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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Dissertation

INVESTIGATING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING IN THE JAMAICAN SECONDARY MUSIC CLASSROOM: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

2022

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DEDICATION

To my loving and beautiful wife, Francine, without whom I could not have survived this difficult and arduous process; my son, Kale, and my daughter, Leighanne, who both supported me in numerous ways during this doctoral sojourn. I could not have done this without you. I am forever grateful.

To my parents, Trevor and Patience Williams, who both instilled in me the discipline and character necessary to excel in life.

To my dear Aunt, Beryl Hudson, who also 'mothered' me before, during, and after my college years in the USA.

To my most influential piano teachers, the late Clarice Crawford and John Sears, who are both pleasantly etched in my memory; and the larger-than-life Dr. Laura Kargul, whose support has been unwavering from the day we met. You were all truly inspiring and significantly contributed to my development as a professional pianist and music educator.

This dissertation is dedicated to all of you for your patience with and faith in me.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am eternally grateful to the three willing participants in this research, and their corresponding high schools, for allowing me to share their stories and learn more about how they approached music teaching in the Jamaican education system. I must say thanks to my meticulous, caring, and honest supervisor, Dr. Kelly Bylica, who was incredibly helpful in all respect with shaping and completing my research. Through your actions, you encouraged me to continually be critical of my work, strive for clarity of thought through my writing, while encouraging me to be probing with my investigation and analysis. To my other committee members, Dr. André de Quadros and Dr. Andrew Goodrich, whose perspectives and suggestions were critical to the overall development of the final document, I thank you both. I would also like to express my appreciation to Dr. Tawnya Smith, whose ideas helped me to formulate, shape, and finalise the research topic.

I must thank the CHASE fund (Jamaica) for their financial support when needed at the initial stages of the journey. Additionally, I should express my gratitude to the supportive faculty members and administrative personnel from the Edna Manley College who showed interest in my research and extended full support. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my close family members, friends, and Providence Methodist Church family, for their unending support throughout this dissertation journey.

INVESTIGATING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING IN THE JAMAICAN SECONDARY MUSIC CLASSROOM: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

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Boston University College of Fine Arts, 2022

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ABSTRACT

Despite calls from The National Standards Curriculum (NSC) to incorporate music that reflects the wider society of Jamaica, the opinions and cultural systems of youth often go unnoticed in the classroom. This can create a disconnect between the established curriculum, students' culture system, and how they are taught in the music classroom. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine how secondary school music teachers practiced culturally responsive teaching by functioning as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning was (a) related to their preferred music, and (b) related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture. Three music teachers from three public secondary schools in the city of Kingston, Jamaica, participated in this research. Using an instrumental case study design (Stake, 2006), I observed each teacher's lesson online on three separate occasions and conducted three semi-structured interviews with each teacher. The data collected were analysed and used to describe the themes that emerged.

The findings from this study suggest that culturally responsive teaching does not only support ethnically diverse student populations but can function effectively with

music teachers supporting students in Jamaica’s postcolonial environment. The teachers’ understanding of Jamaican culture did not necessarily align with students lived popular culture but learning about students’ preferred music and employing contextual teaching and learning was beneficial to the students. Understanding students’ cultural background, including their popular culture experiences, and including historical aspects of their culture to broaden their understanding of their own heritage, were critical to how teachers operated. Their teaching strategies included students’ preferred music and the teachers’ selected music, both used to develop a broad-based music curriculum aimed at engaging and expanding the students’ knowledge beyond what they already know.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since Jamaica's independence from Britain in 1962, conversations related to the integration of culture and education within the postcolonial experience have been ongoing. Many times, these discussions occur in the context of teachers' cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural resourcefulness, development of culturally appropriate teaching strategies, and methodology employed inside and outside of the classroom. On the Jamaica Information Service (JIS) website (2008), a prominent high school principal is attributed with a comment asserting that "Jamaican culture should be the bedrock of the Jamaican education system. We should find in our culture, the ways to teach and to educate our children." This principal, noting the power of the visual and performing arts in the process of cultural education, was further quoted saying the arts can "increase the knowledge of our culture among our young people, and that knowledge can be used for behavioural modification, for improvement in attitude, better self-image…and [generally, how they] operate as young Jamaican citizens" (Jamaica Information Service, 2008). This aligns with Nettleford's (2006) notions about education in postcolonial Jamaica, who argued that culture-in-education is the foundation of the curriculum and should influence how we teach.

Despite these calls, studies show that the Jamaican culture was not always a primary experience in Jamaican music classrooms. Tucker (2003) observed and interviewed 14 secondary school teachers in Kingston, the capital and largest city on the island. At the time, Tucker found that there was a cultural dissonance between the

musical culture within the classroom versus the energetic and vibrant popular music culture that exists throughout the Jamaican society. The use of Jamaican folk music in the curriculum was evident, but the use of Jamaican and Caribbean popular music in the classroom was almost non-existent. Therefore, questions remain as to what is meant by culture, whose culture matters, what culture students expect in the music classroom, and how teachers might embody and disseminate cultural knowledge in the Jamaican music classroom.

In Jamaica, culture is often regarded as the heartbeat of Jamaican people. Yet, defining what constitutes culture in all sectors of Jamaican society is not always straightforward. Gay (2018) defined culture as "a dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behavioral standards, worldviews, and beliefs used to give order and meaning to our own lives as well as the lives of others" (p. 8). Gay's definition of culture is manifested in Jamaica's language, social norms, cuisine, religious affiliations, and a range of other unique manifestations including the local music. When observing how culture works in the broader society, consideration should be given to Jamaican youth culture and the role it plays in the music classroom when exploring the music curriculum.

The Jamaican primary and secondary curriculum, called the National Standards Curriculum (NSC, 2013), lays out the music curriculum for secondary schools, Grades 7 to 9.[1] Students interested in music beyond Grade 9 continue with the Caribbean Secondary Education Council (CSEC) music syllabus in Grades 10 and 11.[2] Music as a

[1] Approximately ages 12 – 15.
[2] Approximately ages 15 – 17.

discreet subject is not offered in Grades 12 and 13,[3] even though it is a part of the performing arts syllabus. However, Grades 12 and 13 are optional for students who elect to take the 2-year Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) programme. CSEC is a Caribbean-wide exit examination conducted by the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) and is normally taken at the end of Grade 11, the final year of compulsory high school education. CXC administers subject tests for high school students in sixteen participating English-speaking Caribbean territories.

The secondary school music syllabi in the NSC provides an explanation of music's context in the Jamaican culture. The teaching notes on "Music and Culture" speak to the cultural context in which Jamaican music operates and the syllabus encapsulates the approach expected of schools by stating the following:

> Over the centuries, Jamaican culture has been enriched by the musical traditions inherited from our forebears. Music has always held a dominant place in our society where it is often combined with dance to embellish and inform social and religious ritual. Schools should play a significant role in cultural education, and because music is an important part of our culture, schools should be responsible for how the art form is experienced and understood by the young. (National Standards Curriculum, Grade 7, 2013, p. 14)

It can be inferred from this statement that music teachers share the responsibility of educating students while being cognizant of culture's role in education and how music is taught in the Jamaican cultural context.

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[3] Approximately ages 17 – 18.

Personal Narrative

I have been an active music educator, performer, examination assessor, and festival adjudicator for many years. However, my initial college level education and training in music took place within the first thirty years of post-independence Jamaica. As a music student and pre-service teacher in the mid to late 1980s, I was taught in an eclectic system of music education. I was trained as a classical pianist who was, on occasion, expected to perform as keyboardist in popular bands and on congas and other indigenous instruments in folk ensembles at my college. I was also taught to use indigenous items such as fudge sticks (popsicle sticks), stones, bottles, cords, and other materials to make various percussion instruments used to enhance music-making in the classroom. Additionally, there was a deliberate effort by music educators at my college to use Jamaican and Caribbean popular music, Jamaican and Caribbean traditional folk forms, jazz and blues, and North American popular music within the general music classroom. At the time, a national curriculum for music was not yet in existence, so it was the norm for pre-service music teachers at my college to develop curriculum content and individual teaching kits within the methods courses. These materials were used in the listening and appraising aspect of the general music classes, as a foundation for composition and arranging for classroom instruments and ensembles, and as content for school ensembles including choirs. Although the use of folk and popular music in the classroom was the educational thrust in my college, that was not the reality in the music classrooms at the time.

My perception of music teachers in the secondary school system, though highly

subjective and possibly skewed, is formed by my more than 25 years of teaching at the high school and college levels. In my current capacity as an administrator and music educator at a tertiary institution, I periodically observe in-service and pre-service secondary school music teachers using a variety of music genres to deliver the music curriculum. These musical genres include Jamaican popular music such as Dancehall, Reggae, and Ska, and Jamaican traditional folk music such as Mento, Kumina, Revivalism, and traditional songs for work and play. I am also aware that some music teachers, including pre-service teachers I have observed, use other genres of music in classes including foreign popular music such as R&B and Rap from the United States, Soca and other popular music from the wider Caribbean, European classical music, and songs from musical theatre.

Since the Tucker (2003) study, there seems to be a shift in approach by some music teachers as their awareness of students' musical preferences have influenced their pedagogical approach in teaching the broader curriculum. I have spoken with secondary school music teachers from different cities in Jamaica and they all speak about students' preferences for popular music as it is their lived experience. On the part of some music teachers, there seems to be an acknowledgement regarding the importance of including students' popular culture in the delivery of the music curriculum.

