00, PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM \$2200.00

WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING:

- ⇒ MUSIC LESSONS, MORNING & EVENING LESSONS
- ⇒ DEDICATED TEACHERS, WHO ARE COMPUTER SAVY. THEY USE THE COMPUTER AND MULTIMEDIA TO ENHANCE THE TEACHING/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, POSSESS FIRST AND SECOND DEGREES.
- ⇒ CLUBS TO BUILD SOCIAL AWARENESS, WE HAVE FIELD TRIPS TO REINFORCE TAUGHT CONCEPTS
- ⇒ OUR CLUBS INCLUDE: CULTURE CLUB, ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB, 4-H, NUMERACY CLUB,
- ⇒ BROWNIES, THE WRITER'S CLUB
- ⇒ AND, STARTING SOON, CRICKET

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

WE CAN BE REACHED AT 354-8374 OR 3987670. PLEASE CALL US TODAY, YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID!

Figure 5.3 Recruitment Flyer

Another strategy employed to recruit prospective students who live in the neighbouring district of McMeadow, involved Mrs. Carter-Morgan picking me up for a Sunday morning service at the McMeadow Baptist Church. After driving up an unpaved road, we arrived at the church that is cleverly etched into a *steep* hillside. The other members of the teaching staff were already present, and after the opening hymns and choruses, Mrs. Carter-Morgan addressed the congregation about the school's open enrolment for the Fall 2018 term. She received an applause and a few "Amen's" from parishioners. After the service, one of the Church Mothers gave us slices of Black Cake and bottles of juice as a thank you for attending the service.

Although I do not know the result of the two recruitment events that I participated in, the teachers' commitment to supporting the growth of the school population in this manner should not be ignored; especially because their time spent engaging in these activities goes uncompensated. Be that as it may, community walk throughs and visits to local churches are not adequate enough to meet the NJA's financial needs. Because, once families are enticed to send their children to the NJA, the teaching staff still require appropriate learning resources in order to meet the needs of their students. Therefore, according to Mrs. Lawrence:

The teachers, [and the] principal, they ... have to go out of their own, out of their way just to get things done. They have to really push hard with different, let me say, like different things, just to get things done. For example, they have to put on like a fish fry, they have to do different things to get, even to get the resources, to get money in the school, for a door to fix, for a window to fix, for the school to be painted. All of these. They have to push and pull.

I would like to note that Mrs. Lawrence used the phrase “push and pull” several times throughout her interview because, from the perspective of a parent, she views the principal and teachers’ labour as a constant struggle with factors that are out of their control. I would, however, like to pause for a moment to point out that teaching without adequate resources is not only endemic to rural public primary schools in Jamaica. This phenomenon can be found in other countries in the Global South, as well as in the inner cities and Indigenous communities of countries in the Global North. But, I will say that I was intrigued when Mrs. Lawrence shared her opinion of the teachers ‘extra-curricular activities.’ From her perspective they have to push and pull in order to address the school’s, and by extension, their own resource deficits so that they may carry out the work that they were both trained and hired to do. However, because Walking District is not an urban community, Ms. Flanders, the teacher with the most seniority, argues that the NJA suffers from a visible form of rural neglect in the following statement:

I don’t know why it is done that way [by the Ministry], but over the years, this is an issue that we are faced with ... The rural schools don’t get enough materials, enough textbooks, enough of anything. And so we are at a disadvantage and we are still, we are still expected to produce ... the same level of students ... with the same experiences [as those in urban schools], we have to produce all of that.

What Ms. Flanders has described here is an environment in which teachers *must* be creative and resourceful in order to fulfill their pedagogical duties. Of course, this is difficult because teaching materials are finite and, in many cases, outdated. Hence, the school’s need to fundraise so that it can combat the problems of under resourcing and austerity.

According to Dei and Lordan (2016), “we must understand that there is a conjunction of theory and practice that manifests itself in the everyday material lives of colonized and oppressed

peoples around the globe” (p. IX). In other words, it is erroneous to separate the existences of the overlooked, as well as the marginalized from the conditions of the multilateral agreements that characterize the current era of globalization (Dei and Lordan, 2016), that, for example, necessitate that Grade 4 students pay a \$400 (approximately USD \$3.00) fee for their Grade 4 Literacy and Numeracy Test⁶⁵ practice test papers. I learned this when I invigilated a series of practice tests for one week in Ms. Plummer’s stead because she was ill and could not attend school. On the first day, her students began approaching me with payment. Feeling slightly confused by this, I asked Mrs. Carter-Morgan if I should, indeed, be collecting payment, she replied saying, “Yes, Ms. Plummer would have instructed them to bring their money last week in order to defray printing costs for the school.” So as not to forget who paid in full, who needed change, and keep track of IOU’s, I began making a list.

However, it is important to note that collecting payment for practice test papers is only a part of what the nature of limited state finances requires the NJA to do in order to sustain itself. The school sells pencils and pencil sharpeners on a daily basis. The items retail for \$30 (approximately USD \$0.23) each. Mrs. Reed sells iCool bottled water throughout the day for \$100 (approximately USD \$0.77) per bottle, and scoops of ice cream twice per week during recess for \$50 (approximately USD \$0.45) each in order to raise funds for the Guidance Department. Also during recess, Ms. Curtis sells a variation of salty and sweet packaged snack items for \$20 (approximately USD \$0.15) each at the outdoor Tuck Shop. On “Special Fundraising Days,” the school orders and sells Juici Patties with coco bread⁶⁶ and cheese, and slices of meatloaf for \$175 (approximately USD \$1.70), and Mr. Bearer, the school cook, bakes

⁶⁵ The Grade Four Literacy and Numeracy Test is administered island-wide at the end of June or in early July. This particular practice test period took place in May 2018.

⁶⁶ A slightly sweet bread that is baked with coconut milk that is typically eaten with patties.

desserts, such as Sweet Potato Pudding, which sell for \$100 each. The school also hosts “Fun Days,” for which it rents a bouncy castle, and each child is charged an admission fee per turn. In the past I have been told that the funds raised from these events have gone towards the purchase of a new refrigerator, a stove for the canteen and the construction of the garbage skip.

The day before my return to Toronto, I attended a special fundraising event at the Methodist Church next door. The teaching staff organized it to raise funds for the purchase of an office computer. Since it was my first time attending a ‘Prayer Breakfast’ in Jamaica, I did not know what to expect, but I made a contribution of \$500 (approximately USD \$3.83) to procure an adult ticket to the event, which turned out to be a service led by a multi-denominational host of clergy persons from churches in Walking District, and surrounding districts, who each offered prayers on behalf of the NJA’s staff and students, followed by a short sermon about investing in Jamaica’s children. Upon the service’s conclusion, a diverse group of guests, which included parents and community members, entered the school yard through the side gate, and descended upon the Grade 5 and 6 classrooms, where the partition had been opened in order to accommodate an elaborate breakfast buffet (by “breakfast” I mean boiled and fried dumplings, stewed and curried chicken, fried snapper, callaloo⁶⁷ and cabbage and mackerel) that had been prepared by Mr. Bearer with the help of parents, Ms. McMartin, Ms. Cargil, Ms. Simpson and Ms. Bines, who also did the cleaning up afterwards. The teachers served both the guests and the students, who were charged \$100 for their meals. Parents and community members who could not attend the Prayer Breakfast donated food items for the buffet and ordered meals to-go in take-out containers to support the cause. As a result, the NJA achieved its goal and was able to

⁶⁷ Green leafy vegetable.

purchase a new computer for the school office.

Inspired by the English-language proverb “necessity is the mother of invention,” I submit that the aforementioned fundraising efforts are the actions that great insufficiencies produce. So, instead of “crying and playing dead,” as Mrs. Carter-Morgan remarked, she, the teachers and parents respond to the dire economic circumstances that the school finds itself in because of the MOEYI’s weak financial capabilities. Although, these responses do not subvert the political agreements that have placed public primary schools in peril in many developing countries, they mitigate their effects. Operating under the remnants of both old and new colonialisms, the NJA community has become accustomed to coping with, and working around, their dominant-everyday impositions (Dei and Simmons, 2012), as it endeavours to deliver its best version of a primary school program to its students.

“Most of Our Children Are Struggling Children”

Because the majority of the NJA’s students come from poor families,⁶⁸ many arrive to school in the mornings with empty stomachs, and present behavioural challenges that are symptomatic of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). However, according to Ms. Flanders “sometimes you see them [the students] and they might be giving [trouble], they might be having behavioural problems in class. But then when you get to find it, it’s because they’re hungry.” “Most of our children are struggling children,” she said, “they come here and they come without food.” Today, we understand that education and eating go hand in hand (Taras, 2005), so in order to address the problem of hunger, and thereby increase the efficacy of teaching and learning, the above mentioned Breakfast Program was implemented with some financial

⁶⁸ Roughly 10 percent a from middle-income families.

support from the NJAAA (which I discuss in detail in Chapter 6) for students who come from families that are food insecure and cannot eat breakfast at home.

Before classes begin, Guidance Counsellor, Mrs. Reed, who is in charge of the Breakfast Program, along with a volunteer from the community, serve a hot cup of Milo or Ovaltine and three to four Excelsior Water Crackers topped with peanut butter, or a small bowl of corn flakes with warm milk to this “needy group,” as they are often referred too. If per chance there is extra food available, for a nominal fee of \$50 (USD \$0.36) students who, likely, would have eaten breakfast at home may purchase a meal. As a means of determining who is entitled to a costless breakfast in instances when food stuffs are particularly limited, Mrs. Reed will ask the question: “Are you on PATH?” before serving each child. (“PATH” is an acronym for the Program Through the Advancement of Health and Education, which is a conditional cash transfer social assistance benefit that is funded by the World Bank and distributed on a bi-monthly basis to families who are in financial need and have school aged children.)⁶⁹ If the child answers, “Yes” then she or he will be served, providing they did not have breakfast at home. Children who reply, “No” are not typically served because, at times, there is not enough to go around, and it is assumed that they would have already eaten.

In order to sustain the Breakfast Program, Mrs. Reed participates in fundraising activities, selling bottled water and ice cream, as noted above. Curious about her ability to serve breakfast when her profit margin is thin, I asked, “How do you still provide these [breakfast items]?” and

⁶⁹ The parents who mentioned that they receive PATH funds during their interviews indicated that the bi-monthly amount per child can range anywhere between \$2000 and \$3000 (USD \$15.17 and \$22.75). One mother noted that her entitlement is \$11,700 (USD \$88.73) for her four children. Also, according to the NJA Inspection Report (2015), 86 of 192 (enrolled, but not necessarily attending students) received PATH funds, which included a subsidized lunch. Today, all PATH recipients’ lunches are still subsidized.

to my amazement, Mrs. Reed said “Beg. Which I don’t like to do but there are persons that I’ll ask and they will assist financially ... whatever they can.” Although begging is not her preferred means of solicitation, Mrs. Reed is willing to do it in order to meet the basic need of hunger — that is quite prevalent at the NJA — and other health and personal hygiene needs as well because, she said, “they’ll [the students] come and say ‘Teacher, do you have any shampoo, conditioner, deodorant?’ ”. For this reason, she always has to be prepared.

From Ms. McNaught’s perspective, the NJA’s large population of students who come from “mostly lower income families,”

Puts a strain on the school that’s already strained. Also, it requires ... [you] to be more charitable ... So, as a teacher you can’t just be a teacher, who’s just teaching. You have to address certain other issues ... So, you’re not only giving your time, but even your finances too. Because they [the students] will come and they won’t have [money] ... to go home ... As the teacher who is always in contact with the student, this is something that you are nudged or I wouldn’t say forced [to do], but the human side to you will cause you to do that.

My interpretation of Mrs. Reed’s and Ms. McNaught’s words is that teachers must address the challenges that poverty brings to the classroom. However, while doing this, they must also cope with institutional poverty that causes them to have to either beg for help, or draw from their own financial resources in order to meet students’ most basic needs which, apparently, are not always being met at home.

Explicating how the colonial mediates this process is necessary here because children are born into a context that is not of their own creation. More specifically, they “inevitably enter into

definite relations, which are independent of their will ...” (Marx, 1970, p. 201). Therefore, the societal-institutional arrangements that precede them, undoubtably, shape their respective worlds. Bradshaw et al. (1993) postulate that there is a relationship between national debt and children’s quality of life, and describe it as one of the most important sociological phenomena in modern history. And UNICEF (1989) contends that “hundreds of thousands of the developing world’s children have given their lives to pay their countries’ debts, and many millions more are still paying the interest with their malnourished minds and bodies” (p. 30, quoted in Bradshaw et al., 1993). An anti-colonial lens enables us to see that the colonial hides itself in plain sight under the umbrella of global capitalism, operating through structural adjustment programs in the Global South. When indebted countries follow the concomitant procedures that necessitate currency devaluation and cuts to basic social entitlements, children are the most significantly affected (Bradshaw et. al., 1993). According to Johnson (2012):

With greater resources going to debt servicing, even less is left for social spending and needed infrastructure projects. So while Jamaica and its international financial backers ensure that creditors continue receiving checks, the people of Jamaica will find it even harder to send their children to school or to the doctor (Johnson 2012, para. 4).

Moreover, in Walking District and other rural communities that have, historically, relied on agricultural labour, the prospect for a successful livelihood has been stripped away because of structural adjustment policies that necessitate reduced trade barriers. As such, the Jamaican market has been engulfed by imported food, making farming an unsustainable occupation. Much of the community’s poverty can be attributed to this, and consequentially, the poverty of several of the NJA’s students, who at times are kept at home if their parent/guardian cannot give them

money to purchase lunch from the canteen. In recent years, the school raised the price of lunch because of the inflated cost of meat protein and other essential food items.⁷⁰ So, instead of paying \$50 for their lunches, students who receive PATH funds now pay \$100, and non-PATH recipient students now pay \$150 (approximately USD \$1.15) as opposed to \$100, thus making the purchase of lunch on a daily basis more inaccessible to several families. Ms. Cargil perceives parents who keep their children home for this reason to be prideful because “the Principal talk all the while in the Parents-Teacher meeting [and says] ‘Parents, if you’re having a problem with lunch money to come to school, don’t stop the children them from come to school. Just write a note and let them come and give me it’.” An anti-colonial reading of Mrs. Carter-Morgan’s willingness to accommodate these students underscores the relevancy of the adage, “it takes a village to raise a child.”⁷¹ The ‘village’ in this context are the NJA teaching and support staff who make it their duty to see every child educated, but also, fed.⁷² I can say definitively that no student at the NJA is denied lunch, even if they are unable to pay.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have made an ardent attempt to present the NJA’s challenges. But, it would be fallacious of me to try to convince you that they begin and end here. This is a mere screen capture, in which I set out to convey that the NJA school community is not comprised of a passive group of charity recipients who are incapable of doing for themselves. Against the

⁷⁰ Helping to offset the cost of meal preparation, Food for the Poor (FFP) Jamaica makes donations to the NJA whenever the Organization has a surplus of food. However, FFP donates less frequently to the school due to poverty increases in the areas that were most devastated by Hurricane Matthew in 2017.