I continue to interact with both pre-service music teachers and secondary school music teachers both inside and outside of the music classroom. Each year, as an adjudicator for an annual island-wide Jamaican performing arts competition, I have an opportunity to observe solo and ensemble performances presented by secondary schools.

For two years, I was an external examiner for music in the Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC), a Caribbean-wide examination. In all these situations, I noticed music teachers selecting a wide range of music repertoire for the performance aspect of the syllabus. However, the teachers observed seem to have an affinity for specific genres of Jamaican and U.S. popular music and gospel, and I surmise that these genres are not only selected for public performances, but also used to facilitate the teaching and learning process in general music classes. Is that the reality or a construct in my head?

With my lived experience of music teaching in Jamaica, I constantly ask myself if a student's culture, sub-culture, societal background (stratification), and music preferences should dictate or influence repertoire used in the music classroom and, more importantly, influence how music is taught in the classroom. These questions led me to conduct further investigation into culturally responsive teaching in the music classroom. To prepare for this research, I administered a pilot study (Williams, 2019) in a primary school observing a teacher's practice of culturally responsive teaching (CRT). In that study, I defined CRT as a practice that honours one's culture, develops cross-cultural relationships, and translates students' cultural competencies to learning in general (Gay, 2018). Based on my observations and interviews, there seem to be different interpretations among students about what is considered their native culture and whose culture is privileged in the classroom. Students responded positively to learning about traditional Jamaican folk music and Reggae, the latter of which is no longer as popular as Jamaican Dancehall music. They also appreciated learning about music from other

cultures within the Caribbean and around the world, mainly North America. The teacher's role in teaching Jamaican and foreign music cultures in the classroom showed a high level of organization and ingenuity, while giving students the opportunity to develop listening and performance skills in the classroom and as a part of the extracurricular activity at the end of the school day.

The pilot study instilled in me a desire to explore this current research project with secondary school music teachers. This research was conducted to investigate how the music teachers utilise students' preferred music culture to enhance teaching and learning in the secondary music classroom. Acknowledging that students' musical tastes may differ, and music teachers have their individual music preferences, the study was used to look at how teachers navigate the alignment or misalignment of these music cultures when addressing the realities of teaching in the Jamaican music classroom. I also investigated how students are broadening or not broadening their understanding of music when teaching is aligned or not aligned with their music preferences. These interests led me to explore if and how music teachers in the Jamaican secondary school system employ teaching strategies that are culturally responsive within the general music classroom.

Background of the Problem

Since the 1960s, the movement in Jamaican education to decolonize the music curriculum from a colonialist European music paradigm has influenced student learning and interest in classroom music. Tucker (2003) supported this position by stating that the arts benefitted from the 1960s reform in education as it "embraced the African-derived

expressions of the black majority…foster[ed] cultural inclusiveness…[and] remove[d] hierarchies integral to colonialism" (p. 158). Tucker further argued that within this post-colonial context, a teacher's role is to help students learn in a setting that places high value on Jamaican and Caribbean culture, while maintaining their varied heritages including their dominant West African and British traditions.

The Jamaican National Standards Curriculum requires students to engage in listening and appraising, performing, and composing a diverse range of musical styles including that of their own country. Therefore, to satisfy the music requirements in the curriculum, it is important for music teachers to include Jamaican traditional folk music and non-popular music genres in the classroom. Teachers are also expected to be aware of music's context in contemporary Jamaica. Hence it is important to include repertoire, within the classroom, that reflects the cultural pluralism of Jamaican society (Tucker, 2003). Among Jamaican secondary students, current popular music including Jamaican dancehall, Rap, Hip Hop, R&B, and Gospel, are genres that are favoured for listening and music video viewing (Abdulkadri, 2017). In Jamaican secondary schools, students seemed to prefer the inclusion of current popular music in the general music classroom (Minott, 2008; Tucker, 2003).

An awareness of Jamaican students' preferred music can be ascertained in various ways. In Jamaica, there are research studies that investigated the effect of popular music, namely Jamaican dancehall, on Jamaican adolescent youths and their sexuality (Crawford, 2010; Forbes, 2010; Holder-Nevins & Bain, 2002; Rowe, 2013). Among the findings in these studies, reference was made to students' music preferences when

listening to music or watching music videos. In a July 2011 presentation entitled "The Social Impact of Jamaican Popular Music," Marcia Forbes stated that in 2005/2006, American Rap and Hip Hop were very popular among adolescent youths across the island. Jamaican Dancehall was the most popular music genre, while Reggae, Jamaica's famous popular genre, R&B, and Religious/Gospel, were lower on the list of listening and video watching preferences (Forbes, 2010).

Abdulkadri (2017), in a media content impact survey commissioned by the television and radio regulatory body known as the Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica (BCJ), focused on students' behaviour related to electronic media exposure and consumption. The two-year survey was conducted in five secondary schools ranked at different ends of the academic performance spectrum and located in different parts of the city of Kingston. The questionnaires were designed to investigate both electronic audio sources and visual media sources including music videos. The results of the survey showed that female students preferred to listen to Dancehall, R&B, Rock, Gospel, New Age/Alternative, and Soca music. On the other hand, male students prefer to listen to Dancehall, Hip-Hop, R & B, Gospel, Reggae and Rap. Among the male and female students, Jamaican Dancehall music was the most listened to genre (Abdulkadri, 2017).

The music syllabi in the Jamaican National Standards Curriculum (NSC) highlight what is expected of music education as a whole and teachers in the secondary music classroom. The NSC emphasises that music education should be "educating the senses and providing for the development of inventiveness and personal creativity through the medium of sound. It should develop the whole person rather than merely

provide a musical training" (p. 13). The section entitled "Guidance for Teachers" laid out the context in which the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI) expects the music programme to operate. The section on repertoire stated the following:

> The music taught in schools should reflect the musical culture of the wider society. Selections made from different musics should, however, be made with awareness of the maturational levels and interests of students, and should provide opportunities for personal expression and musical growth. Students should be exposed to a wide variety of 'finely crafted' musical items to allow for the development of musical judgment based on personal knowledge of music of good quality. Knowledge of the musics in Jamaican society should be coupled with exposure to other musics. Instead of approaching music in terms of musical hierarchies, teaching is best aimed at providing opportunities for a growing understanding of the many ways in which musical sound can be organised, resulting in diversity of style and expression. (National Standards Curriculum, Grade 7, 2013, p. 14)

Although the document did not present a definition of "finely crafted" music or "music of good quality," terms that in and of themselves are subjective and prone to personal bias, it is expected that teachers will give students opportunities to organise sound to create and perform music in a variety of ways in the classroom.

The term "musical hierarchies" was addressing the notion that one music is "better" than the next, often, due to the music emanating from a superior or inferior culture. In the context of Jamaica's colonial history, European classical music was seen

by the ruling class as high-quality music, while music genres from other cultures were perceived to be not of the same ilk and of a lower class. During the colonial reign, many Jamaicans were trained to "despise sounds, sights and ideas that did not synchronize with those of the ruling powers" (Lewin, 2000, p. 42) including the African derived music of Jamaica. The concept of musical hierarchy was integral to colonialism and one that the Jamaican education system consciously tried to eliminate when planning the first national curriculum in the 1990's (Tucker, 2003). The language used in the National Standards Curriculum implies that all music genres should be treated as important within their context and should not be benchmarked based on Western European standards only. Therefore, music teachers are expected to be cognisant of the cultural context of music in Jamaican society and beyond.

The music syllabi in the NSC continue to promote the tradition I was exposed to in the 1980s. Music teachers' use of popular music that incorporates both formal and informal learning pedagogies as well as culturally sensitive teaching strategies are integrated into the three tenets of the Jamaican general music curriculum: listening and appraising, composing/arranging, and performing (National Standards Curriculum, 2013). The NSC requires music teachers to use varied genres of music to deliver the course content and it seems imperative that music teachers explore current popular music that they believe can appeal to students while fulfilling the curriculum requirements.

While research has considered culturally responsive teaching in other contexts such as the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, and Australia (e.g., Barton, 2018; Pirbhai-Illich et al., 2017; Rohan, 2011; Shaw 2015), this topic has not yet been explored in Jamaican

secondary schools. Most writings related to culturally responsive teaching (CRT) look at minoritized students (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2009) while in postcolonial Jamaica where more than 90% of the 2.7 million population is of African descent, students are not frequently marginalized due to race and ethnicity. However, the opinions and cultural systems of youth often go unnoticed in the classroom. This can create a disconnect between the established curriculum, students' culture system, and how they are taught in the music classroom.

Theoretical Framework

Practitioners of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) aim to use cultural knowledge to inform learning encounters in the classroom (Gay, 2018). Culturally responsive teaching focuses on teaching to and through the strength of students and is a practice that validates and affirms cultural diversity in learning. Abril (2013) suggested that teachers who practice culturally responsive teaching consider "the role of culture in every aspect of teaching and learning so that student learning is made more relevant, meaningful and effective" (p. 6). Additionally, researchers have suggested that the use of culturally responsive pedagogy that utilizes popular music (Bond, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Mantie, 2013; Minott, 2008; Shaw, 2015, 2016) and informal learning practices (Jaffurs, 2004; Robinson, 2012; Vasil, 2019) could positively transform students in the school environment.