⁷¹ Scholars of African history have yet to trace the origins of this saying. So, as not to misattribute it to an entire continent, I have chosen not to refer to it as an “African proverb,” even though the phrase likely descends from the Continent.

⁷² In previous work (Thompson, 2014), I ascertained that accessible school meals are an important mechanism for fighting crime because it keeps children, especially boys, in school and off of the streets.

backdrop of the theoretical/discursive anti-colonial framework, I have conceptualized the principal, teachers, parents and support staff as their own first responders to, what I perceive is, the emergency of austerity in public primary education in Jamaica. In the next chapter, the diasporic responses to this situation are taken up.

CHAPTER 6

BENEVOLENCE:

“GIVE BACK TO THE CHILDREN, GIVE BACK TO THE FUTURE”

Introduction

Revisiting the letter that I submitted as the second article of evidence in Chapter 1: Trailer 2, I introduce you to its author, Mrs. Melody Edwards-Kemp. In 1994, Mrs. Edwards-Kemp wrote to her batchmates in the hopes that they would come together and address the pressing needs of their former primary school that was “struggling for survival in many departments.” Appealing to their collective memory, she wrote:

As someone who has passed through these walls, and benefitted from coming here, I am sure you would want to see it [the school] continuing to be of help to the community and the wider world for centuries to come. It is therefore in this light that our arms here at the [Nyerere Junior Academy] are outstretched, and fervently hope that you will assist us to remain ‘alive.’

Injecting a morsel of transparency, I have never considered making a contribution to the primary schools that I attended in Brampton and Caledon, Ontario. Nor have any of my former schoolmates solicited financial or other help from me on the schools’ behalf. Although my experience of the public education system was far from ideal, the institutions that I attended were not dependent on transnational remittance flows for survival; and this remains the same today.⁷³ I draw this comparison in order to underscore the point that Mrs. Edwards-Kemp’s plea for help for the NJA necessarily bypassed the MOEYI — and the border — so that it would reach the

⁷³ This is not to say that the public education system in Ontario is not without its fiscal challenges; however, the operation of its schools is not dependent upon ‘Canadian Diasporans’ — if such an entity can exist — who live abroad.

school's past students in Canada. As such, a group of alumni responded to Mrs. Edwards-Kemp's request through an organized form of giving in 1997 that is still in operation today. Therefore, again being carried by my authorial voice, the GTA-based participants in this study will speak; explaining to you, the reader, *why*, *how* and *what* they give to the NJA. The Alumni's concerns about the government clawbacks that its alma mater experiences as a result of their giving is also discussed. Finally, the efficacy of the NJAAA's non-financial remittances are considered, and I have given a venue for the principal and teachers to weigh in on this matter. The aforementioned will be analyzed against an anti-colonial theoretical backdrop.

Why Give Back?

"We have to support, we cannot let it fall apart"

As a second generation Jamaican Diasporan, I did not question the normality of sending, what appeared to be, any and everything home to Jamaica for family members, friends and special causes.⁷⁴ However, my scholarly pursuits would inspire me to begin thinking about the ontology of this transnational arrangement. Today, I understand that it is rooted in the historical and present manifestations of colonialism that have produced negative social and economic outcomes for many in Jamaica. As such, the mass migration waves that were discussed in Chapter 2 occurred, and are still occurring today. But, my dissertative Discovery has taught me that the process of diasporization (Simmons and Dei, 2012) has proved itself to be advantageous for Jamaica. Because, in an emotive sense, the experiences of hardship and lack that one leaves behind are accompanied by a connective politics that, forever, binds those who migrate to their homeland, and inspires them to "give back" (Simmons and Dei, 2012). As it pertains to the

⁷⁴ The devastation that hurricanes bring, the death of a loved one or any other tragedy that is known to have taken place in Jamaica, is a cause for individuals and groups to send money, food and other items home.

individuals who participated in the GTA-based portion of this bifurcated study, I ascertained that they remitted money and other goods to the NJA for reasons that are inextricable from a sense of responsibility, attachment and guilt (Burman, 2002). In order to demonstrate my point, I direct your attention to the following snippet from my conversation with Mr. Luke Winter, who attended the NJA during the late 1940s and the early 1950s, and was introduced to you in Chapter 1, Trailer 2:

Giselle:⁷⁵ Why is it important for you ... to support the school? Why do you personally feel a responsibility, once the letter⁷⁶ was written, you didn't have to take it, you didn't have to come back [to Canada] and try and do something, why did you do something?

Mr. Winter: It's an institution that's been there for years. My parents, their parents, they went there. They were taught A-B-C, how to count, read ... We had nothing better than there. We had nothing better than there.

Giselle: Right.

Mr. Winter: We have to support, we cannot let it fall apart. It's ours.

In addition to his experiential and generational ties to the NJA, Mr. Winter, much like other interview participants who attended the NJA, lays claim to the school; and therefore, carries a

⁷⁵ During my conversations in the GTA, participants referred to me by my first name, which I am most comfortable with. While in Hanover, I assumed the moniker "Ms. Thompson" in order to 'fit in' the school environment. However, beyond this, going by your title and surname is quite common in Jamaican society.

⁷⁶ Introduced in Chapter 1, and discussed above.

burden of responsibility to support and sustain it for future generations. He articulates this in the next excerpt from our conversation:

Giselle: There's no rule or law that requires anyone to get together with their old schoolmates and start an organization ... So what I'd like to understand is, you've kept connected but ... could there ever be a time where you would disconnect from it [the NJA]?

Mr. Winter: Disconnect from it?

Giselle: Yes.

Mr. Winter: No, I couldn't.

Giselle: Okay.

Mr. Winter: I couldn't be disconnected from it [the NJA] because it's a sense of pride, where you come from. It's an honour. Like I always say, you have to give back, you can't just take ... give back to the children, give back to the future. They are the future.

Also concerned about the futures of school-aged children and high schoolers in Jamaica en masse, is Mr. Saul Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin has been a friend and supporter of the NJAAA since its inception and is quite active in the diasporic school alumni association community in the GTA. In response to the question "Why is it important to engage in this sort of collective form of remittance, or giving to educational institutions [in Jamaica]?", he replied "The government alone can't do it ... and if we don't give them [schools] a fighting chance, we won't be able to go back to Jamaica." Mr. Benjamin perceives education to have indispensable and

preservative qualities that Jamaica requires in order to sustain itself for generations to come. So, for this reason, he has committed himself to supporting the development and maintenance of alumni associations in the Toronto area through the AJAA.

In the previous examples, we are made privy to how diasporic ties, which in this case are derived from Mr. Winter and Mr. Benjamin's experiences, influence a politics of social transformation (Simmons and Dei, 2012). According to alumnus and founding president of the NJAAA, Mr. Walter Smith, who attended the NJA from 1953 to 1958, the "undesirable" condition of the school made collective giving, "something that we had to do." Drawing from Mr. Smith's sentiments, it can be argued that moral obligation cannot be easily separated from the process of diasporization. I say this because in several of my interview sessions I ascertained that alumni, whom in this case were all senior citizens, and friends of the organization, who are also approaching their elderly years, expressed a distinct brand of giving ethics which are rooted in their ethnocultural and familial experiences. For example, phrases such as "Daddy was a giver," and "My parents, they always give back to the community" were commonly repeated. Therefore, several participants described giving as a transgenerational way of life, which they maintained throughout the process of migration, and subsequently passed down to their Canadian-born children; several of whom are active members of the NJAAA and are also involved in other forms of transnational-diasporic giving.

In a manner that captured, what I refer to as, 'transgenerational giving ethics' quite poignantly, Mr. Winter remarked, "I cannot stand up or sit here in Canada and look at the school that my parents, and their parents went to, fall apart." So, in addition to preserving his family legacy, Mr. Winter, his batchmates and other NJAAA supporters, such as Mr. Benjamin are contributing to the creation of new futures (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019; Todd, 2019; Dei, 2018) for

the students who attend the NJA. In doing so, they are participating in the reversal of what Fisher (2014) refers to as “the slow cancellation of the future,” which is caused by the uncertainties that structural adjustment and austerity present to the public primary education system in Jamaica.

The anti-colonial discursive framework deems this kind of action to be necessary in order for the dreams of colonized people, whom in this case are rural-school aged children, to be realized (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019; Todd, 2019; Dei, 2018) through education that empowers and does not constrain (Buchanan, 2019). The transnational-diasporic provision of resources is necessary for the achievement of this goal. And, the GOJ, MOEYI and its administrators, principals and teachers are acutely aware of this. It is a sociocultural understanding, of sorts.

Donations, Clawbacks and Government Mistrust

“We’re Jamaicans, we’ll find a way around that”

So, how *exactly* does the NJAAA support its alma mater? With the understanding that its giving is needed, the Association makes its donations primarily through financial means.

However, gifts in kind are a significant portion of its benevolence repertoire. I will return to this discussion in the following subsection, and for now, focus on the NJAAA’s financial contributions.

The lion’s share of the NJAAA’s revenue comes from its annual fundraising banquet. The Association also occasionally receives private contributions. In recent years select members of the NJAAA have been participating in an annual walkathon that is hosted by another locally-based Jamaican school alumni association group. The NJAAA Executive Board agreed to a 70-30 split of the proceeds, with the former going into its reserves and the latter, to the hosts of the event.⁷⁷ The donated funds are then sent to Jamaica through a money transfer service, and a

⁷⁷ The innovation to partner with the alumni association group that hosts the walkathon was issued to all alumni associations who are under the AJAA umbrella.

withdrawal letter is sent to Mrs. Carter-Morgan, authorizing her to retrieve it on behalf of the school. She, then, deposits it into the NJA's bank account, which is monitored by the Ministry.

Although I cannot verify this,⁷⁸ interview data that were collected in both Hanover and the GTA reveal that the MOEYI has been known to claw back funding from schools who have active alumni associations abroad. The ethicality of this ministerial practice is outside of the scope of this dissertation. However, I ascertained how this 'problem' is often circumvented. Mr. Winter remarked, "We're Jamaicans, we'll find a way around that," to which I replied, "Find ways around the Government?" "Yeah," he said, "because ... if the Government gives \$10 and we give \$10, the Government looks at it and says 'Hey, this school has \$20 in their account, so we shouldn't give them [their full entitlement]' ... So, we make sure we don't have \$10 in the account ... That's right. We work around it."

I must admit, when I heard Mr. Winter say this my immediate thought was, "*Interesting.*" On one hand, the MOEYI welcomes diasporic support, as Education Officer, Mrs. Hamilton, informed us in Chapter 1; and on the other, the members of the NJAAA are exploring ways and means to "work around it." President of the NJAAA, Derwin Miller, whom we met in Chapter 1, admitted that he encouraged Mrs. Carter-Morgan to open another bank account:

Where the Ministry can't go in and claw back what they're supposed to give ...

We discussed it here, how can we establish an account out there where, at so many times we could say to the principal, you can go in and get so much

[money]. But from my understanding, she would still have to report it ... to the

⁷⁸ I am unable to verify this because I do not have access to the NJA's banking records. But, whether real or perceived, the subject of government clawbacks came up numerous times in the interview data. Even in conversations with supporters of the NJAAA, who are actively involved with other school alumni groups.

Ministry, so that wouldn't [be] beneficial in the direction that we were looking at.

In an agitated tone, Mr. Miller continued, saying "I was just trying to find a way where the Ministry maintains what they're supposed to do [because] what we're giving is just an addition ... [a] supplement I should say." Mr. Winter, Mr. Miller and their batchmates, as well as members of other alumni groups, view clawbacks as a ministerial absolution of responsibility to the school that weakens the efficacy of their transnational financial endowments. So, for this reason, the Association is careful not to reflect the full amount of its benevolence to the NJA.

In addition to the fear of clawbacks, members and friends of the NJAAA appeared to be hostile towards, and mistrusting of, the GOJ. Mr. Benjamin, who was introduced above, insisted that "we've [the Jamaican Diaspora and alumni association groups] got to start holding the Government accountable ... and I'm beginning to spread the message to the Alliance⁷⁹ now of not giving the Government the opportunity of getting their hands on the money [that is donated to schools from the GTA]." Without a display of partiality towards the PNP or the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), Mr. Benjamin argued that the GOJ cannot be trusted to handle education-focused remittances. When I invited him to elaborate on this matter, a conversation about the NET,⁸⁰ which I introduced in Chapter 2, ensued. But, before I share Mr. Benjamin's sentiments, using Mrs. Hamilton's words, I will explain the NET's reason for existence:

The National Education Trust is an entity, an arm within the Ministry of

Education that streamlines ... how things [money and other items] should be

⁷⁹ Member organizations of the AJAA.

⁸⁰ I determined four distinct attitudes towards the NET from this study's GTA-based participants: 1) abhorrence of its existence and insistence on regulating giving; 2) fear that financial and other donations will not reach their respective alma mater, and be sent to other schools; 3) indifference; and 4) little or no knowledge of its existence at all. Needless to say, none of these sentiments are good.

disseminated, and they also assist with the tax so that persons don't pay a lot of the overheads and so on.⁸¹ But there must be proof that these things are really going to be used in the schools, and so on. So, it's just to streamline, make sure all the documentations are in place, and to ensure that everything is very transparent.

From a posture of diametric opposition, Mr. Benjamin rebuffed this, stating:

No, no. [The alumni association groups are] not going that route. It's...the Prime Minister now came to Toronto when he was Minister of Education, in that short time. And he came with that half-baked story, and it hasn't been fixed yet. And he tried to sell us on that and he had to be taken out of the room by the High Commissioner [to] Toronto.⁸² Because he didn't know [who] he was coming to... And I remember [I] get up and said, 'Mr. Minister of Education, as long as I'm involved with the alumni association, over my dead body it will never happen.' [Then] Marley Alumni Association⁸³ got up, same thing. Bennett Alumni Association⁸⁴ got up [too].

When I invited Mr. Benjamin to elaborate on their vehement rejection of the then-Minister of Education's proposal he simply noted, "there was no credibility from the Government." For this reason, Mr. Benjamin is on a mission that he describes as "gathering steam" in the local Jamaican community: "We [several alumni groups] don't send money to the schools anymore,"

⁸¹ The taxes that Mrs. Hamilton is referring to here are customs fees.

⁸² It should be noted that the Consulate General of Jamaica hosts private meetings with select members of the Jamaican Diaspora to discuss economic and social issues back home. From time-to-time — particularly, during election years — GOJ cabinet ministers will be in attendance. Here, new ideas are presented to, and solicited from Diasporans.

⁸³ Pseudonym.

⁸⁴ Pseudonym.

he announced. “We’re now asking the schools to set up foundations in Jamaica ... It [donations] goes to the foundation; it’s a private organization. Because when it goes to the school, the Government sees what foreign currencies come in, and they short-change the school.” Although the NJAAA and the NJA have not established a foundation for the purpose of government circumvention, I have been told that the option remains on the table given this burgeoning trend in transnational giving.

All things considered, I would be remiss if I did not draw attention to the fact that, in Jamaican and other “post-colonial” country contexts, ‘the State’ is a colonial creation. Therefore, its tendency to surveil and control the behaviour of groups of people is not a new phenomenon that can be attributed to Western modernity (Berda, 2013). But, we can and must trace its origins to the historical-colonial enclaves of Eurocentricity (Simmons and Dei, 2012), where, I surmise, the contentious relationship between the surveillant and the surveilled, the controller and the controlled, began. According to Fanon (1963), the hostility that colonized people harbour towards states is easily understood “if we simply study and are alive to the number and depth of the injuries inflicted upon a native during a single day spent amidst [a] colonial regime” (p. 249). And, as we are less than two centuries removed from African slavery in the British Caribbean, these effects are intergenerationally experienced⁸⁵ at the hands of transhistorical colonial regimes (Simmons and Dei, 2012).

Although anti-colonial scholars are highly critical of the work of post-colonial scholars, as I discussed in Chapter 4, we can still look to the work of Homi Bhabha (1994), who argues that historical-colonial powers prepared colonies for post-colonial mimicry of their systems, which include governance. As such — and as Fanon (1963) predicted — when seated in power,

⁸⁵ How can a state gain the full, unfettered trust of its African-descendent populations who were once capital in the system of triangular trade (Kincaid, 1988)?

the formerly colonized do not eliminate, but reinforce coloniality without question or impunity.⁸⁶ And we see this demonstrated in the GOJ's continued practice of "panopticism"⁸⁷ (Foucault, 1977; Bentham, 1791). Panopticism, according to Caluya (2010), is abstracted from the panopticon, which in a Foucauldian manner, can be interpreted as a distinctive practice of surveillance that is meant to serve the needs of both the historical-colonial and the contemporary colonial-state. And it appears as though the GOJ is intent upon monitoring how, and to whom, alumni-associations are giving so that it may discern the extent to which it can reduce its financial obligations to the NJA and other public schools. I am by no means suggesting that this is the result of state malevolence, mismanagement or corruption. We know that there has been a consistent diminution of education spending since the era of structural adjustment began in the late-1970s because of the weakened capacity of the Jamaican dollar (see Table 2.2 in Chapter 2 for Education Expenditure Table) (Thompson, 2014; Miller, 1999a; 1992).

Nevertheless, Mr. Winter, Mr. Miller and Mr. Benjamin's comments inform us that sophisticated plans to evade the Government already exist and are proliferating in both local and transnational space in order to increase the efficaciousness of educational remittances.⁸⁸ And, from this display we are made privy to the engagement with "another politics" (Dixon, 2014),

⁸⁶ This is another area in which I have chosen to leave ethical questions unbothered because I am not certain of the benefit of such discussions.

⁸⁸ Having said this, it should be noted that alumni associations' commitment to working *around* the GOJ, as opposed to working *in tandem* with it may be disadvantageous for international development in the area of education, even though their concerns about government clawbacks and credibility are valid. I say this because the necessity of educational remittances is indisputable, and extends much further than alumni association to alma mater benevolence. In Chapter 1, Trailer 2, Mrs. Hamilton unashamedly admitted that the MOEYI "cannot provide" for its schools; and is therefore, "grateful for all the help that the schools receive from [the] Diaspora." And in Chapter 2, I discussed how at the height of the SOPE proclamations in 2018 the, then-Consul General to Toronto, Lloyd Wilks wrote to *all* members of the Jamaican Diaspora — regardless of their school affiliation — asking them to donate fundamental learning supplies and money to Basic schools in ZOSOs. This begs important questions about the experiences of public schools in Jamaica that do not have alumni association support abroad.

which an anti-colonial interpretation of diaspora/diasporization requires. We know that the ultimate goal of anti-colonial theory is decolonization (Dei, 2018; Mignolo, 2013), and in contrast to this, understand that colonialism will never end (Simmons and Dei, 2012). But, it is still necessary to maintain a potent literacy of resistance that pushes back against colonial domination and control (Kempf, 2010) so that the goals and objectives of colonized people are realized.

Bad (But Well-intended) Benevolence

“Your heart is in the right place”

In an era of globalization where governments are actively seeking external help to tackle social and economic issues within their borders (Abbey, 2004), it is reasonable to argue that the members of the NJAAA are doing their fair share of the ‘heavy lifting.’ For example, in his presidential address in the NJAAA’s 2018 annual banquet magazine-program, Mr. Miller wrote:

Through your support for our fundraising events, we have been able to assist the students at our alma mater in their academic pursuits and sports. We re-established the music program and compensate the music teacher as the Jamaican Government refuses to do so.

And in his 2019 presidential address, Mr. Miller wrote,

You [patrons] have risen to the task every single time to partner with us on the projects we organize at the school. For example, the painting of the school to make it look more presentable, the installation of water tanks, retrofitting the Principal’s office, the expansion of the lunch program into a breakfast/lunch program and re-establishing the music program (to name a few projects). ...

For the past thirteen (13) years our Alumni Association has been awarding scholarships to deserving students at our Alma Mater who are going on to high school ... Your continued assistance is helping these students to achieve the highest calibre and become the future leaders of society ... These scholarships serve the important purpose of lightening the financial burden of recipients while allowing them to focus on their learning and career aspirations.

Mr. Miller went on to say:

The school is presently overcrowded, so in addition to the other projects that we undertake the banquet is our major fund raising which will assist towards our long-term goal of expanding the physical facilities, and making it more conducive to a better learning environment.

As per Mr. Miller's words, it is evident that the Association is helping to address the tremendous immediate and long-term needs of its alma mater, and, as such, should be commended. *But*, it would be negligent of me not to convey a most curious finding — one that might easily have been overlooked had this study not taken on a bifurcated design, which offered me an invitation into the everyday worlds of both transnational remittance senders and local remittance receivers.

At the risk of coming across as impertinent, the process of Discovery has brought the constitutive difference between “well-meaning gestures” (Collier, 2007, p. 170) and “well-analyzed actions” (p. 170) to my attention. From this I determined that benevolence is, sometimes, unconscientious, misguided, unwanted, unneeded, or all of the above, because it flows from a well-intended, but “headless heart” (Collier, 2007). Having said this, the commonly used idiom, “your heart is in the right place” often came to mind when members of staff at the NJA would point out the inefficacy of some of the Alumni's non-financial contributions to the

school. These discussions did not emerge to discredit the efforts of the members of the NJAAA because overall, the school community appears to be appreciative of their transnational help. However, there are notable instances where this help has morphed into an obstacle for the already burdened school.

“A hoarding school”

According to Ms. Flanders, the Grade 5 teacher who was introduced in the previous chapter, “overall ... the [Alumni Association’s] venture on a whole is positive ... as it relates to how things are done now, that’s a different story.” For example, she says “... when [donated items] comes to the wharf, we have to raise funds to finance the customs duties and all of that to get the things here.” Ms. Flanders acknowledges that there are discrepancies in both the school and the NJAAA’s knowledge of the appropriate tax-exempt forms that should be filed;⁸⁹ and as a result she said:

The things stayed at the wharf for a long period of time, incurring costs for storage, and also the additional costs that was for customs. Now this was explained to [the Association] and they did not...make any effort to help. We had ... a fundraiser that we were planning to buy, I think it was a fridge or something,

⁸⁹ This appears to be a common problem for both individuals and groups who support schools, and other institutions in Jamaica. Moreover, I have heard from reliable sources that customs officials are, sometimes, unaware of the appropriate paperwork as well. Thus, making the process all the more difficult and expensive. As it pertains to education-focused giving, the National Education Trust (NET) exists to remedy this problem. However, its existence is unbeknownst to many diasporic givers and local receivers. For example, on their yearly summer trip to Jamaica to deliver backpacks for the coming school year, the Community of United Jamaicans (CUJAM) at York University is forced to pay taxes upon entry to the country even though they present the required forms issued by the NET to customs agents. According to Kevin Carter, Director of Marine Wharves at Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA), charitable shipments should be exempt from import duties, the General Consumption Tax and stamp duties, and should only be required to pay fifty percent of customs administration fees. Unfortunately, these policies are not widely known and upheld by customs and immigration staff; and diasporans and locals are not always aware of their rights. It is also important to note that not all schools have charitable status. Presumptively, I will say that most do not. This may also be a barrier to receiving items that have been donated from abroad at little to no cost.

we were planning to buy something for the school and we had to use up that fundraiser ... it was a good sum of money that we had to find and clear the things at the wharf, plus pay for the storage there. And the sad thing is that when we got our books ... they were not things that we could use ... right now ... there are about two or three barrels of Canadian books that are in the bathrooms that, they have no use to our children. There is nothing from them that we can use as teachers, or the children can use to get information...there's nothing (see 6.1).



Figure 6.1 One of the book-filled barrels that is stored in the girls bathroom.

Continuing on the topic of counter-productive giving, Ms. Flanders noted that the school has also received donations of laptop computers from the NJAAA in recent years. She says,

They were used computers for one. They...you find that they come with, they were password protected. So you find that every time you are going on, you have to use a password. And not only that, although we changed the password but, some of them, because of the kind of technology, then you cannot change the

password. You have to use it as is, so you find, then you find that it's not, there are some things wrong with it like the operation things, like the batteries were weak, so you cannot use them without they are plugged in. So those were challenges. And these things, they came to us and we have to pay at the wharf for them. The [the Association] did not help us to clear these bills ... So we had to [pay for] them. And then, like a few years after, maybe six months or a year after, these things become redundant and we can't use them any more. So we have to put it aside. And we're back to square one. We are using our chalk and talk.

Overall, donated items that are not fit to be used are proving to be more burdensome than anything else because they force the school to reach into its already limited resources to pay customs retrieval fees. In addition, these items also occupy valuable real-estate at the tightly packed school. For example, an enlightening conversation ensued after I asked Mr. Thomas, the music teacher, about a piano that had been donated to the school by a member of the Alumni Association:⁹⁰

Ms. Thompson: Where is the piano?

Mr. Thomas: It's under a cage in the Grade 6 classroom ... But the problem, um...you can't move that class to class. There are times when, like [I want to]...use it. But because I only come once per week [to teach], sometimes it doesn't get used more than [so]...so you find some of the keys get [out of tune] ... [the piano] started to give problems on account of a lack of use. I got a smaller

⁹⁰ I had knowledge of the piano prior to my departure to Jamaica because the NJAAA member who shipped it told me directly.

keyboard, a portable one that is inside the office, that I can take from class to class.

Ms. Thompson: So how do you feel about the piano? ... What do you think of this investment that was given to the school?

Mr. Thomas: Because of...schools like these, nowadays when you have portable instruments, they help the school better ... The only thing I don't like, because, the climate in the community, sometimes when you go out to play it, some of the keys not sounding [right] ...

Ms. Thompson: Oh, so the climate affects the piano?

Mr. Thomas: I think so. I think so ... like...when I go there to play it now, sometimes you strike the keys and some of the keys might go down and not come up back.

When I asked Mr. Thomas about getting the piano serviced, he replied saying, "It can be done in the long run because we can't have it there going to ruin." Yet, this is effectively what is happening. Due to a severe lack of space, it is secured under a custom-made grill — which the school had to purchase — in the Grade 6 classroom in order to prevent theft. Also, as Mr. Thomas noted, the acoustics in the piano are beginning to decline due to the cool, foggy morning climate in Walking District, and a lack of use. In Figure 6.2, you can see that the Grade 6 class uses the grill cover as a shelf to store items.

Meanwhile, Mr. Thomas now uses a keyboard that he can transport from classroom to classroom to teach music. It appears to be second-hand, and has a low sound threshold, but is a more appropriate instrument for the limited spatial organization of the school. The keyboard was

donated by a member of the NJAAA, to be used as another instrument for the development of a fully-equipped music program, which the school does not have the space to house. A set of drums was also donated by the NJAAA for this purpose (See Figure 6.3). However, since 2012 they have been stacked in the Miscellaneous Room/Guidance Department. Both the piano and drum set were held by the Jamaica Customs Agency until the school could raise enough funds to retrieve them from the nearest marine wharf. But the looming question is, to what avail? Because, their intended functionality has not, and cannot be actualized in the location to which they have been sent. In addition to the costs associated with procuring the piano and drum set, and the small and unaccommodating space, Mr. Thomas's musical expertise is in the areas of "piano, music theory [and] singing." "I can't teach them [the children] drums," he says "because I really don't know those instruments." Evidently, his pedagogical foci were not taken into consideration before the drums were purchased.