Gay (2018) posited that teachers who practice culturally responsive teaching (CRT) honour students' cultural orientations including their behaviours, beliefs, and values; develop cross-cultural relationships; and translate students' cultural competencies

to learning throughout the curriculum. Culturally responsive teaching is not a "prescriptive method" but a framework that responds to context and learner (Shaw, 2015). When successful, CRT can be validating and uses "cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (Gay, 2018, p. 36). Teachers who practice CRT are expected to develop strategies to connect the school experience to the lives and learning style of culturally diverse students in their classroom (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

According to Gay (2018), culturally responsive teaching (CRT) requires an understanding of culture, an awareness of education as cultural transmission, and an understanding of a student's cultural background. Lind and McKoy (2016) added that culturally responsive teachers "affirm the varied and unique cultural experiences, values, and knowledge their students bring to the classroom" (p. 27). In affirming students' cultural backgrounds, teachers are expected to respond to students in culturally appropriate ways that are relatable and meaningful to the intended students while validating their cultural heritages and personal experiences (Gay, 2018). Therefore, the use of teaching materials and pedagogical strategies that align with students' cultural understanding can be advantageous to the teaching and learning process and experience. However, there is an acknowledgement that "shared core cultural values" among a group does not deny a student's individual expression of their culture. This has direct implications for the application of teaching strategies which need to be broad and diverse (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

In Jamaican secondary school music programmes, music teachers often incorporate Jamaican indigenous folk music and Jamaican popular music repertoire in the delivery of the music curriculum (Mundle, 2008). This is manifested at the National Festival of the Arts, school pop band competitions such as “Jamaica Best School Band,” and contemporary choir competitions such as “All Together Sing,” a seasonal programme aired on Television Jamaica, a prominent national television station. However, as expressed earlier, the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) requires music teachers to deliver a music programme that reflects the wider society and exposes students to a variety of musical experiences.

Ladson-Billings (2014) spoke to the value of youth culture as it affords teachers opportunities to change how we “think, learn, perceive, and perform in the world” (p. 78). It is critical that music teachers who practice culturally responsive teaching use their cultural competence to help adolescent students expand their understanding of music outside of the students’ immediate knowledge (Gay, 2018). To cultivate cultural competence in the classroom, Gay posited that a teacher’s roles and responsibilities are critical in developing culturally responsive pedagogy and in the process, enables a teacher to operate as a “cultural broker” (p. 51). The concept of teachers as cultural brokers is derived from Diamond and Moore (1995) who place the roles and responsibilities in three categories: teachers as “cultural organizers,” “cultural mediators,” and “orchestrators of social contexts for learning.”

Teachers as cultural organizers incorporate students’ experiences into the teaching and learning process. Teachers need to understand their students’ cultural realities in the

classroom and create culturally appropriate learning environments that facilitate high academic achievement (Gay, 2018). Viewing teachers as cultural organizers in the Jamaican music classroom requires an application of CRT that will allow researchers to better understand how students learn about the cultural background of the music they select; how teachers contextualise selected music in the Jamaican culture; and how teachers contextualise music in a global culture. Teachers who practice CRT as cultural organizers, then, not only acknowledge and understand their students' varied cultures, but also "act upon this understanding" (Abril, 2009, p. 89).

As cultural mediators, teachers create opportunities for students to become culturally diverse learners who affirm each other while understanding different cultural systems. Teachers help students to understand their own culture and appreciate other cultures while affirming each other toward empowerment (Gay, 2018). In Jamaican contexts, teachers acting as cultural mediators will not only have teacher-directed activities but may use music in specific ways that can be beneficial to the students and support an environment of diverse learners. Therefore, CRT will be utilized to better understand how teachers operate as facilitators of cultural discussions among students in Jamaican music classrooms.

As orchestrators of social contexts for learning, teachers make teaching and learning processes compatible with the sociocultural contexts of diverse students. Teachers need to understand and recognize a culture's role in the process of learning and how learning takes place within specific sociocultural contexts (Gay, 2018). Additionally, teachers should encourage students to experiment while building their knowledge in

diverse settings that foster collaboration and group learning (Diamond & Moore, 1995). In Jamaican classrooms, this means that teachers need to understand the postcolonial contexts of their students and the eclectic formal and informal ways in which they learn music.

An understanding of how music teachers respond to the cultural needs of students by including music that is considered their preferred music can lead to a more inclusive education within the Jamaican music classroom. Honouring students' cultures may also promote active participation and stimulate individual growth within the general music classroom. Additionally, teaching students beyond their familiar cultural systems can broaden their understanding of music and create opportunities for students to become culturally diverse learners within the music classroom. Therefore, research is needed to examine the ways in which Jamaican secondary school music teachers operate as cultural brokers when they practice culturally responsive teaching.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine how secondary school music teachers practice culturally responsive teaching by functioning as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning was (a) related to their preferred music, and (b) related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture.

Research Questions

1. In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning is related to their preferred music?
2. In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning is related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture?

Methodology Overview

To examine the ways in which music teachers practice culturally responsive teaching by functioning as cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning, I used a qualitative multiple case study design. According to Stake (1995), case study is a "specific, a complex, functioning thing" (p. 2) and is used to study the "particularity and complexity of a single case" (p. xi). This instrumental multiple case study was focused on understanding how teachers practice (or do not practice) culturally responsive teaching in the context of three Jamaican secondary schools.

Three secondary schools located in an urban centre in Jamaica were used as the context for this study. The schools were strategic and purposefully selected based on their urban location and the presence of active general music programmes (Miles et al., 2020). Each of the three schools has one fulltime music teacher teaching multiple general music classes. Over a period of three months, I observed each teacher's lesson online via Zoom

and Google classroom on three separate occasions and took extensive field notes during each observation. I also conducted three semi-structured interviews with each teacher. For each of the three cases, the data collected were analysed and used to describe the themes that emerged. Thereafter, the emergent themes were collectively analysed in a cross-case analysis (Stake, 2006).

Significance

This research is situated in the postcolonial context on which the Jamaican society is built and within which it continues to define and redefine itself. Although there are several studies in the field of education focusing on students in the Jamaican secondary school system (e.g., Cook & Jennings, 2016), very few of these studies focus on music teaching in the secondary public-school system in Jamaica. This study aims to fill that gap by offering insight into how three music teachers perform their roles and responsibilities in the music classroom. This includes affirmation of student prior knowledge about their preferred music and the extent to which these teachers expand the knowledge base of their students beyond the music with which they are familiar.

An examination of how music teachers practice culturally responsive teaching in the Jamaican school system can inform curriculum development and pedagogical approaches. Understanding how music teachers negotiate the cultural dynamics of the classroom, create opportunities for students to become culturally diverse learners who affirm each other, and make teaching and learning compatible with the sociocultural environment can be beneficial to educators (Gay, 2018). Additionally, increased research can assist in understanding and shaping how music teachers practice culturally responsive

teaching in Jamaican music classrooms, provide new understanding into their varied roles and responsibilities, and give insight as to approaches used by music teachers to navigate the diverse students and situations they face in a modern postcolonial Jamaica.

Organization of the Dissertation

This study is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the research investigation and includes the background of the problem, overview of the theoretical framework, purpose statement, research questions, methodology overview, and significance of the research. Chapter 2 provides a rationale for the use of Gay's theoretical framework of culturally responsive teaching (CRT). I also review literature related to CRT, the historical development of CRT, the use of CRT in music education, studies related to CRT including popular music and informal learning in the classroom, and the practice of music education in Jamaica. In Chapter 3, I explain the multiple case study design using processes suggested by Stake (1995). Included in Chapter 3 is the selection of teachers and sites, the data collected including the observations and interviews, and the method of evaluating the data.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 provide the presentation of data and findings obtained through the nine observation sessions and nine semi-structured interviews. I also outline the emergent themes observed subsequent to the data-gathering process. Chapter 7 presents a cross-case analysis of the data discussed in the data analysis chapters. In Chapter 8, I address the research questions, state implications for music education, and propose ideas for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, I review literature that examines culturally responsive teaching in music education. This multiple case study was conducted in the island of Jamaica, a country located in the north west Caribbean. It is therefore necessary to contextualise the Jamaican culture and education system in a Jamaican (and English-speaking Caribbean) postcolonial context. I review literature on culture in education, postcolonial thoughts in Jamaica and the diaspora, music education in Jamaica, and historical foundations of culturally responsive teaching while outlining a theoretical framework for the roles and responsibilities of teachers who practice CRT, CRTs application to music education, and popular culture in Jamaica.

The scope of the review is restricted by the paucity of music education research in Jamaica directly related to this topic. Although there are few studies that investigate the practice of music teachers in the Jamaican secondary classroom (Minott, 2008; Tucker, 2003), the literature review is supported by research from other countries and related research on teaching in secondary schools in Jamaica.

Culture and Culture in Education

Culture is multi-layered and has been defined in a variety of ways. Hall (2016) defined culture as "experience lived, experience interpreted, experience defined" (p. 32–33), and in the postcolonial context, these experiences influence what content is explored and how teaching and learning operates in the Jamaican classroom. Benhabib (2002) stated that "any collective experience, sustained over time, may constitute a culture" (p.