Figure 6.2 Piano in the Grade 6 classroom



Figure 6.3 Drums stored in the Miscellaneous Room

In spite of these things, I would like to emphasize that the impracticality of these gifts does not negate the kindheartedness that, ideologically, precedes them. “I sent home [to Jamaica] that drum set. With my drummer, we package it, and I heard that they [the school] don’t even have a proper place to put it. It’s a disaster,” said Mr. Clifton Pitters who is both a musician and an NJA alumnus. Mr. Pitters claims to have “all kinds of other stuff waiting” for the development of the music program, but appears to be frustrated by the reality of a facility that is too small to accommodate *his* vision. “How do you think I feel?” he remarked during our interview. Mr. Pitters’s *a posteriori* consideration of the school’s structural constraints inspired him to purchase the aforementioned portable keyboard since the piano is inviable and near-defunct. However, Ms. McNaught, the NJA’s youthful Grade 2 teacher, encourages *a priori* consultations with the teaching staff about what is both needed and wanted by the school before the NJAAA makes donations. “It’s a matter of planning and communicating,” she says, “I don’t think we have horns in our heads.” According to Ms. McNaught:

Sometimes ... it's a preconceived notion that many people have that this school is only about the students. And because it's about the students you forget that there are persons who are there with the students and these persons are in charge of the students. Not only that, whatever is given as gifts, or are given as gifts are used by both teacher and student. ... So, you have to consider the teachers too, and value their opinion. We have a voice too. We are interacting with the students. We know what they need, or what is needed for such a time as this.

When I asked Ms. McNaught about the possible implications of continuing the pattern of exclusion that obscures the teachers' thoughts and recommendations to the NJAAA, and the Alumni Association's continuance in sending more unusable items from abroad, she noted that "the implications can be great because you'll have a *hoarding school*." Judging from the forgone examples of the outdated books and technology, and large instruments that have been donated and are occupying valuable space, this rings true. Today, we understand that hoarding is an obsessive-compulsive disorder, and I find it intriguing that Ms. McNaught would use such a descriptor for an inanimate entity like a school. Frost et al. (2000) inform us that hoarding poses severe health and safety risks to both individuals and communities, and in the event of an emergency the presence of unnecessary clutter increases the likelihood and incidence of fatalities. Therefore, it is appropriate to say that this aspect of the NJAAA's benevolence does not support the educational process — it actually hinders it.

"There is room for improvement"

When I asked Grade 4 teacher, Ms. Plummer, why she thinks that second-hand items are donated to the NJA so often, she replied saying,

I think what happens is that persons look at Jamaica as a third-world country and some persons are of the opinion that Jamaicans, they live in a box, per se, they are not all that exposed so they are not used to some of the finer things in life. So, whatever you give them will be okay with them because they don't know any better. I think that is the opinion some persons have of us. ... So, it makes you feel, I don't know, maybe underappreciated ...

It is important to keep in mind that the donors in this case are Jamaicans who migrated to Canada forty-plus years ago. According to Ms. Plummer, their perceptions are of “what they left behind,” and as such, their giving reflects this. Assessing the psychology of inefficacious diasporic giving anti-colonially, is necessary here. Because, the anti-colonial discursive framework calls for “a particular self-reflexive relationship with the past” (Simmons and Dei, 2012, p. 95), and for “the present to dialogue with the past” (p. 95) so that our efforts to remediate the problems that are associated with colonialism's manifestations are well-planned, well-executed and can be sustained over time. If the ultimate goal of diasporization is social transformation, which can only be achieved through a reclamation of agency and an articulation of ingenuity (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001), more self/organizational-reflexivity and dialogue is needed between the members of the NJAAA and the key stakeholders in the educational process at the NJA, which are the teachers, parents, and of course, the students.

That said, I draw from library studies in order to suggest how inappropriate gifts-in-kind may be dealt with. In “How to Look a Gift Horse in the Mouth, or How to tell People You Can't Use Their Old Junk in Your Library,” Strnad (1995) describes how to practice the art of respectful refusal when old and near-obsolete items are, well-intendedly, donated. O'Hare and Smith's (2011) “Gifts Nobody Wants: The State of the Art in Dealing with Unwanted

Donations” (2011), posits that “there are some types of gifts that are more trouble than they are worth” (p. 67). The NJA, and other remittance receiving schools in Jamaica, might consider invoking something similar to a library’s collection development policy, which determines its ability to accept useful donations and respectfully reject the opposite so as not to waste valuable time, space and resources.

I submit that diasporic givers should not be guilty of the same errors and omissions as the progenitors of the “Standards and norms in the field of Education” (UNESCO, 2020), who tend to obscure the voices and experiences of local people in policy making because they, presumably, know what is best (Buchanan, 2019; Dei and Jaimungal, 2019; Dei, 2018). Easterly (2013), refers to this as “the tyranny of experts,”⁹¹ who, often, forget — or ignore — the input of marginalized people in matters that pertain to their own lives. However, within the anti-colonial theoretical paradigm, the voices that are traditionally excluded are projected (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001). In spite of this, and at the risk of sounding impertinent once again, it does not appear as though the members of the NJAAA have provided a venue for these voices, but have, instead, imposed upon the NJA its own vision for the school, which as we can see is, often, conflicting with its present reality. Perhaps a more strategically targeted effort to achieve the Association’s initial goal to expand the NJA would be more advantageous.⁹² In light of the

⁹¹ In the *Tyranny of Experts* (2013), the “experts” about whom Easterly speaks are technocrats. However, I have extrapolated Easterly’s “tyranny of experts” to the members of the NJAAA in order to substantiate the argument that I have made here.

⁹²I understand that this is not an easy undertaking, but I have been told that an architectural drawing for the proposed renovation has existed for a number of years. And, since the expansion project has been one of the primary goals of the Association since its inception in 1997, one cannot help but wonder why it has not yet been realized. During his interview, Mr. Miller said “I would like to see [the expansion completed] because to me, to see students sitting on each other, you can’t learn that way [but] ... unfortunately, it’s not going to be done during my [presidency] ... because it’s a long process.” Mr. Miller also blames a lack of ministerial support for the project.

aforementioned, it is likely that the members of the school community would welcome such a discussion.

Considering the foregoing, I would like to draw your attention to the following conversation between Mrs. Carter-Morgan and me:

Ms. Thompson: It's important for me to know whether or not you as the principal of the school, and as an educator with years of experience, if you feel as though this relationship ... with the alumni and the past students, is something that is a good one and one that is working in favour of the students.

Mrs. Carter-Morgan: *It's a good one and there is room for improvement* ... And as I said to you before, having a round table would, I think it would help. It would help...

Ms. Thompson: So a round table with whom?

Mrs. Carter-Morgan: The president of the association, the vice president, and board chair, and members of staff. We sit and we place ... what we'd like to see happen, before them ... *we have never had a round table.*

Here, from Mrs. Carter-Morgan's vantage point, we have a clear view of the root cause of bad (but well-intended) benevolence: no invitation has been issued, nor has any space been created for transnational dialogue to take place. Within the anti-colonial paradigm, collaborative discourses wherein there is elasticity, transparency and fluidity, are necessary in order for substantive and sustainable change to occur (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001). These discourses are pragmatic, praxis oriented and counter oppositional to coloniality because they give ear to the concerns, desires and ideas of colonized people, and showcase and celebrate their creativity (Dei and Asharzadeh, 2001). Collaborative discourse also rebuts the notion that receivers of "diaspora

philanthropy” (Pinnock, 2013; Newland et. al., 2010), who in this case are the members of the NJA school community, are mere subjects of education-focused development. As such, they deserve a seat at a literal or virtual round table so that they may, as experts, consult on their own circumstances, and thus, inform the process of giving and receiving.

Conclusion

In “Weak State, Strong Diaspora: A Case Study on Education in Jamaica” (in press), I describe how the mass migration waves that occurred in the post-independence era proliferated the number of Jamaicans living abroad, and have, thus, led to the formation of a transnational relationship between diasporans and their alma maters that is helping the MOEYI to deliver and sustain the system of public schooling. This is an important phenomenon that is hidden in plain sight. However, from what I have demonstrated in this chapter, it is clear that, at times, this arrangement leaves more to be desired. And, not only does this require more monitoring and evaluation in the global education literature by scholars, it also necessitates a more effectual practice of remitting. All things considered, I anticipate that this revelation will inspire new actions that will increase the conscientiousness and efficacy of educational remittances in the future.

CHAPTER 7

MUSINGS ON HOPE:

“WE CAN HELP OURSELVES”

Introduction

It was a hot day in Walking District when I arrived at the NJA for the first time in April 2018. The vehicle in which I was driven entered the open gate and traversed the long, stony driveway that leads to the school yard as the unambiguous sounds of children at play filled the atmosphere. It was First Break.

In the absence of a parking lot, and lines to separate play areas from where motor vehicles operate,⁹³ my driver navigated this terrain carefully and created a parking space for his vehicle under a shady tree. As noted in Chapter 5, the children are used to vehicles driving into the school yard, so they reoriented their games and clique gatherings accordingly. I exited the car and snapped two panoramic photographs of the property with my eyes: one intellectual, because I was a sociologist on an investigative mission, and the other, emotional, because I had finally come face-to-face with the NJA after several years of being acquainted with, and supporting the NJAAA in Toronto.

As I walked through the yard towards the school for my meeting with Mrs. Carter-Morgan, a group of boys who were playing a seriously competitive game of football⁹⁴ on the rock-strewn ground — without shoes⁹⁵ — drew my attention. I must admit, I was astounded, but

⁹³ This is because a seven-year-old boy in Grade 2 was killed instantly when a garbage truck turned over on him at the Clan Carthy Primary School in Kingston in October 2019 for similar issues with the school's yard.

⁹⁴ Soccer.

⁹⁵ I should clarify that these boys owned shoes, but chose not to wear them during their football matches. After becoming acquainted with them during my stay I asked them why, and the common answers were so that their designated school-shoes remained in tact, and to avoid trouble with their parent/guardian.

equally impressed by their skill, and thought to myself, “Wow, they’re still playing, and having fun too.” Curiously, I saw hope in the sight of play persisting in ‘unideal’ circumstances, and thus, would like to share this with you, the reader.

In this chapter, I endeavour to highlight the tenacious everyday hope that exists at the NJA in spite of its limited resources, which are the result of IFI-induced structural adjustment and austerity (Thompson, 2014; Miller, 1999a, 1992). However, before I perform this task, I would like to discuss how hope can be cruel (Berlant, 2011). Here, I am referring to the IMF’s tendency to promote its policy cocktail as a panacea for Third World underdevelopment without being transparent about the economic and social devastation that it has been known to cause (Desai, 2017; Levitt, 2005; Stiglitz, 2003 and Peet and Hartwick, 1999). And, by this point in your reading of this dissertation, I trust that you have ascertained that these arrangements are intrinsically linked to the GOJ’s weak financial capacity and its inability to adequately provide for its public schools.

Therefore, maintaining the anti-colonial theme of this research, I explore the above-mentioned paradigms of hope in this chapter, again, with the support of the interview participants who shared their stories with me during my Discovery in Hanover and the GTA.

Cruel Hope: Paradoxes and Contradictions

“I don’t think they are using the resources right.”

I recognize the liberty that I am taking in describing hope as, often, being cruel. But it is necessary in order to identify another way in which the contemporary-colonial operates in the politest and most paternalistic of ways. For example, according to Stiglitz (2000), “the older men who staff the fund [the IMF]— and they are overwhelmingly older men — act as if they are shouldering Rudyard Kipling’s white man’s burden ... [and] believe they are brighter, more

educated, and less politically motivated than the economists in the countries they visit” (para. 13). Therefore, in the spirit of post-World War II American trusteeship, the IMF markets itself as “working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world” (IMF, 2020). Naturally, this prospectus is appealing to countries in the Global South who find themselves in balance of payment difficulties that impede on their independent development objectives. But, the problem with this is that it is *only* a prospectus. Case in point: on Stiglitz’s (2000) authority as the former Chief Economist of the World Bank — which, often, works in tandem with the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO) to enforce cross-conditionality restrictions — the prospectus states that:

In theory, the fund supports democratic institutions in the nations it assists. In practice, it undermines the democratic process by imposing [structural adjustment] policies. Officially, of course, the IMF doesn’t “impose” anything. It “negotiates” the conditions for receiving aid. But all the power in the negotiations is on one side — the IMF’s — and the fund rarely allows sufficient time for broad consensus-building or even widespread consultations with either parliaments or civil society. Sometimes the IMF dispenses with the pretense of openness altogether and negotiates secret covenants (para. 11).

Furthermore, Stiglitz remarked:

When the IMF decides to assist a country, it dispatches a “mission” of economists. These economists frequently lack extensive experience in the country; they are more likely to have firsthand knowledge of its five-star hotels than of the villages that dot its countryside. They work hard, poring over numbers

deep into the night. But their task is impossible. In a period of days or, at most, weeks, they are charged with developing a coherent program sensitive to the needs of the country. Needless to say, a little number-crunching rarely provides adequate insights into the development strategy for an entire nation. Even worse, the number-crunching isn't always that good. The mathematical models the IMF uses are frequently flawed or out-of-date. Critics accuse the institution of taking a cookie-cutter approach to economics, and they're right (para. 12).

Although Stiglitz (2000) contributed these words to *The New Republic* twenty years ago, his indictments against the IMF's mode of operation are still relevant today and inform us just how flawed the idea of the 'neo-White Man's burden' is.

That said, one would assume that IMF missions would be more comprehensive. More nuanced. But, as we can see, they are not. And debt-ridden developing nations still trust in its policies/promises even though country reports are, often, written before IMF 'missionaries' even board a plane to a borrowing nation to do the required investigatory work ⁹⁶ (Stiglitz, 2000). Perhaps this is because of the widely-held belief that Washington Consensus policies always prevail. Therefore, in a scolding and disciplinary tone, John Williamson (1990), progenitor of the term "Washington Consensus," informs us that "debtors [need] to fulfill their part of the proposed bargain by "setting their houses in order," "undertaking policy reforms," [and] "submitting to strong conditionality" (para. 1).

⁹⁶ Stiglitz (2000) recalled an incident where a mission team's country report had copied text from another country's report. Because the "search and replace" function was used incorrectly, the name of the original country remained in the new report. As a result, the team's carelessness was discovered.

According to George (2004), Washington Consensus adherents perceive their brand of economic globalization to be most optimal for the improvement of livelihoods in a global context; and thus, preach a convicting gospel that desperate post-colonial developing states believe and obey — even if it means that present and succeeding generations will have to be sacrificed for a future, which they insist, will be bright when/if it arrives. So, until then, a hard-knocks economic growth attitude that encourages political resistance to too many social safety nets and services is implemented through “shock therapy.” And, the classic neoliberal trifecta of privatization (of state-owned industries and resources), liberalization (of the terms of trade) and deregulation (of the market) is the preferred method of operation. The presumed residual “trickle down” of this proverbial “rising tide that lifts all boats” ordains growth as the principle means of development (Brown, 2017). In other words, “economic growth = social development.” But, Pieterse (2006) asserts that neoliberalism is antithetical to social development because it rests the fate of people — the fate of school-aged children — in a market that is mediated by an invisible hand. Even if developing countries adapt illiberal welfare measures by engaging in low and continuously declining social spending, this, quite often, does not translate to economic growth (Rudra, 2008). Herein lies the cruelty of hope.

The IMF, and other neoliberal leaning IFIs, arouse a sense of possibility in their member countries that is near-impossible to achieve (Berlant, 2011). For this reason, “the expansive transformation for which a person or a people [or a nation] risks striving ... is cruel” (Berlant, 2011, p. 2). Because, the neoliberal policy paradigm has successfully commenced, what Rudra (2008) refers to as, the “race to the bottom,” governments, and, by extension, their poor and marginalized citizens find themselves bound in perpetual and profoundly oppressive economic circumstances (Berlant, 2011), proving that the opposite of hope is despair.

As I discussed in Chapter 4, the public education systems upon which non-elite people rely are, often, negatively affected by structural adjustment. We understand that this is the case in Jamaica (Thompson, 2014; Miller, 1999a, 1999b, 1992). Moreover, structural adjustment is known to exacerbate long-existing problems such as curricula that are irrelevant to social progression, inequitable fee structures, lack of female participation, and schools that are lacking in community efficacy in rural and poor urban areas (Jolly, 1987). These challenges weaken education's ability to cultivate and prepare young minds for anti-colonial and decolonial praxes under global capitalism (Buchanan, 2019; Dei, 2018). The reason being, developing states have become less concerned with investing in education, and other public provisions, and have become preoccupied with achieving debt-sustainability — and not debt removal — because there is no foreseeable end to, what Johnson (2012) refers to as, the “debt-trap.”

Therefore, it is with this understanding that I say, I am not optimistic about the future agenda of globalization because its historical and present economic and social discontents are very real (Stiglitz, 2005). In the words of George (2008), “globalisation takes the best and leaves the rest” (p. 6) by inducing inequities through its neoliberal policy framework. For example, because of the nature of IMF, World Bank and WTO cross-conditionality, we can assume that the value of the Jamaican dollar will continue to decline, weakening its efficacy society-wide. And since the 1978-1979 fiscal year, although the MOEYI has increased its spending, the value of each dollar is much less (see Education Expenditure Table in Chapter 2) and therefore, can only go so far. As I articulated in Chapter 5, it is likely that the NJA will continue its recruitment and fundraising projects as a matter of survival. However, the school community's persistence in these areas is responsive to what Dei (2006) refers to as colonialism's “contamination of the

present” (p. 11), which, I might add also causes citizens to lose faith in, and become suspicious of, the Government.

During an interview with Ms. May, whose son was, at the time of our conversation, in Grade 4 at the NJA, she remarked “I don’t know much about politics but ummm ... I don’t think they [the Government] are using the resources right because if they are borrowing how many billions from IMF, I think some should be on school, or a lot more should be on school.” Ms. May emphasized this point because prior to this she noted that, “they [the Government] paid \$6 million [approximately USD \$56,921] on a phone bill.”⁹⁷ That wasn’t necessary. I think that some of that should have been going to schools.” From Ms. May’s perspective, borrowed funds should be invested in accessible schooling, and not misappropriated by politicians.

It is not my intention to excuse a certain parliamentarian’s gross indiscretion, and I will not attempt to analyze it here because it is outside the scope of this dissertation.⁹⁸ However, we see how the modern colonial machine of neoliberalism can siphon hope from those who are excluded from the economic benefits of globalization, and replace it with skepticism — and in many instances, violence and civil unrest — when the state does not appear as though it is prioritizing the needs of its populace. Often, because of the reality of their lived experiences,

⁹⁷ Astounded by this piece of information, and determined to verify it, a Google search yielded a disconcerting number of articles on the matter from reputable news sources. *The Jamaica Gleaner*, *Jamaica Observer*, and the *Caribbean National Weekly* report that the approximate total of Finance Minister (now Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries), Audley Shaw’s mobile phone bill for the 2016-2017 fiscal year was, actually, \$8.34 million dollars (approximately USD \$64,869).

⁹⁸ By this I mean, I am not interested in discussing Shaw’s justification for the exorbitant phone bill in any great detail. According to the *Jamaica Gleaner* (2017), Shaw insisted, via Twitter, that the bulk of the charges were for his consumption of data. I sympathize with his attempt at transparency because he could have, unintentionally, incurred the fees. However, his negligence, combined with the use of public funds to pay the bill (which he committed to paying back a portion of) is a major cause for concern in the court of public opinion, given that it was higher than Jamaica’s GDP per capita of USD \$5,582.30 (World Bank, 2019). Needless to say, it is an embarrassment to his party.

citizens grow disheartened and faithless by unfulfilled promises, neglect, or, an arcane combination of the two.

In Chapter 5, I itemized a laundry list of challenges at the NJA — which disconcertingly, is not the most deprived school in Jamaica. Contrasting this list against the backdrop of the sixteen known lending arrangements between the IMF and the GOJ (see Table 2.1 “History of IMF Lending in Jamaica” in Chapter 2), one might question if it has all been worthwhile. Are the educational experiences of primary school-aged children better? Is the nation better? In an interview, former PNP leader, Michael Manley remarked, “Look at every IMF country today, and tell me which has a really good hospital service? Which has a good educational system? ... All of them are trapped in that old-colonial crisis of finance” (Thesimplethetruth3, 2011). Ultimately, Manley insists, leaving Jamaica “nothing like the country it could have been” (Thesimplethetruth3, 2011).

So now, we must come to grips with the fact that the historical and contemporary colonial have shaped, and continue to shape Jamaica by virtue of strong “economic links within external markets [that] still impose limits to [its] decisions and actions” (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, p. 21) even after the achievement of national independence and political sovereignty. From an anti-colonial position, this dissertation provides a microscopic view of how IMF-induced austerity mediates the GOJ’s handling of its public education system. Recall in Chapter 2, I discussed the strides that were made in education during the era of populist government (1953 to late 1970s); the most notable being Manley’s 1973 “free education for all” declaration. In 1989, in the current era of structural adjustment, a newly re-elected Manley reversed this decision, requiring those who could, to pay school fees because of the burdened state of the economy.

Today, although primary schooling in Jamaica is tuitionless, it is not free. Many institutions charge a school fee. The NJA charges a \$500 (approximately USD \$3.44) “development fee,” which, to some families, is unattainable. In 1994, the MOEYI introduced cost sharing, which requires primary and secondary students to pay auxiliary fees to cover the cost of textbooks, physical education gear and other miscellaneous items. This cost-sharing approach, however, disproportionately marginalizes poor and working-class students because the additional school expenses are often only affordable to wealthier parents. Poignantly demonstrating this financial strain while fighting back tears during our interview, Ms. McConnor, whose children were in Grades 1, 4, and 6 at the time said: “because I’m not working at the moment ... it’s kind of difficult.” The sobering reality of Ms. McConnor’s experience is that it is not unique at the NJA. According to the Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI) and the UNICEF-Jamaica (2018), neither is it unique to other parents of school-aged children in Jamaica, especially in rural and low-income households.

As we can see, the “free education for all” declaration packaged and sold hope. A hope, which Manley intended to be “the watershed in our history,” but the inherent coloniality of neoliberalism would later repossess it; thereby, making the experiences of schooling for non-elite children disadvantageous. Which brings me to my next indictment of hope: specifically, its tendency to put forward unfeasible plans.

In Chapter 1, I discussed the ardent and aspirational qualities of the UNCRC and other United Nations stratagem. Jamaica is understood to have appeased the United Nations metrics

for the universalization of primary education.⁹⁹ But, it is apparent that there is a disconnect between official discourse (i.e., “universal,” “compulsory,” “free”) and what happens on the ground (Buchanan, 2019; Somé, 2010). Necessarily, Somé (2010) asks, “if history is littered with the bones of dead projects in the educational reform initiated by global forces, *what are the processes that cause failure in particular national contexts* (emphasis added)?” (p. 162). Recall in Chapter 4, I cite Buchanan (2019) who poses similar questions, and is particularly concerned with who/what is to blame for unsuccessful education policies. Buchanan (2019) champions the use of an anti-colonial lens to highlight the nonsensical and generalizing tendencies of colonialism that are in full operation in global education policy making. I concur with Buchanan (2019) and Somé (2010), and bolster their arguments in stating that, although well-intended, global education schemes, including the current SDG4 (“ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning” (United Nations, 2015)) also manufacture and diffuse unrealizable hope to 193 sovereign states¹⁰⁰ which are unique in both character and function. Hence, the problem with standardized goal setting.

It appears as though the United Nations and its constituents are obsessed with seeing a proliferation of schools, and are less concerned with the quality and sustainability of education (Somé, 2010). I would like to explain wherein lies the cruelty in this. Monolithic education goals, which are time bound, set a trajectory for hope that points to a utopian horizon for all to expectantly look towards. But in reality, “the failure of grand education schemes spearheaded by respectable international organizations alongside the world community is customary and

⁹⁹ Jamaica achieved MDG 2, but as I noted in Chapter 4, Jamaicans are dissatisfied with the significant numbers of illiterate and unskilled persons, inadequately qualified teachers, high student-teacher ratios, and ineffectual school administration (Gilbert-Roberts et al., 2015).

¹⁰⁰ The United Nations is understood to have 193 members states.

unfortunately tends to be the rule rather than the exception” (Somé, 2010, p. 162). And yet, we see a rebranding of broad-scale education initiatives with each new decade. Consider, for a moment, the following:

In 1990, the World Conference for Education held at Jomtien at the initiative of the UNESCO, the World Bank the UNDP, UNICEF, and more than one hundred and 50 nongovernment organizations, declared education for all in the developing countries by the Year 2000. Yet, the Regional Forum of Dakar convened in 2000 grimly concluded that most African countries could not achieve this goal.

Bertrand (2003) recalls that “It is not the first time that plans of action with ambitious time-bound goals have been set in the education sector” (p. 3). Still fresh in our minds are the Karachi Plan adopted in 1960 by 18 Asian States for the *Provision of the Universal Compulsory and Free Education; the Addis Ababa Plan for African Educational Development* adopted in 1961 by the Conference of African States in the Development of Education in Africa; these two plans were due to be achieved by 1980. There is also the Latin American compact, *The Major Project on the Extension and Improvement of Primary Education in Latin America*, “jointly scheduled by the Organization of the American States (OAS) and UNESCO for a ten-year period, 1957-1966. If all these plans failed to reach their objectives, new plans with the same objectives were developed in 1981 and in 1996 (Bertrand, 2003, p. 3)” (Somé, 2010, pp.161-162).

Now, add to Somé’s (2010) itemization of failed education projects, the most recent — and widely unachieved — MDG 2, which was to have been realized by 2015. Given history’s tendency to repeat itself, I am not confident in the current SDG4 agenda (whose target year for

achievement is 2030) despite the fact that the word “quality” is mentioned in almost all of its 10 targets.¹⁰¹ Because, according to Unterhalter (2019), there are slippages between the SDG4 vision and the aspirations that are outlined in its targets. Also, Unterhalter (2019) argues that there are considerable limitations to the indicators that were designed to evaluate its progress. Moreover, in my assessment, a clear definition of what quality actually means is missing from SDG4, hence my skepticism towards its achievement.¹⁰²

In “Achieving the Universal Primary Education Goal of the Millennium Declaration: New Challenges for Development Cooperation” (2003), Doris Bertrand remarked that “the first problem to be examined is obviously *why* the lessons of history have not been learned (emphasis added)”. *Why?* A simple, but powerful question asked by Bertrand, who, ironically, is a United Nations Inspector. With that said, why does the United Nations continue to vend inviable hope to the world’s nations through broadband education policies? Why do experts remain ignorant of, or indifferent to, issues that pertain to low-state income, debt owed to IFIs, structural adjustment and austerity, which are known barriers to the operation of those same policies (Pupavac, 2011; Somé, 2010 and Bradshaw et al., 1993)?

¹⁰¹ The SDG 4 targets include 4.1: free primary and secondary education; 4.2: equal access to quality pre-primary education; 4.3: equal access to affordable technical, vocational and higher education; 4.4: increase the number of people with relevant skills for financial success; 4.5: eliminate all discrimination in education; 4.6: universal literacy and numeracy, 4.7: education for sustainable development and global citizenship; 4.a: build and upgrade inclusive and safe schools; 4.b: expand higher education and scholarships for developing countries and; 4.c: increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries (United Nations, 2015).

¹⁰² I am even more skeptical about the achievement of the SDG4 agenda in the wake of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), which has significantly impacted the process of teaching and learning globally. With the shift towards online models of education, it is reasonable to assume that schools that are already lacking basic infrastructure will have even greater challenges. Also, the limited resources of governments in developing countries will likely be earmarked for combating the spread of the virus, and not for education.