61). Others state that culture is socially constructed and is nurtured by the members of the group (Diamond & Moore, 1995). Culture can be seen as an alternative expression for identity and used to recognise and differentiate one group from another. Culture can demonstrate shared social values, practices of signification, representation, behavioural standards, and symbolism that crafts its own logic (Benhabib, 2002). Similarly, Apple (2014) defined culture as "the way of life of a people, the constant and complex process by which meanings are made and shared" (p. 46). Benhabib also posited the idea that "we should view human cultures as constant creations, recreations, and negotiations of imaginary boundaries between 'we' and the 'other(s)'" (p. 8). Gay (2018) supports a similar view, summarising culture as multidimensional, complex, interactive, and dynamic, in that it is always evolving while providing stability among a common group of people.

Although a culture group has shared core values, members of a culture group do not necessarily demonstrate identical core cultural characteristics. According to Benhabib (2002), cultures cannot be considered "homogeneous wholes...[as] they are constituted through the narratives and symbolizations of their members" (p. 61). Gay (2018) posited that cultural characteristics are influenced by "mitigating variables" such as gender, age, social class, and other societal realities that influence the behaviour of individuals within the culture group.

Education is built on cultural practices that are transmitted through different means. This includes curriculum and pedagogy, that is, both what and how we teach (Gay, 2018). The curriculum promotes the norms and values of the mainstream culture.

Gay (2018) argued that teachers should select and teach curriculum content that is culturally relevant to the students in their classes regardless of its relationship to the mainstream culture. This means the curricular content should validate the student's "personal experiences and cultural heritages … it [also] means teaching content entirely new to ethnically and culturally diverse students but in ways that make it easy for them to comprehend" (p. 143). Furthermore, understanding how individuals operate within a culture group is important to educational practice because it has implications for the way teachers teach and respond to student's culture within the classroom. Therefore, student's individual expression of culture should be recognised, encouraged, and harnessed using diverse teaching strategies (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Postcolonial Thoughts and Jamaican Identity

Modern Jamaican society and culture are a direct result of Jamaica's colonial past. Therefore, a postcolonial perspective is necessary to understand Jamaica's complex culture. Hickling-Hudson, et al. (2004) defined postcolonialism as a theoretical framework that addresses the lingering effects of colonialism, especially that of inequality. It is a process, an approach, not a "descriptive or evaluative term." Furthermore, "it recognises the philosophical, political, economic and sociocultural consequences of colonialism ... It does imply a space for moving beyond the negative patterns that persist after colonialism began" (p. 2). Therefore, the term postcolonial does not refer to the end of colonialism, but the struggle such societies experience when challenging oppressive structures (physical and mental) experienced as repercussions of colonialism.

In the context of Jamaica, the journey to postcolonialism had its roots in the dehumanising trading of West and Central Africans as slaves to the Caribbean island. As a result of the transatlantic slave trade, there is now a large population of people of African descent living in Jamaica (Lewin, 2000). Consequently, Jamaica and the Caribbean have a largely Afrocentric focus due to their history. Furthermore, after the abolition of slavery, Jamaican culture evolved when indentured labourers from East India and China were infused into the society (Lewin, 2000; Sherlock & Bennett, 1998). The distinctiveness of Jamaica's complex culture was blended with African, Asian, and European cultural components leading to a hybridised society, one that Hall (2013) declared is a culture "essentially driven by a diasporic aesthetic" (p. 385). However, Nettleford (1998) proffered that in Jamaica, the "Euro-African" creole culture is dominant and the settlers from the mid nineteenth century who are not of European (mainly not British) and of African descent mostly adapted to the dominant culture. This adaptation to the dominant culture is manifested in Jamaicans' approach to language, music, religious beliefs, and other behaviours including their concepts of race, where "things European gaining ascriptive status while things African were correspondingly devalued, including African racial traits" (Nettleford, 1998, p. 174).

From as early as the 1930s, the ideology of one of Jamaica's national heroes, Marcus Garvey, and the rebellion of a culturally important group of Jamaicans who fought for positive black identity, the Rastafarians, were integral to the formation of modern Jamaican identity and the perception of black power (Nettleford, 1998; Sherlock & Bennett, 1998). Rastafari, among other things, identified their African heritage and

promoted black consciousness and redemption as positive experiences. Importantly, Rastafari is a rebellion against a colonial misnomer that promoted negative connotation of people of African descent; thus, Rastafarian's emphasis on black being synonymous with everything good (Nettleford, 1998).

Jamaica (and the Caribbean) has evolved into an 'Africa' that has been transformed in the new world. Due to slavery and a history of submission to colonial rule, Africa has become the descriptor for the Caribbean society. Hall (2013) stated that the Caribbean society conceptually views its African heritage in the following way:

> 'Africa' is the signifier, the metaphor, for that dimension of our society and history that has been massively suppressed, systematically dishonoured and endlessly disavowed, and that, despite all that has happened, remains so…Race remains…the guilty secret, the hidden code, the unspeakable trauma, in the Caribbean. (p. 389)

Hall further stated that colonial practices reshaped the identity of the enslaved by inculcating colonialist ideals deliberately designed as subversive measures to systematically dismantle the history of the enslaved. Therefore, 'Africa' gave Caribbean nationals a voice to be heard, one that gave social and cultural meaning to its way of life and its very existence. This post-slavery cultural transformation is not about what the traditions make of the citizens, but what the citizens make of the traditions. Hall posited that cultural transformation is ongoing, therefore "culture is not a matter of ontology, of being, but of becoming" (p. 391).

Postcolonialism, Education, and Popular Culture

Researchers have used postcolonial theory as a framework to understand and interpret educational practices in postcolonial societies. Kanu (2006) posited that postcolonial theory can be used to study power relations, race, ethnicity, and "cultural production and relations" (p. 7). Education and schooling are often the main areas used to influence citizens of postcolonial societies to accept the ideological positions of those in power (Kanu, 2006). Hickling-Hudson (2003), in addressing the Australian education system, suggested that a postcolonial framework is a lens that can help to better understand and address curriculum deficiencies aimed to promote socio-cultural equity. Therefore, postcolonial thinking can promote the rebalancing of education and address inequity and cultural deficiencies within the curriculum. Its primary goal is to challenge mainstream conceptions of "knowledge, 'race' and culture" (Hickling-Hudson et. al., 2004, p. 5).

At times, postcolonial societies struggle with defining whose knowledge and culture should be propagated in the classroom. Apple (2014) considered the question of what the purpose of education is, and at the same time questioned who determines the knowledge considered to be legitimate and fit for dissemination to a broader population. Similarly, in a comparative study examining culture, postcolonialism and educational change in Australia and the Caribbean, Hickling-Hudson (2006) suggested that postcolonial theory is an important lens through which educators can reimagine and affirm students' cultural identity through education. Through a postcolonial lens, education can be understood as an issue of race and cultural oppression, mainly that of

Eurocentric education, and can be seen as "stratifying and racist…[it] suppresses knowledge, distorts learning and persuades Europe and its diaspora of their putative superiority" (p. 215).

Although postcolonial societies continue to redefine themselves and separate from the negative and oppressive past, black popular culture has emerged as an influential force worldwide. Hall (2003), discussing black popular culture, spoke of the rich experience that drives its existence, a culture that is entrenched in the communities from which they emerged. This black experience is manifested in "its expressivity, its musicality, its orality, in its rich, deep, and varied attention to speech, in its inflections towards the vernacular and the local, in its rich production of counter-narratives…in its metaphorical use of the musical vocabulary…" (p. 470). Hall further made the call to pay attention to the diversity of black experiences experienced between diasporas, communities, and countries, noting that these diverse experiences are influenced by place, position, and locale.

Although Jamaica is a relatively small country with a population of just over 2.7 million people, its popular music, especially reggae and dancehall, are well-known to popular music connoisseurs beyond its borders. Jamaican reggae artistes such as Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Jimmy Cliff; and in recent times, Beenie Man, Bounty Killer, and Shaggy, are all international artists who have spread Jamaican music culture overseas. In countries as far as Zimbabwe, China, Nicaragua and Germany, Marley's and Tosh's music were used as songs of protest and liberation from oppression and injustice (Chang & Chen, 1998). Jamaican dancehall culture with its drum and bass emphasis,

mega sound systems, rapping over rhythm tracks, and dub remix, are all innovations that have been absorbed into wider popular music (Barrow & Dalton, 2001). Jamaica has made its mark on popular music and its history has had a bearing on music and music education in the island state.

Music Education in Jamaica: An Overview

Since Jamaica's independence from Britain in 1962, there has been a deliberate effort to make Jamaican culture an important contributor to the development of the Jamaican education system. Just as a postcolonial perspective is critical to understanding culture, that same perspective is also key to understanding the systems of education throughout Jamaica's history prior to and post slavery. Therefore, framing the Jamaican education system in its postcolonial perspective, one that examines the conflict and paradoxes between decolonisation and colonisation, helps to contextualise the culturally diverse musical traditions and pedagogy experienced in Jamaica (Hickling-Hudson, 2000). Postcolonial Jamaica and the wider Caribbean continuously engage with these conflicts and paradoxes as European cultural hegemony is juxtaposed with African heritage to create a cultural hybridity that blends both musical and cultural traditions (Hickling-Hudson, 2000; Nettleford, 2003). There is an ongoing social tension between the two traditions where European classical music, despite its colonial roots and historical dominance, has become secondary to Jamaican traditional folk and popular music forms (Hickling-Hudson, 2000).

Jamaica, being a post-slavery society where some traditions of Britain remain the dominant culture, continues to battle the vestiges of its slave history and colonialism even

after over fifty years of independence from Britain. Reflected in this dominant culture is their religious beliefs, language, visual and performing arts, among other practices. Lewin (2000) stated that battling these cultural negatives had adverse “sociological, psychological and educational effects” on Jamaican society (p. 35). Lewin further stated that the cultural practices of Jamaica have been influenced in the following ways:

> …the ideas and values of Britain were imposed through both formal and informal education. One negative result of this has been the development of a belief in the superiority of cultural expressions of other societies, particularly those of the former colonizers, and the inferiority of the indigenous traditions. (pp. 35–36)

Although the larger part of the Jamaican population was of African heritage, those of African descent were the majority of the country’s working class. The deliberate negative actions and stifling colonial policies and practices “caused Jamaicans not only to be ignorant of their African past but also to despise the sounds, sights and ideas that did not synchronise with those of the ruling powers” (Lewin, 2000, p. 42).

The secondary school system started in 1879, and some of these schools have a long and rich history of educating students in the small island nation (Tillmutt, 2013). Based on the structure of the British education system, the modern Jamaican secondary school system goes from Grades 7–11, at the end of which there is a subject-based exit examination called Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC). Some students who qualify may choose to apply and enrol in Grades 12 and 13 at which point they sit the subject-based examination called Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). Music is a subject test at the CSEC level and is incorporated into the performing

arts syllabus at the CAPE level.

Colleges in Jamaica were established as early as 1832 prior to emancipation from slavery in 1838. College music programmes emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. The mid-1970s through the 1980s saw the development of teacher education programmes which included music (Mowatt, 2013; Tillmutt, 2013). However, it was the Jamaica School of Music (JSM), formed in 1961, that started to train specialist music teachers for the secondary school system. At the time of its inception, one year before independence, the Jamaican society was still strongly influenced by British values and culture (O'Gorman, 1984). Therefore, the school's curriculum was modelled on the British Royal Schools of Music and the faculty members, except for one, were all from Britain (Mowatt, 2013; O'Gorman, 1984; Tillmutt, 2013).

By 1972, the administration of the Jamaica School of Music (JSM) recognised that they could not continue to operate with the strict classical music curriculum in a society where most of the population responded to "other musical cultures and looked upon this outpost of European hegemony with suspicion and resentment" (O'Gorman, 1984, p. 68). In some circles, the school was seen as anachronistic with its curriculum design, lacked the vibrancy and creativity experienced with local popular musicians, and an entity that surrendered to the "canons of the European classical tradition" (Nettleford, 2003, p. 72). Because there were societal questions regarding the use of limited resources to train musicians for overseas jobs (classical musicians) versus the local music industry, the JSM administration determined that teaching Jamaican music, including reggae and the rich folk music heritage, mattered to the society (Nettleford, 2003; O'Gorman, 1984).

Therefore, by the mid-1970s, the school devised a curriculum that moved away from the strict classical music vocal and instrumental training and for the first time, JSM allowed popular musicians to study at the school. The JSM administration established a curriculum that included popular, jazz, and Jamaican folk music, created a course called Jamaican Studies, while keeping the European classical music tradition as a part of the course offerings (O'Gorman, 1984). However, the inclusion of popular music and jazz was because of demands from local musicians and the need to become more relevant as a national school of music. With this approach, the JSM had to "cut across the predominant cultural attitudes of post-colonial society by attempting to place equal emphasis on all musics, avoiding any hierarchical structure that would seek to place greater value on one than on another" (O'Gorman, 1984, p. 81).

The Jamaica School of Music added a teacher training programme that benefitted from the new philosophical thrust of the school. Outside of choral and instrumental training, the music education curriculum included traditional Jamaican conga drumming, recorder, Jamaican traditional folk music and popular music, inclusive of reggae (O'Gorman, 1984). By the mid-1980s, the graduates from the teacher education programmes (diploma and certificate) at JSM influenced an increased acceptance of popular music in the education system (O'Gorman, 1984). Even though the school has evolved and become a part of a larger entity called Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, the teacher training tradition has continued with the School of Music offering an undergraduate degree programme in music education. Fortunately, there are now a few other colleges offering specialist music teacher training and

education albeit on a much smaller scale (Mowatt, 2013; Tillmutt, 2013).

As an outgrowth of the Jamaican music education tradition, the use of popular music and informal music practices to deliver music concepts was strengthened. The development of the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC), formerly the Festival Arts Competition, encouraged the performance of Jamaican traditional folk and popular music. They also provided regular workshops and training for music teachers (Mundle, 2008; Tucker, 2003). However, from the 1960s to the 1980s, there was no national curriculum for music in the secondary schools. During their training, pre-service specialist music teachers were taught to develop their own curriculum as there was no curriculum to teach on entering the classroom (Mowatt, 2013; Tillmutt, 2013).

In making a case for education in a postcolonial society, Nettleford (2006) stated that culture-in-education is the foundation of the curriculum and should influence how we teach. This approach was evident in the development of the first national secondary curriculum known as the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE). Developed in the 1990s by the Ministry of Education in Jamaica, the objectives outlined in the ROSE curriculum stated that it aimed to "foster cultural inclusiveness and to remove the hierarchies integral to colonialism" (Tucker, 2003, p. 158). For the first time in Jamaica's educational history, music was officially included in the national curriculum. Both popular music and traditional Jamaican folk were included to represent the cultural dynamics of the nation (Mowatt, 2013; Mundle, 2008; Tillmutt, 2013). The latest national curriculum, the National Standards Curriculum (NSC), continues to use popular and Jamaican folk music along with a wide range of music genres in the general music

classroom. Additionally, the syllabus for the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) suggested the use of diverse genres that includes popular and contemporary music as a standard part of its music examination repertoire and study.

The integration of Jamaican culture, guided by government policy and exhibited in the various curricula, is integral to the education system as a whole and specifically, music education. Like many postcolonial societies, Jamaica is concerned with forming its own cultural identity and one that is profoundly linked to music and arts in general. Nettleford (2009) aptly stated it this way:

> The decolonization of the spirit, which forms part of the ongoing quest for dignity, self-
> esteem and sense of place and purpose for most who inhabit the post-colonial world, not infrequently finds answers in the exercise of the creative imagination… guaranteeing to individuals a form of self-empowerment and to entire societies recognition and status in the world at large. (p. 35)

Therefore, the inclusion of Jamaican cultural identity in education is considered an integral part of developing the individual and the collective.

Although curriculum is often influenced by culture and cultural experiences, questions are frequently asked as to whose culture is represented in the classroom (Gay, 2018; Lind & McKoy, 2016). Among students and teachers, there is sometimes a perception that a student's culture is not always represented in the classroom. In the Jamaican context, music educators have been advocating the use of Jamaican popular music and traditional folk music to enhance relevance and student learning in the music

classroom (Minott, 2008; Tucker, 2003). However, the question still arises as to what music, popular or otherwise, is considered relevant to current students in secondary music classrooms and how can music teachers respond to these students' educational needs.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Historical Foundations

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is an outgrowth of concepts and ideas emanating from multicultural education (Bond, 2017). CRT was meant to address biases that stemmed from racial and ethnic inequalities that affected student learning opportunities and outcomes. Gay (2018) stated that the underlying intention of culturally responsive pedagogy is "to empower ethnically diverse students through academic success, cultural affiliations, and personal efficacy" (p. 142). Gay further stated that CRT is about "teaching … which centers classroom instruction in multiethnic cultural frames of reference" (p. xxvii). Despite Gay's emphasis on one element of an individuals' identity, other scholars have centred CRT as a response to "white dominance in all its forms" including racism and colonialism, prejudicial systems that affected racialised people (Pirbhai-Illich et al., 2017, p. 4). Nevertheless, CRT developed out of a need for teachers to provide "equitable educational experiences" for all students in the classroom (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Traditionally, teachers in the United States have engaged students based on a standardised curriculum from a dominant culture, which in some instances does not culturally represent the students being addressed. Gay (2018) posited that the practice of culturally responsive teaching uses cultural knowledge to formulate pedagogical

approaches that make the classroom experience consistent with students' diverse cultural backgrounds and performance styles. Therefore, teachers who use CRT recognise the cultural heritage of diverse groups and places a high value on the nature of the curriculum taught and the influence of cultural legacies on students' attitudes, temperament, and learning styles (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

To better understand CRT, a consideration of its forerunner, culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), and CRP's successor, culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP), is critical to its contextualisation. Culturally relevant education stemmed from the work of advocates of multicultural education who sought to ask some basic questions of teachers who teach students from minoritized populations. The questions include (1) What do teachers need to know? (2) What do they already know? (3) What does research suggest about pedagogical approaches to be employed? (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Positively using minoritized students' cultural difference to develop pedagogical approaches that address their needs is a concept that is common to advocates of culturally relevant education (Bond, 2017). This concept that infuses culture and education in student teaching and learning was later adapted and expanded by two main proponents of culturally relevant education, Gloria Ladson-Billings and Geneva Gay.