Easterly (2006), views this conundrum to be the result of what he refers to as the “Planners” versus “Searchers” dichotomy in international development policy. Planners, because of their academic and professional expertise, presume to know the right answers, and assume that issues that pertain to underdevelopment are amenable to carefully engineered solutions (Easterly 2006). Searchers, however, do not presume to know any answers at all, and look to local people to educate them on their own circumstances so that they may, collaboratively, design and articulate homegrown solutions. According to Easterly (2006), Planners possess a rhetorical advantage: the end of poverty, education for all and so on — on a massive scale. This, of course, moves us. As it should. But, as Easterly (2006) puts it, “it’s a tragedy that so much well-meaning compassion did not bring ... results” (p. 4).¹⁰³ As we can see, in a global educational context, this also rings true because historical and present inequalities and inequities go unremedied (Buchanan, 2019; Dei and Jaimungal, 2019; Dei, 2018) due to the failed promises of Big Western Plans (Easterly, 2006). This too is cruel hope, and, albeit a nicer version, still colonialism.

Colonialism goes undetected when it is benevolent. But we must understand that it is an ever present, dominant imposition, and not an alien/foreign entity (Simmons and Dei, 2012). For this reason, anti-colonial theory implores us to ask the hard and uncomfortable questions that may, at times, offend well-intentioned global education policy makers and practitioners. In doing so, we ‘call out’ the colonality that is a part of their efforts, and criticize their proclivity to deal

¹⁰³ The absence of results that Easterly is referring to, is, what is understood to be, the failure of the MDGs. In an article written for *The Lancet: Global Health* in 2018, renowned economist Jeffery Sachs, who is among the chief of Easterly’s indictees and the former Director of the Millennium Project, stated that “the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could be achieved if the high-income donor nations increased their official development assistance (ODA) to the long-standing UN target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI).” Matters that pertain to the MDG policy model and implementation are not discussed as, possibly, being flawed.

policy-based hope to nation-states as though it were a euphoria-inducing drug. A drug that inhibits the international community's ability to soberly acknowledge that in spite of expert planning the NJA, and other primary schools in the developing world, remain aged and decrepit, over worked and understaffed, inadequately resourced and in dire fiscal strain because their governments cannot adequately support them. This is, indeed, both a paradox and a contradiction.

Viable Hope: Possibilities and Futurities

"I'll sacrifice two pounds of flour... two pounds of rice, just for him to get one book"

As I draw this dissertation to a close, I would like to engage in a more optimistic dialogue with hope. In a conventional sense, we can describe hope as "a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen" (Lexico, 2020). However, I prefer to conceptualize it, not just as a horizon to look towards (Giroux, 2004), but as a "structural condition of the present" (Benjamin, 2005, p. 1) — even in the face of an uncertain future. Hope as a "condition" does not ignore the real presence of challenges (Giroux, 2004), it acknowledges them and bolsters "the capacity to see the worst and offer more than that for our consideration" (Dumm, 2000, p. 160, quoted in Giroux, 2004). Therefore, I submit that hope is laden with multiple possibilities, and as such:

Becomes a discourse of critique and social transformation. Hope makes the leap for us between *critical education*, which tells us what must be changed; *political agency*, which gives us the means to make change; and the *concrete struggles* through which change happens. Hope, in short, gives substance to the recognition that every present is incomplete ... Hence, hope is more than politics, it is also a

pedagogical and performative practice that provides the foundation for enabling human beings to learn about their potential as moral and civic agents. Hope is the outcome of those educational practices and struggles that tap into memory and lived experiences while at the same time linking individual responsibility with a progressive sense of social change (Giroux, 2004, pp. 38-39).

For the aforementioned reasons, Giroux (2004) describes hope as a “subversive force” (p. 39) because it opens up space for the possibilities that social transformation requires, and summons authority to the courtroom of accountability. Although hope places a demand on governments, IFI’s, experts and the like to take action, it does not wait passively for this to happen. It. Works. Now. Because it must. I bore witness to this throughout my Discovery. I ascertained that spaces of struggle — or “pushing and pulling” as Mrs. Lawrence informed us in Chapter 5 — are, by default, what Harvey (2000) refers to as, “spaces of hope,” wherein there is both an “optimism of the intellect” (p. 17) and an “optimism of the will” (p. 17) that causes individuals and groups to persevere in spite of the odds that are stacked against them.

This being the case, in spaces of hope, we must “imagine ourselves as architects, all armed with a wide range of capacities and powers” (Harvey, 2000, p. 233) that help us to navigate “a physical and social world full of manifest constraints and limitations” (p. 233). We know that the constraints and limitations of structural adjustment policies have exacerbated the problem of Third World indebtedness, thus, creating a vicious and erosive economic cycle. This has not only led to a physiological malnourishing of many of the world’s children, as Nyerere alluded, due to fewer resources being allocated for nutrition, immunizations and the overall maintenance of health, but also an ideological malnourishing because of the austere measures

that are taken in public education systems (Bradshaw et al., 1993). Today, we see this travesty in Jamaica (Thompson, 2014; Miller, 1999a, 1992).

Bearing this in mind, I asked Mrs. Carter-Morgan the following series of questions, “What do you predict for education in Jamaica?”, “Do you see the situation getting better on an institutional level?”, “Do you see it getting worse?”, to which she replied, “I believe that if we have leaders that are insightful, leaders that are creative ... we can get to a point where we, we don’t actually plunge into, what should I say, nonexistence.” Eager to know whether or not she believed that this was a possibility, I invited her to elaborate. She remarked:

If we don’t have leaders who are resourceful, and insightful, we will get to a place where we don’t have the resources to help the children and so they might just come three or four days out of the week [to school]. But if we have leaders of these institutions who are insightful, who are proactive, we can, we can do well ... as leaders, we have to be that support.

Later in our conversation Mrs. Carter-Morgan defined her use of the word “leaders” as principals, education officers and teachers; those who play a fundamental role in the everyday trenches of public primary education in Jamaica. Note that Mrs. Carter-Morgan’s faith is not in the State. It is in herself and her colleagues, who in spite of challenging circumstances, still perform the tasks for which they were appointed — in many cases, going above and beyond the call of duty. For example, because the 2020 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak forced all schools in Jamaica to close, students who rely on the low-cost meals that the NJA’s canteen provides experienced increased levels of food insecurity at home. Taking matters into her own hands, and dollars from her already strained pocket, Mrs. Carter-Morgan delivered food to her most vulnerable students at the height of the pandemic. In a May 2020 telephone conversation,

she remarked “this COVID thing is turning me into a beggar because we have so many needy children.” After our conversation, I revisited the transcript from her interview, where she said: “We can do what we have to do and help ourselves. I mean if we can’t do everything, someone will come in and see that we’re trying and lend a hand.” During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mrs. Carter-Morgan’s fixity of purpose attracted support from friends, community members and non-profit organizations in both global and transnational contexts. As a result, more of the NJA’s students and their families received the necessary help.

Echoing Giroux (2004), I argue that hope, in this context, teaches one to make do with what is available, and gives birth to an unparalleled level of resourcefulness and skill that would otherwise remain untapped. From an anti-colonial perspective, it puts forward a literacy of resistance (Kempf, 2010) and does not wait unassertively for help; although, it is humble enough to accept it for the sake of the greater good. This is because “the movement of love is underneath all of our activities” (Kornfeild, 1993, p. 18, quoted in hooks, 2000). In other words, hope loves (hooks, 2000). Although they are distinct entities, hope and love are not easily separated (hooks, 2000), and I discovered this at the NJA.

Love is a touchy and under discussed subject in the Academy (hooks, 2000). Nevertheless, when it is conceptualized as a verb it can explain why Mrs. Carter-Morgan put herself at risk during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that members of the NJA student community were fed. Love also explains why, in spite of stress, tiredness, and what I have been told is the threat of sudden and premature death,¹⁰⁴ the teachers are willing to go on community walk throughs and attend Sunday church services in order to recruit students, host fundraisers,

¹⁰⁴ A number of the teachers that I interviewed told me that teachers in Jamaica are dying prematurely from the stress that is associated with the occupation. According to Jovan Johnson of *The Gleaner* (2016), the Jamaica Teachers Association made this claim publicly in 2016.

finance their own supplies for lessons and keep toiletries in stock for those who are the most in need, as I discussed in Chapter 5. In *Love: New Visions* (2000), bell hooks argues that when children are on the receiving end of such kindness, tenderness and concern, they glean a sense of hope that accompanies them into their adult years. Therefore, in being practitioners of love, the NJA teaching staff are injecting a viable and lasting hope into the lives of their students, and by extension, their families whom, as hooks (2000) informs us, cannot solely rely on their nuclearity for survival.

Nowhere was the interdependency of the members of the NJA community made more clear to me than in the two following examples. On one particular occasion, Ms. Charmaine, who assists Mr. Bearer in the kitchen, arrived to Mrs. Carter-Morgan's/the school office to ask for her wages. She needed the funds in order to pay for her daughter, Deborah-Lee's medication. At the time, Deborah-Lee was in Grade 2 at the NJA, and had been hospitalized due to an asthma-induced lung infection.¹⁰⁵ Her attending physician asked Ms. Charmaine to purchase the medication so that the nurses could administer it because the hospital had none, nor would it be receiving any in the near future.¹⁰⁶ Although not fully prepared, Mrs. Carter-Morgan paid Ms. Charmaine from the cash that she had on hand, and Deborah-Lee received her medication and returned to school the following week after being absent for nearly two-weeks.

Marlene, who at the time of my visit was in Grade 4, was affectionately described by the Guidance Counsellor, Mrs. Reed as the "school's baby." I would come to realize that Mrs. Reed meant this literally. You see, Marlene is living with the negative health implications of prenatal

¹⁰⁵ Deborah-Lee was known to be a sickly child because of her nutrient-poor and inconsistent diet. Mrs. Carter-Morgan believed that this was the mitigating factor in her asthma attacks, which, often, caused her to miss school.

¹⁰⁶ It is quite common for attending physicians to ask family members to purchase medication for their loved ones while they are being hospitalized. Institutional poverty is not limited to the domain of education in Jamaica's non-elite communities.

cocaine exposure¹⁰⁷ and has been a ward of the State since her birth, but she was de facto under the school's care at the time of my visit. The staff saw to it that Marlene's basic needs were met. She was not charged for her meals and break snacks, and her dress and physical education uniforms were provided by the school.

Through these examples we are made privy to a tangible expression of love, which reiterating hooks (2000), breeds a futuristic hope in children. And this, in and of itself, *is* anti-colonial. Because, love, in this respect, counters the socially deterministic tendencies of colonial domination and control that have, for too long, relegated Black children to the margins of their respective societies as a result of inadequate and underresourced school systems (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019). As it pertains to the NJA, I argue that love flows through the phenomenon of "othermothering" (James, 1993; Collins, 1990). Othermothering, which has its roots in the communal lifestyles of West Africa, is the formal or informal assumption of responsibility for a child that is not one's own (Edwards, 2000; James, 1993). According to Edwards (2000):

The familial instability of slavery engendered the adaptation of communality in the form of fostering children whose parents, particularly mothers, had been sold. This tradition of communality gave rise to the practice of othermothering [in the Americas]. The survival of the concept is inherent to the survival of Black people as a whole (Jones, 1984), since it allowed for the provision of care to extended family and nonblood relations (p. 88).

The transhistorical and disparaging effects of colonialism have necessitated othermothering for centuries; and looking through an anti-colonial gaze we can see that the full-time teachers at the

¹⁰⁷ According to D'Avila et. al. (2016), prenatal cocaine exposure has been linked to low birth weight, an underdeveloped head, poor cognitive development and social attachment and adjustment issues.

NJA, who are all women,¹⁰⁸ are continuing this tradition. Mothering in its biological, social and cultural forms, is deeply personal, but it is also political and synonymous with post-independence era anti-colonial struggles (Oliver-Powell, 2019). In the words of African-American hymnologist, Reverend W. Herbert Brewster (1951), it is a central component in “how we got over,”¹⁰⁹ and a conduit through which viable hope flows. To this point, in my conversation with Grade 3 teacher, Ms. McNaught, she remarked:

I don't think that the task of teaching is limited to just teaching and learning. I was exposed to teacher being mother, friend, confidante — all of those things. So, I know that I, it can't be just me, Ms. McNaught [and] coming to say, 'I'm just going to teach today.' There are going to be instances where I'll have to go beyond what is, quote unquote, my responsibility on paper to assist [the students]. So, it feels good to help ... I don't have a problem doing that.

As we can see, despite the colonial underpinnings of education/schooling, within the ‘anti-colonial-Afrocentric othermothering paradigm’ it becomes a safe, nurturing and generative space; and Deborah-Lee, Marlene, and countless other students at the NJA, are beneficiaries.

In spite of this, we should not be deceived into thinking that othermothering is not exploited by the State. According to Sparr (1998), governments implicitly rely on a quiet, but predominant, army of women to pick up the slack in the areas where they have taken austere

¹⁰⁸ Mr. Thomas is employed to the NJA on a part-time basis. He teaches Grades 1 through 6 music once per week, meeting with each class in their homeroom. He is not an employee of the MOEYI, as I mentioned in Chapter 5.

¹⁰⁹ Although the hymn was written by Brewster, it is widely attributed to Clare Mae Ward for her 1951 rendition. The original words are “how I got over.” I pluralized this phrase in order to emphasize my point. The year in which the hymn was penned is unclear.

measures.¹¹⁰ I discovered how this plays out at the NJA as I observed how the teachers juggle three shifts: their paid work, their fundraising and advocacy for the NJA, and their home and family lives. Hence, the need to highlight the feminist component of anti-colonial struggle in this dissertation because, in most countries women are overrepresented as pedagogues at the primary school level (Gaskell and Mullen, 2006), and thus, bear the burden(s) of structural adjustment in the classroom in HICs.

I would be remiss if, in my discussion about hope and its relationship to othermothering, I did not also discuss how ‘conventional-biological’ mothers support their children who attend the NJA. They, too, are a source of viable hope. In the following excerpt from our discussion, PTA secretary, Mrs. Lawrence articulates a love-centred self-denial and commitment to her son, James’s, success, who was, at the time, in Grade 6:

Ms. Thompson: As a parent ... did you ... make it a point to understand what was being taught to him [James] and follow up with ... his teacher...?

Mrs. Lawrence: I did this, yes ... I came home from work ... frustrated, tired, but after a few minutes of refreshing, having a bath and all of that, I would ask what ... he has to do [for] his homework ... I have to keep consistent [with him] ... [and] ensure that I have each teacher’s number ...