As a response to addressing minoritized students, their culture, and culture's role in education, Ladson-Billings (1995) developed a theory called culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). Cultural relevance speaks to teaching that "uses student culture in order to maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 19). Proponents of CRP also sought to develop pedagogical approaches

that address curriculum deficiencies that link students' home and school cultures while aiming to "improve the academic performance of students who are culturally, ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse" (p. 17). Therefore, CRP, as a student-centred approach, aims to accomplish three main goals: guide students to achieve academic success, demonstrate cultural competence, and understand and critique the social order they routinely experience (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The fundamentals of culturally relevant pedagogy are demonstrated in teachers who have positive conceptions of self and a high regard for others, demonstrate positive social relations that promote community, and display conceptions of knowledge that is continuously re-created, recycled, and shared (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009). These characteristics, demonstrated in the teacher's approach to teaching and learning, embody what the teachers do at both an individual level and at the school community level. In her work investigating successful teachers of African American children, Ladson-Billings (2009) concluded that teachers who use culturally relevant pedagogy demonstrate the following: (1) When students are treated as competent, they are likely to demonstrate competence; (2) When teachers provide instructional "scaffolding," students can move from what they know to what they need to know; (3) The focus of the classroom must be instructional; (4) Real education is about extending students' thinking and abilities; (5) Effective teaching involves in-depth knowledge of both the students and the subject matter (pp. 134–136).

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is built on Ladson-Billings's theory of culturally relevant pedagogy and is fundamentally a different approach. Gay (2018)

argued that CRT is informed by three interacting pillars: theory, research, and practice. CRT focuses on how teachers, not only the pedagogy, create opportunities for students to empower themselves therefore leading to academic success. CRT acknowledges the importance of culture in education and uses pedagogical approaches and practices that value teacher's responsiveness to cultural diversity in the classroom. Gay defined CRT in the following way:

> …using cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches *to and through* the strengths of these students. Culturally responsive teaching is the behavioral expressions of knowledge, beliefs, and values that recognise the importance of racial and cultural diversity in learning. (pp. 36–37)

Gay further stated that there are several qualitative characteristics that frequently manifest when CRT is effective at promoting learning in the classroom. Teachers who practice CRT demonstrate qualitative attributes that are validating, comprehensive and inclusive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, emancipatory, humanistic, and normative and ethical.

Gay (2018) stated that culturally responsive teaching is based on a pedagogy that provides opportunities to empower students through "academic success, cultural affiliation, and personal efficacy" (p. 142). To achieve success using this pedagogical approach, the expectation is that culturally relevant curriculum content should be meaningful for the intended students and presented by the teacher in a way that improves

student understanding while guiding them to academic success (Gay, 2018). Gay posited that in order to support effective culturally responsive pedagogical practices, relevant curriculum content from inside and outside of the boundaries of the school, in addition to quality and culturally appropriate textbooks, are important to education as a whole.

A similar concept is promoted in music education where the use of culturally responsive pedagogies in the classroom draw on music from students' home and school cultures. Popular culture, that involves popular music and associated with informal learning processes, is important to adolescent students in music classes (Lind & McKoy, 2016). Therefore, culturally responsive teaching uses a variety of pedagogical approaches and is fixed on the following pillars of practice: "teacher attitudes and expectations, cultural communication in the classroom, culturally diverse content in the curriculum, and culturally congruent instructional strategies" (Gay, 2018, p. 53).

Critiques of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) and culturally responsive teaching (CRT) exist in the literature. Researchers have questioned aspects of their assertions hence it is necessary to address them in this way. The most prominent critiques have been by Paris (2012) and Paris and Alim (2014). Paris (2012) contended that the terms "relevant" and "responsive" do not aptly serve the intention described in culturally relevant pedagogy because they do not "maintain heritage ways" or "value cultural and linguistic sharing" intended to support multiculturalism in education (p. 95). Paris posited that an improved theoretical framework, culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP), is the critique and alternative to both CRP and CRT. Paris & Alim (2014) contended that the practice of CSP gives teachers an opportunity to access their students "dominant cultural

competence" and address what it means to be from a particular race or ethnic group. They also asserted that the philosophical grounding of both heritage practices and community practices is focused on culture as "dynamic, shifting, and encompassing both past-oriented heritage dimensions and present-oriented community dimensions" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 90).

Ladson-Billings (2014) later supported the concepts of culturally sustaining pedagogy while critiquing practitioners of CRP. Ladson-Billings surmised that, due to evolving scholarship, CRP as a concept needed to shift so that marginalized students become "subjects in the instructional process, not mere objects" (p. 76). Dubbed the "remix" of CRP, Ladson-Billings stated that practitioners of CSP see youth culture as an opportunity to change the way we "think, learn, perceive, and perform in the world" (p. 78). Ladson-Billings further argued that CSP does not focus on a single racial or ethnic group only, but considers emerging global identities in the arts, and particularly, identity in classrooms that are defined by "hybridity, fluidity, and complexity" (p. 82). CSP addresses previously disadvantaged students and leads mainstream students to critical analysis of their privilege. Therefore, Ladson-Billings, similar to Paris and Alim (2014), is suggesting that CSP is an upgrade of CRP and CRT.

An awareness of literature that critiques culturally relevant education will hopefully bring more rigour to my research. Additionally, this study might help to mitigate some of the issues that scholars suggested have arisen from a particular way of thinking and doing. Though I acknowledge these critiques, I have determined that CRT is an appropriate theoretical framework to guide my investigation in this phenomenon as it

is a lens that contextualises teachers' responses to students' culture in education and education as cultural transmission. Culturally responsive teaching as a theory will help me to critically focus on how teachers employ different approaches to all facets of the educational process, including "curriculum, instruction, and assessment, embedded in multicultural contexts" (Gay, 2018, p. 53). Hence, this approach will give me a better platform on which to investigate teachers' roles and responsibilities in the music classroom.

Additionally, I view CRT in the secondary music classroom as a vehicle to help students empower themselves to develop cultural competence that ultimately leads to high achievement (Gay, 2018). Culturally responsive teaching is based on constructivist theories that is student focused, and learning is reliant on social interactions. Teachers who are culturally responsive involve culture in all areas of teaching and learning leading to student learning becoming more meaningful, effective, and relevant (Abril, 2013). Therefore, CRT is an appropriate lens by which I can investigate teacher responsiveness, one that is centred on student learning in and beyond the secondary music classroom.

Teachers' Roles

Embedded in the principles and tenets of culturally responsive teaching are important roles and responsibilities of teachers (Gay, 2018). Gentemann and Whitehead (1983) view teachers' roles and responsibilities as that of cultural brokers arguing that they are the link between the mainstream culture and the various subcultures within a society. However, Diamond and Moore (1995) suggested that the roles and responsibilities of teachers should be that of "cultural organizers," "cultural mediators,"

and “orchestrators of social contexts for learning” (p. 35).

When operating as cultural organizers, teachers should create a classroom atmosphere that is sensitive to the daily culture of the students and one that acknowledges the diverse students in a classroom in order to promote student learning (Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2018). In addition to understanding the specific classroom culture in which they operate, teachers should also aim to promote diverse expressions to support learning and behaviour while incorporating students voices and experiences into the classroom (Gay, 2018). This approach by teachers will help students to develop confidence and social responsibility (Diamond & Moore, 1995).

Teachers who operate as cultural mediators create “opportunities for critical dialogue and expression among students” (Diamond & Moore, 1995, p. 36). Within the classroom, teachers help students to clarify their ethnic and cultural identities and critically analyse their values and assumptions while embracing diversity in the broader community. Without stifling the culture of others, teachers as cultural mediators create communities with diverse learners who affirm each other leading to “liberation and empowerment,” not “powerlessness and oppression” (Diamond & Moore, 1995, p. 36). Within these communities of diverse learners, teachers provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively leading to mutual success (Gay, 2018).

According to Diamond and Moore (1995), teachers who orchestrate social contexts for learning see the direct relationship between students’ cultural background and their approach to learning. In that context, student learning is enhanced as they operate in “socio-culturally compatible contexts” (p. 36). In this scenario, teachers

encourage experimentation to build learning and collaboration to promote social interaction. To expand on the understanding of this concept, Gay (2018) stated that students are able to transform their "cultural competencies" to valuable school learning assets (p. 52). Therefore, teachers who are orchestrators of social contexts for learning help students to successfully translate their cultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes into valuable individual approaches that enhances their learning (Gay, 2018).

As a way of navigating the traditional classroom where the dominant culture is often promoted, Diamond and Moore (1995) spoke of the positive attributes associated with a culturally sensitive classroom. It is in this context that the roles and responsibilities of teachers are situated and in turn, support the tenets of culturally responsive teaching. Diamond and Moore stated that teachers' roles become more challenging than the norm when they operate as cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning, as they are responsible for creating a classroom culture in which students co-participate in the process of teaching and learning. In support of this concept, Gay (2018) posited that with these roles and responsibilities, teachers demonstrate a sense of faith in the student's intellectual capabilities, building bridges between the student's culture and the curriculum, while demonstrating an understanding of the multicultural contexts in which they operate.