And to tell you the truth, Ms. Thompson, parents have to play a very integral part in their children coming to school — a lot of parents might not [be] able to have a change of clothes for their child, every day. But I

¹¹⁰ According to Sparr (1998), when structural adjustment policies force states to cut back social services, especially health care and education, women are forced to care for the sick, the elderly and children without adequate support.

sacrifice to have five suits of khaki, every day for James. Every morning, he doesn't have to have that sweaty shirt that he wore, or that pants, that he wore the next day. So, when he goes into that classroom, though the classroom is clustered, he's able to have this feeling of freshness in him.

With regards to her strategies for procuring James's textbooks and uniforms, Mrs. Lawrence remarked:

Ms. Thompson ... when it comes on to July ... I go to the bookstore, because sometimes by time you go to the bookstore [in September], the books are already gone. So what I do, before July comes in, I go...and they have a layaway policy [and] because I know I don't have the money for all the books [I put them on layaway] ... I want him to have all the books because I believe that my child should not be in the classroom without a book. So, I'll sacrifice two pounds of flour, if it's two pounds of flour, two pounds of rice, just for him to get one book. And I'll sacrifice that, I'll go to the bookstore, get [another] layaway plan ... because you have to pay off the entire amount to get the books. So what I did is, for example, I ask the store owner 'Can I get this book and put another book on it [layaway]?'. So I ask the teacher before [school starts] ... 'What are the books that you think you're going to use at the first portion [of the year]?' I know the Math, the English, and the Science will be priority books. So I ensure that I get those books. Especially the first part of the term. And then now you start to incorporate the other books after a while. So, that's what I do.

Concerning his khaki, 'cause he's a very stout boy so, I wait a little bit into July there, and then I try to say how best I could get this stuff ... you have

to give yourself space. And I have to sacrifice because things that I want, I put it aside. Even when I was going to school, I had to stop because I wanted to attend college ... to do a teaching degree in early childhood and special needs. So, I deprive myself of these benefits, which I could have had ... My mom didn't have it [either]. So what I did, I tell myself that no, my children is gonna get the education that I didn't, that I couldn't get. You understand? So I put out all my effort. I stay away from things that I don't need [and if] I need them, I don't take them. I put him first.

That's what I want to put in the minds of [other] parents, that you can sacrifice your own self for your child in a sense of putting away things that you need, for them. I didn't have the money to buy five khaki suits, but I try. I didn't have the money to buy the books, but I try.

Mrs. Milton, whose son, Jermaine, was in Grade 2, stopped by to see me at the school one day on her way home from work. Soberingly, she said during our interview, "I see the priority of my children." And as such, Mrs. Milton made strides to see to it that their educational needs were met. Her strategy for acquiring textbooks was "two-two [two here, two there], two-two [two here, two there] until I reach the amount [of books that they need]," she remarked proudly. According to Ms. Cargil, whom you met in Chapter 5, "Yu ha fi buy de books fih learn" [You have to buy the books in order to learn]. She, too, made ardent attempts to ensure that her daughter, Justina, who was in Grade 6 had the necessary books for the academic year. Her method: checking the prices at the bookstore as often as possible, and saving towards purchasing them one-by-one.

On the surface, fulfilling their due diligence as mothers may not appear to be a site for hope to dwell. But I put forward for your consideration that the, seemingly, ordinary acts of communicating with your child's teacher, helping them with their homework, purchasing their uniform and laundering it regularly, and putting their textbooks on layaway are ways in which hope is transmitted in the midst of hardship. And I argue this from historical, experiential and anti-colonial theoretical perspectives. The historical perspective comes from the wisdom of my, now deceased, maternal grandmother who used to tell stories about making sacrifices that were similar to the aforementioned in order for my mother to attend school. My mother, whom I consulted throughout the dissertative process, credits my grandmother for being a catalyst of hope for her that created the pathway for her success, in spite of their experience of relative poverty in a Kingstonian tenement yard.¹¹¹

Experientially, I can testify that when hope is 'planted' by a mother, it begets more hope and has both transnational and transgenerational implications. I am writing this dissertation because of this, as my mother immigrated with hope for herself and her yet-to-be born children's futures. I have referenced my own familial and personal experience here because, in addition to being an emotional feeling, hope is a form of psychological capital (Luthans et. al., 2003) that one can bestow upon another. So, as an heir of hope, that was produced under similar circumstances to those of the members of the NJA school community, I recognized its presence, viscerally, every day of my Discovery in Hanover.

Although, I have, in this dissertation, been critical of some of their giving methodologies, I discerned that the NJAAA were highly contributory to the persistent presence of hope at the NJA. The Association's Grade 6 scholarship competition, which is among its more efficacious

¹¹¹ See footnote number 7 on page 4.

endeavours, has helped to defray the costs that are associated with attending high school for students and their families for up to 3 years, giving them a “fighting chance to further their education,” according to NJAAA member Adam Jones.

Having said that, when it is operating in the decolonial capacity for which it was intended, anti-colonial theory draws on the creativity, imagination and dreams of colonized people so that they may design and construct new and hope-filled futures for their children (Dei and Jaimungal, 2019; Todd, 2019; Dei, 2018). In the same tradition as the Maroons of Jamaica, decolonial thinking is about epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, 2013), and is needed in order for us to fulfill the mass decolonizations that our ancestors began (Simpson, 2014) as we navigate present-day capitalistic imperialisms. Therefore, we must draw from the reservoir of our emotional, spiritual and experiential intelligences, which are part and parcel of our embedded knowledge, that has, historically, been disqualified both in and outside of the Academy, and participate in border thinking (Mignolo, 2013). And we can do this through intellectual and community-based forms of engagement and action (Simpson, 2014), the likes of which I have outlined in the current section of this chapter.

Conclusion

Undertaking this research has taught me that local and diasporic people are equipped with the practical tools to manufacture their own options and reject the ones set-before us by colonialism. It is in this vein I argue that it is our articulation of agency that makes hope viable because it does not rest in the systems that have failed us historically. Because there is no single authoritative interpretation of anti-colonial praxis (Dei and Lordan, 2016), I have taken the liberty in postulating that hope is a push back against the old-apparent and new-insidious imperialisms (Dei and Loran, 2016) that we contend with daily.

The hope of colonized people is by no means about singularity. It is about collectivity because it has sustained our belief in the prospect of better for centuries. Therefore, I submit that hope is about *living*, and not merely *surviving*. As an interviewer-ethnographer at the NJA, I observed a hope that does not occupy itself with feelings of victimization, but champions a ‘get-up-and-go’ way of being that is necessary for the holistic work of education¹¹² (Wu et al., 2013) to continue in spite of a severe lack of resources.

I understand and acknowledge that education is a colonial conception that was intended to subdue Black people in Jamaica in the post-Emancipation era and maintain their labour in the plantation economy. Reconciling this truth, however, gives us insight into how we can and must exploit the system of education for the benefit of *our* children so that their futures are more equitable and just. In addition, we must interrogate international politics, economics and social governance and their threats to this objective, and chart new pathways to the future in both local and transnational spaces.

¹¹² According to Wu et. al. (2013), there is no universal definition for holistic education, nor should there be one. I tend to agree.

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APPENDIX A:

JAMAICA

Observational Consent Form

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

This study examines the ways in which the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto — particularly alumni groups — respond to the under-prioritization of public education at the State level which is a result of Jamaica’s increasing national debt. This study will be conducted in two parts, using in-school observation and interviews that will take place at the Nyerere Junior Academy in Hanover, Jamaica. I will also be conducting interviews in Toronto, Canada with members of the alumni association.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

The purpose of this form is to request your permission to observe your child/children in their school environment. All data gathered will be protected and the identities of participants will remain anonymous. If you agree to this, please fill out and sign the form below.

Expected Time Commitment: April to June 2018

Risks and Discomforts:

There are no known risks for participating in this research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

Participants will be contributors to the success of this study that I, the researcher, hope to use to support future research and projects that pertain to public education in Jamaica.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Should you wish to withdraw after the study, you will have the option to also withdraw your data up until the analysis is complete.

Confidentiality:

Methods of documentation include note taking. Hard copy data will be kept securely in a locked cabinet in my private office and shredded twelve (12) months after the project is complete (September/October 2020). Only I, the principle researcher and Dr. Carl James, my supervisor will have access to this information.

Unless you choose otherwise, all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research.

Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the

study, please feel free to contact me at gisellet@yorku.ca or my supervisor, Carl James at CJames@edu.yorku.ca and/or (416) 736-5013, ext. 20279. You may also contact the Graduate Program in Sociology at gradsoci@yorku.ca and/or 416-736-5013.

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Delegated Ethics Review Committee, which is delegated authority to review research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I, _____ consent to participate in "National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: "Glocal" Challenges and Responses" conducted by Giselle Thompson. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Informed Consent Form for Principal(s)

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

This study examines the ways in which the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto — particularly alumni groups — respond to the under-prioritization of public education at the State level which is a result of Jamaica’s increasing national debt. This study will be conducted in two parts, using in-school observation and interviews that will take place at the Nyerere Junior Academy in Hanover, Jamaica. I will also be conducting interviews in Toronto, Canada with members of the alumni association.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

Participants will be asked to participate in one sixty to ninety minute semi-structured interview.

Risks and Discomforts:

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. However, some of my interview questions, and perhaps, the follow up discussions, may cause upset feelings (e.g. crying).

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

This study will be beneficial because it will inspire conversations about public education in Jamaica and its financial challenges. Participants may also view their contribution to this study as important.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

If you decide to stop participating, you may withdraw without penalty, financial or otherwise, and you will still receive the promised inducement, which is a gift card.

In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Should you wish to withdraw after the study, you will have the option to also withdraw your data up until the analysis is complete.

Confidentiality:

Methods of documentation include note taking and audio recording using TranscribePro technology. Hard copy data will be kept securely in a locked cabinet in my private office, and electronic data will be kept in an encrypted file on my personal computer. All data will be destroyed twelve (12) months after the project is complete (September/October 2020). Hard copy data will be shredded and electronic data will be eliminated using an unrecoverable deletion technique. Only I, the principle researcher and Dr. Carl James, my supervisor will have access to this information.

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Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

1. Audio recording

☐ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

2. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Informed Consent Form for Teachers

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

This study examines the ways in which the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto — particularly alumni groups — respond to the under-prioritization of public education at the State level which is a result of Jamaica’s increasing national debt. This study will be conducted in two parts, using in-school observation and interviews that will take place at the Nyerere Junior Academy in Hanover, Jamaica. I will also be conducting interviews in Toronto, Canada with members of the alumni association.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

Participants will be asked to participate in one sixty to ninety minute semi-structured interview.

Risks and Discomforts:

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. However, some of my interview questions, and perhaps, the follow up discussions, may cause upset feelings (e.g. crying).

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

This study will be beneficial because it will inspire conversations about public education in Jamaica and its financial challenges. Participants may also view their contribution to this study as important.

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Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

3. Audio recording

☐ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

2. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Informed Consent Form for Parents

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

This study examines the ways in which the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto — particularly alumni groups — respond to the under-prioritization of public education at the State level which is a result of Jamaica’s increasing national debt. This study will be conducted in two parts, using in-school observation and interviews that will take place at the Nyerere Junior Academy in Hanover, Jamaica. I will also be conducting interviews in Toronto, Canada with members of the alumni association.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

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Risks and Discomforts:

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. However, some of my interview questions, and perhaps, the follow up discussions, may cause upset feelings (e.g. crying).

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

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In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Should you wish to withdraw after the study, you will have the option to also withdraw your data up until the analysis is complete.

Confidentiality:

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Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

3. Audio recording

☐ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

2. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Informed Consent Form for Interviews with Grade 6 Children

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

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What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

The purpose of this form is to request your permission to interview your child/children in their school environment. All data gathered will be protected and the identities of participants will remain anonymous. If you agree to this, please fill out and sign the form below.

Risks and Discomforts:

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. However, some of my interview questions, and perhaps, the follow up discussions, may cause upset feelings (e.g. crying).

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Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

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I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Informed Consent for Ministry of Education, Youth & Information Personnel

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

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Participants will be asked to participate in one sixty to ninety minute semi-structured interview.

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Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

3. Audio recording

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2. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Informed Consent for National Education Trust Personnel

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

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Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

3. Audio recording

☐ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

2. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Principals

1. How long have you been working at Nyerere Junior Academy?
2. Overall, describe your experience, including successes and challenges.
3. Do you have a State-issued operating budget? If so, is it adequate?
4. Describe your school relationship with the Ministry of Education.
5. Where are you most challenged, fiscally? How do you navigate these challenges?
6. From which alumni groups do receive the most support (UK, US, Canada or other)?
7. To what extent is the alumni association involved in school fundraising and planning? And, how do you feel about this?
8. In your assessment, how are the money and other resources being used, and, do alumni dictate the terms of their use?
9. Does your school receive financial gifts from other organizations? If so, in what form?
10. How do you work with teachers, parents and other school staff to ensure an efficacious learning environment for students?
11. How frequently do you partake in professional development courses, workshops or training sessions? If so, how does this affect your performance as an administrator?
12. Describe the quality of education that your students are receiving?

Teachers

1. How long have you been working at Nyerere Junior Academy?
2. Overall, describe your experience, including successes and challenges.
3. What do you think about the financial situation of the school?
4. How do you navigate challenges? Particularly, fiscal challenges?
5. How do you work with administrators, parents and other school staff to ensure an efficacious learning environment for students?
6. How frequently do you partake in professional development courses, workshops or training sessions? If so, how does this affect your performance as a teacher?
7. Describe the quality of education that your students are receiving?
8. How do alumni dictate the terms of use for the funds and other resources that are sent?
9. In your assessment, how are the money and other resources being used, and do alumni dictate the terms of their use?
10. Does alumni involvement make the Nyerere Junior Academy better? In what ways?
11. How do your resources (or lack thereof) affect your ability to teach/meet the needs of students?

Parents

1. How long has your child/children been attending Nyerere Junior Academy?
2. In your assessment, what is the quality of the education that your child/children are receiving from Nyerere Junior Academy.
3. How involved are you in your child's learning? Do you maintain communication with teachers and school administration?