Teachers' Roles in Practice

When practicing culturally responsive teaching in diverse settings, researchers have explored how the effects of teachers' beliefs and their self-efficacy influence the way in which they engage and motivate students toward learning (Little, 2020; Shealey,

2007; Siwatu, 2011; Stoilescu & Carapanait, 2011). Researchers have also examined how teachers operate as cultural brokers in educational settings (Schonleber & Kelling, 2018), as cultural mediators in specific populations (Kanu, 2002), and to prepare teachers for cultural responsiveness in the classroom (Gere et al., 2019). Diamond and Moore's (1995) framework has been used to analyse how teachers engage students in specific programmes designed to achieve cultural responsiveness within the classroom (Stoilescu & Carapanait, 2011).

Researchers have also explored the effect of teachers' beliefs on how they teach when practicing culturally responsive teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. A study conducted by Little (2020) suggested that teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs are successful with maintaining cultural awareness and developing student relationships in the classroom. Conversely, teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs, among other things, have difficulty integrating students' cultural backgrounds into the diverse classroom setting. Shealey (2007) explored teachers' beliefs and the impact of their beliefs on how they teach literacy to ethnically diverse students. The findings from this study suggested that biased and negative beliefs of preservice educators towards diverse learners can have a damaging effect on the students they engage. Similar research in CRT has been conducted in music education and a review of these studies is explored below.

Culturally Responsive Teaching in Practice in Music Education

In applying the principles of culturally responsive teaching in the music classroom, Lind and McKoy (2016) view CRT as a pedagogy that is "responsive to how

different culturally specific knowledge bases impact learning" (p. x). Lind and McKoy also stated that CRT, as a pedagogy "recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning" (p. x). In other words, critical to CRT is an understanding of how culture informs teacher development, how culture influences learners' experiences in the music classroom, and the vibrant dynamics between culture and the teaching and learning experience. It is only at this point of understanding that CRT can be successfully applied in the classroom, influence the school culture, and connect with the formal and informal learning that takes place within the culture (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Various approaches to CRT in music education can be seen through a body of studies in choral, band, orchestra, and general music classrooms (e.g., Abril, 2006, 2009; Boon, 2014; Gardner, 2015; Nethsinghe, 2012; Shaw, 2015, 2016). Researchers have explored the role of teacher training programmes in guiding students to become culturally responsive music teachers (Cain, 2015; Emmanuel, 2005) and investigated the perceptions of music teacher educators engaged with culturally responsive education (Bond & Russell, 2019). Beyond exploring the nature of music education classroom setting and training of pre-service music teachers, researchers have also investigated CRT from the perspective of learning outcomes in culturally diverse settings (Abril, 2006, 2009; Barton, 2018; Ho & Law, 2006; Ho, 2014; MacLeod & McKoy, 2012; Nethsinghe, 2012; Santos-Stanbery, 2017; Shaw, 2015) and adolescent music preferences including popular music (Campbell et al., 2007; Law & Ho, 2015; Mantie, 2013; Robinson, 2012; Vasil, 2015, 2019). Individual teachers' application of CRT, especially when using their

cultural knowledge within specific cultural contexts, has aided student success in diverse music classrooms and has allowed music teachers to delve more into culturally situated musical expression (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

The practice of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) requires a change in both a teacher's pedagogical approach and curricular content in order to address the disparity between music inside and outside of school. Shaw (2015) conducted a collective case study observing successful choral music teachers and posited that the use of CRT with a focus on the whole child, not their musical development only, should be the emphasis of the teaching and learning experience. Shaw concluded that successful urban choral teachers, when enacting CRT, use knowledge of learners, knowledge of context, and personal practical knowledge to successfully negotiate urban contexts. Therefore, CRT, which is neither prescriptive nor static, can and should foster the development of a curriculum and teaching strategies that respond to students' strengths, interests, needs, and context (Shaw, 2015).

An awareness of students' cultural identities can effect change in teachers' curriculum content and repertoire choice when practicing culturally responsive teaching. Situated in a district with a significant Spanish speaking and Hispanic culture, Abril (2009) conducted a case study in a suburban middle school in the United States investigating music teachers' responses to students' cultural background in an instrumental programme. Based on the results from the study, Abril concluded that for a teacher to be effective and successful, one cannot only acknowledge and understand diverse cultures, but must deliberately act on this knowledge. In the same vein, Shaw

(2016) explored adolescents' perception of culturally responsive pedagogy in an after-school choir programme within a community heavily populated by Hispanic immigrants. Teachers were able to use students' cultural identity to broaden their understanding of appropriate vocal styles used in contrasting performance traditions including their own. Therefore, culturally responsive teaching requires a change in course offerings, pedagogy, interactions with students and music, all of which can lead to higher quality educational experiences in students' lives.

The link between students' home and school cultures is important to student engagement and student responsiveness when practicing culturally responsive teaching in the music classroom. Boon (2014) investigated culturally responsive teaching among African American students in a string programme and the relationship between students' perceptions of the string programme and its connection to their sociocultural background. Students sought to link their classroom violin experience with their out-of-school experiences by trying to learn songs they know and create beats, an influence from their popular culture, using their violins. As stated earlier, teachers who practice CRT create opportunities for students to link their familiar music experiences in their home culture with their string experience in the school culture (Gay, 2018; Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Students' cultural background and their music preferences are a topic of interest to music researchers that is also important to this study. MacLeod and McKoy (2012) conducted a study in a culturally diverse setting that explored relationships between students' cultural backgrounds and their music preferences. Twenty-seven string students were enrolled in an elective orchestra class and the researchers investigated the preferred

performing and learning modes of the students. The results of the study suggest that students preferred to perform music from other cultures that were not necessarily related to their own. Students chose their method of learning, whether learning by ear or through notation, based on what made them feel more successful.

Scholars have posited that teacher education programmes have an important role to play in preparing culturally responsive teachers (Cain, 2015; Emmanuel, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). How music teachers are prepared for culturally responsive teaching is directly influenced by their diverse learning experiences. Abril and Robinson (2019) conducted a study that compared situated and simulated learning approaches with the intention of learning how to develop culturally responsive music teachers. The results from the study suggest that both learning experiences were beneficial to the students as, through exposure, they were able to dispel misconceptions of people with different sociocultural backgrounds other than their own. The teachers had an opportunity to reflect on their "experiences, knowledge base and value system," develop empathy for others, and dispel the notion of a broad-brushed categorisation of students from the same ethnic or cultural background (p. 450). As a result, reflections from the teachers point to a commitment to social justice in the classroom and a newfound engagement that propels them to becoming more culturally responsive teachers.

Popular Music as Culturally Responsive Teaching

Scholars have frequently aligned culturally responsive teaching in music education with popular music culture which encompasses youth culture, youth realities, specific interests, and popular music related to students' lives (Gay, 2018; Herbert et al.,

2017; Hess, 2019; Lind & McKoy, 2016). Other researchers have argued that popular music education, which is intrinsically linked with informal learning practices, has important pedagogical value including strong oral/aural competencies and group learning approaches among other qualities, and is critical to the development of current and future secondary school music curriculum (Green, 2016a, 2016b; Vasil, 2019).

In some schools, there is tension between the students' preferred music out of school versus the educational policy of introducing students to diverse musical styles in school. Ho and Law (2006) examined the relationship between students' social and cultural context and students' music experiences in Shanghai, China. In this context, students viewed popular music as important inside and outside of school, yet the school music programme did not speak to their music preferences. Ho and Law concluded that music teachers and school music programmes are responsible for providing a strong foundation for music education that encourages students to connect music with their emotional lives and culture. This approach recognises that teachers are facilitators of learning and are not the only source of their students' musical knowledge. Similarly, in another study with secondary school students in Beijing, China, Ho (2014) stated that students and teachers believe a new music curriculum should include popular music and music from other cultures other than the Chinese culture. Ho concluded that students are more engaged with popular music that is meaningful to them when they are in the music classroom. Despite the students' preferences, the researcher recognised that the teacher's knowledgebase, when expanded, can guide the curriculum to a more student-centred approach with the potential to address social inequities and cultural barriers, both

important aspects of CRT.

On investigating the significance of music to adolescents in and out of school, Campbell et al. (2007) concluded that music is a meaningful part of their identity. The researchers found that adolescent students believed that music fulfilled their emotional and social needs and helped them to feel more fulfilled as individuals. Although music was seen by the students as providing academic knowledge and performance skills, the curriculum was lacking popular music styles that could be supervised by the current teachers. In this case, incorporating popular music into the curriculum may mitigate the teachers' perception of despondency observed among students in the music classroom.

Vasil (2019) examined the practices and perspectives of four teachers who integrated informal music learning practices and popular music to enact change in their secondary school music curriculum. Like the previous studies discussed, the teachers were responding to the lack of the students' engagement in music classes and their disconnect with the curriculum and pedagogical approach of the teachers. The curriculum and pedagogical changes enacted were initiated by the teachers themselves and not as a consequence of their pre-service training or education. The approach was due to a focus on the students' needs and the relevance of the music curriculum and pedagogy in response to those needs. The teachers recognised that to be successful in the secondary classroom, adolescent students need autonomy and individualised learning experiences promoted through student-directed projects. Success was achieved through a balance between formal and informal learning practices exemplified by a change in the curriculum and a focus on student-centred learning.