4. Are school fees (administrative, textbooks, lunch, gym equipment) affordable/manageable?
5. Do friends and relatives from abroad support your children's schooling by sending money, uniforms, backpacks and school supplies?
6. How do you feel about the alumni association supporting your child's school financially and in other ways?
7. Do you think that their involvement is necessary?
8. In your assessment, how are the money and other resources being used?
9. Have you met a member of the alumni association before?
10. Does alumni involvement make your child(rens) school better?

Grade 6 Students

1. How long have you been attending the Nyerere Junior Academy?
2. What did you like/dislike the most?
3. How do you feel about your school environment? (building, Tuck Shop, Canteen/food,
4. Do you think that the Nyerere Junior Academy has enough money to meet the needs of its students? Breakfast Program, teachers, guidance councillor)
5. Do you have all of your textbooks?
6. Do you have a P.E. uniform?
7. Do you think that you're learning new things on a daily basis?
8. What's your favourite subject?
9. Are you ready for high school?
10. Will you be applying for the Past Student's Association/Nyerere Junior Academy Alumni Association scholarship? If so, why? If not, why?
11. What do you know about the Alumni?
12. Have you met any of them?
13. Did you know that they give out scholarships to students who are in Grade 6?
14. Did you know that they help the Nyerere Junior Academy financially and through other means? For example, books, pens, pencils, etc.?
15. Have you participated in the Spell-Down competition before? Did you enjoy it?
16. How do you feel about the Alumni's support?

APPENDIX B:

TORONTO

Informed Consent Form for Executive Board Members of the Nyerere Junior Academy Alumni Association

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

This study examines the ways in which the Jamaican Diaspora in Toronto — particularly alumni groups — respond to the under-prioritization of public education at the State level which is a result of Jamaica’s increasing national debt. This study will be conducted at the Centre for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CERLAC) at York University with individuals from the Nyerere Junior Academy Alumni Association (Canada Chapter) Executive Board and supporting members.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

Participants will be asked to participate in one sixty to ninety minute semi-structured interview.

Risks and Discomforts:

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Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

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Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

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2. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Informed Consent Form for Members & Supporters of the Nyerere Junior Academy Alumni Association

Date:

Study Name: National Debt and Public Education in Jamaica: “Glocal” Challenges and Responses

Researcher name: Giselle Thompson

Purpose of the Research:

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Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable)

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2. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Alumni Association Members and Supporters

1. Did you attend the Nyerere Junior Academy? If so, what years did you? Please describe your experience. Have you visited since you emigrated?
2. When did you emigrate and why?
3. When and how did you become a part of the Nyerere Junior Academy school's alumni association? Why?
4. Why are you still connected to Nyerere Junior Academy?
5. How necessary is the alumni association's involvement in school fundraising and planning?
6. Is it important for alumni to support their alma maters in Jamaica?
7. How do you support fundraising endeavours? Do you solicit donations from friends, companies, aid agencies and non-profit organizations?
8. Do you personally donate money and other resources through remittances?
9. Did you attend high school in Jamaica? If so, are you also connected/involved with the alumni association?
10. How does the alumni association's role facilitate or hinder the principals, teachers and other in-school employee's day-to-day work?
11. When you give money and other resources what are your expectations? Do feel like you and other members of your organization have the right to give with conditions?
12. What is your assessment of the quality of education that the children at the to Nyerere Junior Academy (and any other school that you support) are receiving? Do you have any idea of this?



APPENDIX C:

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent

I asked each participant to sign and date an “Informed Consent Form” (See Appendices A and B) and as I mentioned previously, I obtained verbal consent in instances where this was not possible.

Risks

The Informed Consent Form outlined the minimal risks that were associated with participating in this study, which included the possible emergence of upset feelings. When expressing her difficult financial circumstances in an interview, one parent began to cry. Other participants, both in Jamaica and the GTA, were visibly upset when discussions about the perceived financial neglect of the NJA by the MOEYI were on the interview agenda.

Benefits

Participation in this study was beneficial to both the volunteers and me because of the engaging and critical discussions about public education in Jamaica that ensued, many of which were solutions oriented. Some participants provided referrals for other potential interview participants and other resources.

Confidentiality

I assured interview participants confidentiality by indicating that only my supervisor, Dr. Carl James and I, the student scholar, would have access to their signed consent forms and the audio recordings of their interviews.

Note that throughout this dissertation when excerpts from interview transcripts are quoted or paraphrased, that interview participants have been assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity.

Voluntary participation

All interview participants had the absolute right to refuse or discontinue their participation in this study without penalty at any time.

APPENDIX D:

Solicitation Letter From the Consulate General of Jamaica



Consulate General Of Jamaica Toronto

PLEASE CIRCULATE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP, FAMILY AND FRIENDS

PLEASE SCROLL TO THE END OF THE PAGE

Dear Friends and Members of the Jamaican Diaspora,

Reference is made to my previous communication (please see below) with respect to contributions for the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs).

To those who have expressed an interest in helping the programme to achieve its objectives, I would like to use this forum to publicly convey heartiest appreciation and gratitude on behalf of the Government of Jamaica.

In addition, I wish to use this opportunity to further advise that in lieu of cash or kind contributions, you may render assistance in the form of lending your expertise. Kindly note that this is not limited solely to the education sector as Jamaica does experience significant gaps/challenges in other areas that can impact the successful

implementation of the ZOSOs initiative.

To this end, I am kindly requesting that you provide me with your particulars as follows:

- **Name**
- **Contact Details**
- **Proposed Area of Support**
- **Areas of Expertise**

I would be most grateful to receive this information by 7th March 2018 which will be transmitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade.

I do look forward to your continued support.

With kind regards,

Lloyd Wilks Consul General

Dear Friends and Members of the Jamaican Diaspora,

I know we have not had the opportunity to meet and share the special moments which Christmas often brings as I was away in December, but I would like to use this opportunity to wish for you and yours a prosperous New Year.

Over the course of 2017, you would have been aware of the severe challenges which Jamaica has been facing in arresting the spiraling homicide figures. The government has devised several strategic approaches to address the underlining and emerging issues including social intervention programs.

As you may recall, the Government of Jamaica embarked on the implementation of the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs) Programme in 2017 which seeks to implement special measures to uphold and preserve the rule of law, public order, citizen security and public safety in communities that are experiencing rampant criminality, gang warfare, escalating violence, murder, inter alia. In addition to these measures, ZOSOs also have a significant social intervention component.

Under the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs), the Government has identified certain key activities and facilities which are required in order to provide some of the social and educational amenities and structures in keeping with good governance and proper social order. The social intervention component encompasses structured initiatives that are aimed at deterring youth and young adults from engaging in illegitimate activities by providing opportunities for skills training and employment. However, in conjunction with these initiatives, the Government of Jamaica attaches priority to the development of children at the early childhood level. This is of particular importance as children must be encouraged and molded into becoming productive citizens who will positively contribute to society.

Having done the necessary evaluation, it has become evident that more resources than is immediately available, will be required to address this enormous undertaking. The problems are urgent as they are necessary and every effort is being made to implement the identified programs accordingly. One of the most critical areas to be addressed is education and the provision of educational materials and equipment in these zones. With these thoughts in mind, I am hereby inviting you to consider if and how you may be able to assist

in donating educational items to meet the needs of Basic Schools, particularly in the ZOSOs across the island. These items may include but are not limited to:

- Age appropriate toys, inclusive of puzzles, building blocks, puppets and manipulatives**
- Playground equipment, jungle gyms, seesaws and swings**

As you know, there are certain restrictions and guidelines to be observed with children and special attention should be paid to ensuring

observed with children and special attention should be paid to ensuring

that all material and equipment should be free of lead paint.

In order to effect the clearance of these donations, the National Education Trust has been identified as the conduit through which these donations will be received. Accordingly, I am attaching for your attention (in the link below) the Guidelines of the National Education Trust (NET). This process requires coordination and the Consulate General of Jamaica, Toronto is available to provide any guidance and information that may be needed. I stand ready at all times to work with you in achieving the best results.

[Guidelines for Donating Educational Materials](#)

Please note the particulars for the NET focal point:

**Ms. Latoya Harris
Public Private Relationship Manager National Education Trust (NET)
37 Arnold Road, Caenwood Centre Kingston 4
Jamaica W. I.
Office 1-876-922-3134 or 1-876-967-7962 Mobile: 1-876-562-9542
[Email: latoya.harris@net.org.jm](mailto:latoya.harris@net.org.jm)**

For persons who may wish to make donations for the purchase of educational materials, you may do so by making a cheque payable to the "Consulate General of Jamaica". Kindly note on the cheque that it is for the "ZOSOs Initiative". Cheques should be sent to our offices as follows:

**Consulate General of Jamaica
303 Eglinton Avenue East
Toronto, Ontario M4P 1L3
Attention: Office of the Consul General**

I would like to thank and commend you for your continued support and patriotism towards our beloved homeland. The Government and people of Jamaica are heartened by your unwavering commitment and varied of Jamaica are heartened by your unwavering

commitment and varied contributions geared towards the growth and development of our nation.

With kind regards,

Lloyd Wilks Consul General



Step by Step Guide to Donating Educational Materials through the

National Educational Trust (NET)

FEBRUARY 2019

BEFORE SHIPPING OR PRIOR TO SCHEDULED FLIGHT

1. Complete NET's Donation Form.
 - A. It is important to include the items being donated, their quantities and their actual or estimated value (Estimated value is to be provided if the actual value of the items is not known or the items are used). Estimated values must be realistic.
 - B. Submit the completed Donation Form in its original excel format to:
 - i. info@net.org.jm
 - C. **Note that some items such as paint require a permit from the Ministry of Health prior to the shipment of the items. The process to get the permit may take approximately 7-10 days. It is, therefore, important that the Donation Form be submitted to NET prior to the shipment departing the port.**
2. If the items being donated include computers, information on these computers must be submitted to ensure that they are suitable for the intended purpose. Computers must meet the Minimum Specifications Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth & Information.
3. If the Donor has identified a recipient institution, contact must be made with that institution. Letters of Offer should be sent to the institution and a copy emailed to the email address listed in 1b above. If a Donor does not have an intended beneficiary, NET can assist with the identification of a suitable school or children's home based on criteria established by the Donor and the nature of the items.

Step by Step Guide to Donating Educational Materials through NET



4. The recipient institution must agree to accept the donation. A Letter of Acceptance must be done by the recipient and a copy of it emailed to the NET. Letters must be done on the institution's letterhead and signed by authorized personnel. It must state that the items will not be resold by the recipient.
5. Copies of any invoices or receipts for the items being donated should be emailed to NET so that they can be used when clearing the shipment.
6. Upon receiving the necessary documents, NET will give approval for the items to be shipped.
7. If an individual(s) is carrying the items on a flight, the flight itinerary must be emailed to NET with the name(s) of the passenger(s) carrying the items.
8. If an individual(s) is carrying the items on a flight, upon receiving the necessary documents, NET will email the clearance documents to the individual(s) or to a representative of the receiving institution. These documents will need to be presented to the Customs Officer upon arrival in Jamaica.

Adequate notice is to be given prior to shipping/scheduled flight to allow for all the necessary approvals. Notice of at least one (1) week is required. This will prevent extended delays at the port of entry and possible storage/demurrage charges.

SHIPPING THE ITEMS

9. **The goods must be consigned to the National Education Trust (NET). The shipping documents must state 'National Education Trust 'and the name of the recipient institution. Do not consign the shipment to an individual.
Example of the correct consignment: "National Education Trust for Rainbow High School"**

Step by Step Guide to Donating Educational Materials through NET



10. **Do not** package educational and non-educational goods (e.g. medical supplies) together, as the approval processes and requirement for customs clearance differ.
11. **Do not** package personal items and educational materials together.
12. It is better to ship items by way of pallets, container, D container, crates, skids, drums or barrels as shipping large quantities of small packages outside of these package types will attract a higher Customs Administrative Fee (CAF).
13. Please note that one shipment for multiple institutions can only be cleared once by an individual or Customs Broker. If a single shipment contains items for multiple recipient institutions then a representative must be identified to clear the shipment.
14. Once the items have been shipped, a copy of the Bill of Lading must be emailed to the address listed in 1b.
15. Please indicate that the 'Arrival Notice' is to be emailed to info@net.org.jm. This is to be emailed upon arrival of the shipment in Jamaica.

ARRIVAL/CLEARANCE OF THE SHIPMENT

16. A copy of the '**Arrival Notice**' from the local shipping company must be emailed to info@net.org.jm
17. Upon receipt of the required documents, NET will prepare the relevant paperwork for clearance of the shipment. This will be issued to the recipient institution or representative for them to clear the items.
18. If the total value of the items is greater than US\$5,000 a registered Customs Broker is required, by law, to clear the shipment.

Step by Step Guide to Donating Educational Materials through NET



19. The name of the individual or Customs Broker who will clear the shipment must be indicated to NET to be included in the Letter of Clearance that NET will prepare for the Jamaica Customs Agency so that the waiver can be applied.

Please note, waivers are only applied once the goods have arrived in Jamaica and at the time of clearing the items.

20. The Customs Administrative Fee (CAF) will have to be paid and cannot be waived. **Where donations of education materials, equipment and supplies are consigned to NET, the GCT, Special Consumption Tax, Stamp Duty, Import Duties and 50% of the CAF are waived.** However, the remaining 50% of the Customs Administrative Fees (CAF) and the Environmental Levy will have to be paid by the donor or the beneficiary at the time of clearing the items.
21. Please note that the waiver does not apply to any local shipping agents fees which may be applicable (waivers are for taxes which are payable to the Government of Jamaica).

The approval process takes a maximum of ten (10) working days.

Failure to abide by the guidelines may result in delays at the ports. Where relevant requirements are not met, goods may have to be detained until the relevant approval is received or full duties will become payable.

NET reserves the right to audit the institutions to ensure that items are in fact in use at the beneficiary institutions.

For further information you may contact the Donor & Partner Relations Management Unit at the NET:

National Education Trust (NET)
37 Arnold Road, Caenwood Centre
Kingston 5
Office: 1-876-967-9007 or 967-7962
Mobile: 1-876-562-9542
Email: info@net.org.jm

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