Adolescents who participate in creating and performing popular music often use informal learning practices where the process is self-directed and holistic (Abramo, 2011; Vasil, 2019). Music educators seek to locate and entrench popular music and informal learning practices in the music classroom so that students can share their values, perspectives, and differences (Allsup & Olson, 2012). Additionally, teachers learn from their experiences and use it to inform their practice (Green, 2016b; Robinson, 2012). This critical observation is important to the diverse learners the teachers will encounter in the classroom. It is important that teachers who seek to use informal music practices must learn pedagogical strategies to meaningfully and effectively engage students in culturally responsive ways. The development of teaching strategies is distinctively individualistic and as personal as our learning histories (Robinson, 2012). Importantly, popular music which includes informal music learning practices, incorporated into the music classroom in a purposeful way, can provide opportunities for students to create, perform and critique music in meaningful ways (Allsup & Olson, 2012; Green, 2016b).

Understanding the discourse on popular music in the United States versus an international approach to music education is important to this study. Mantie (2013) stated that the discourse on popular music among U.S. music educators is in the context of performance ensembles and repertoire choices. On the contrary, in the international setting, there seems to be more of an interest in students' music experiences, pedagogy, and teaching efficacy. In the international setting, including Jamaica, where popular music is the norm, student-teacher discussions are centred on classroom musicianship versus the United States where time is spent on rationalising and legitimising the use of

popular music in schools. However, it should be noted that further inquiry is needed to determine the efficacy and success of popular music as pedagogy in the Jamaican music classroom.

Concluding Thoughts

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is the "behavioral expressions of knowledge, beliefs, and values that recognize the importance of racial and cultural diversity in learning" and at the same time teaches "to and through the strengths" of these ethnically diverse students (Gay, 2018, pp. 36–37). Therefore, teachers who practice culturally responsive teaching and learning in music education should be cognisant of the interaction between education and culture, be aware of education as cultural transmission, and aim to understand students' diverse backgrounds (Lind & McKoy, 2016). Researchers who have investigated CRT have focused their investigation on how teachers adapt the curriculum to diverse cultural settings, make pedagogical decisions in different settings involving minoritized students, prepare preservice teachers to engage students using culturally responsive pedagogies, and are made aware of students' music preferences including those influenced by popular culture. Other researchers examined how popular music and informal learning practices influence music learning and pedagogical development.

In Jamaican secondary music classrooms, very little is known about teachers' roles and responsibilities when they operate as cultural organisers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning while practicing CRT. An investigation of these roles and responsibilities is needed and will aid an understanding of how CRT

operates in the context of a postcolonial society that has strong African retentions, majority population of African descent, rich popular music heritage, and students with various music preferences and cultures, all operating in the society. This will ideally lead toward a better understanding of how music teachers use culture-in-education to engage students in the Jamaican music classroom.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided a rationale for the use of Geneva Gay's theoretical framework of culturally responsive teaching (CRT), reviewed literature related to CRT, and presented an overview of music education in Jamaica. In Chapter 3, I describe my use of multiple case study methodology to examine how three music teachers practice culturally responsive teaching in three Jamaican secondary schools. In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I describe the data collected and present a summary of the findings. In Chapter 7, I present a cross-case analysis of the emergent themes. In Chapter 8, I discuss the implications for music education and propose ideas for future research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine how music teachers practice culturally responsive teaching by functioning as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* in multiple Jamaican secondary school contexts. Geneva Gay's (2018) theoretical framework of culturally responsive teaching was utilised as the lens through which to better understand music teachers practices in the Jamaican classroom. To frame this study, the following research questions guided the investigation:

1. In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning is related to their preferred music?
2. In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning is related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture?

The study is qualitative, based on interpretivism, and uses multiple case study as the methodology (Stake, 1995).

Qualitative Research

The use of qualitative research was appropriate for this study as it allowed me to evaluate teachers' actions and narratives, and their interconnectedness (Glesne, 2016). Qualitative inquiry also presents an opportunity to better understand how music teachers

operate in their classroom settings. This approach includes the observation and interpretation of the teacher's actions and interactions within their contexts and the wider culture, interviews with the teachers, and examining documents including lesson plans (Creswell, 2014; Miles, et al., 2014). Therefore, investigating culturally responsive teaching using a strong qualitative study design is an approach that is holistic, empirical, interpretive, and empathic (Stake, 1995).

Interpretivism is an important aspect of qualitative research. An interpretivist approach seeks to "look for culturally derived…interpretations of the social life-world" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). Interpretivism assumes that the real world we see is socially constructed, and these constructs are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, in an interpretivist design, it is necessary to contextualise the music classroom situations being studied in order to understand and accurately interpret them. Contextualisation of the situation will lead to inductive analysis of the observation sessions during the course of the research. Within qualitative interpretivist studies, the researcher, as observer, is a critical part of understanding and interpreting the situation and extending this understanding to the phenomenon being studied, in this case, culturally responsive teaching in the Jamaican secondary music classroom (Glesne, 2016). As a qualitative researcher using the case study tradition, I utilised an interpretivist approach to make assertions based on my observations and data, and used the information gathered to make informed conclusions (Stake, 1995). Operating in an interpretive role, I used "thick description," "experiential understanding," and "multiple realities" as the basis for understanding and reporting on the phenomenon of culturally responsive

teaching in select Jamaican music classrooms (Stake, 1995, p. 43).

Multiple Case Study

To respond to my research questions, I used an instrumental multiple case study design (Stake, 1995). Stake does not view a case study as a methodology with specific and prescribed procedures, but as an integrated, "bounded system" that is a "complex, functioning thing" (p. 2). Stake (2006) considers a multiple case study approach to be one of "instrumental" interest when the cases are carefully selected to maximise what we learn about the phenomenon of interest, not just the case being studied. Stake further stated that a qualitative multiple case study design is for particularization, not generalization, and can be used to influence the development or expansion of a theory. Barrett (2014) emphasises that critical to a case study is "selecting and binding the case (the *subject*), articulating its conceptual or analytical frameworks (the *object*), employing appropriate and multiple strategies for data generation, addressing clear purposes, and providing a detailed report of the case that is particularistic and complex" (p. 118). Therefore, the methodology should be flexible and open-ended to suit the particular situation while achieving the purpose of the study.

Qualitative case studies were established to "study the experience of real cases operating in real situations" (Stake, 2006, p. 3). Case studies also allow a researcher to use an exploratory approach to lead an inquiry into "underdeveloped or unexamined" areas of research (Barrett, 2014, p. 130). Researchers use multiple case studies to show how a phenomenon operates in multiple contexts by emphasising the experience of the people within each case (Stake, 2006, p. 27). Miles, et al. (2014) suggest that multiple

cases offer an opportunity for a "deeper understanding of the processes and outcomes of cases, the chance to test (not just develop) hypotheses, and a good picture of locally grounded causation" (p. 25). Additionally, multiple-case sampling gives confidence that a theory is transferable, or not, across cases (Miles, et al., 2014).

Understanding how music teachers operate as culturally responsive educators in multiple Jamaican secondary classrooms is an underdeveloped area, and this inquiry will expand on the theory by focusing on CRT in a Jamaican urban setting with culturally diverse students operating in a postcolonial society. My main role as a researcher is to interpret the situations to be observed, making the cases clear and understandable when reporting, while using ordinary language and narratives to describe the cases studied (Stake, 1995). Since the purpose of the study was to understand "how" and "why" teachers use the phenomenon of culturally responsive teaching to perform their roles in the music classroom settings, an instrumental multiple case study design was best suited for this research (Stake, 1995). Therefore, this study was undertaken in three separate music classrooms at three different secondary schools as contextually situated analysis is important to the understanding of CRT and not just the single case (Stake, 2006, p. 27).

Selection of Cases and Sites

The cases studied were purposefully selected (Stake, 2006) as the teachers were recommended by experts in the field based upon their reputation and inclusion of cultural understanding in their teaching, the contrasting settings and programmes within each school (cross case analysis), and opportunities to learn about CRT in multiple contexts (Miles, et al., 2014; Stake, 2006). Therefore, the selection of these cases was deliberate

and allowed me to observe how CRT operates in different settings (Stake, 2006). The three schools selected have general music classes that are offered to all students within a grade stream. In the lower school, Grades 7 to 9, students did not opt to take music as the subject was a requirement within the secondary school curriculum in Jamaica. Therefore, the teacher was obligated to teach all students in the various classes.

Jamaica has a tradition of single-sex and co-educational secondary schools. Due to their availability and appropriateness for investigating CRT in the Jamaican music classroom, I decided to conduct this study in established general music programmes taught in both single-sex and co-educational schools. This approach allowed me to have three contrasting sites for this investigation. To fit the guidelines established by the researcher, the teachers and sites were purposefully selected based on the following criteria:

1. A trained music teacher with a diploma or degree in music education
2. A minimum of three years teaching experience
3. One public co-educational secondary school
4. One public single-sex secondary school for boys
5. One public single-sex secondary school for girls
6. Have an established general music programme within the school
7. At least one male teacher
8. At least one female teacher
9. Located in parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew

Due to these criteria, the number of public single-sex and co-educational secondary

schools with established general music programmes that qualified for this research was limited to under twenty schools.

I contacted three public secondary schools in the city of Kingston, a major urban centre. At first, I made phone calls to the music teachers and explained the purpose of my study and the need for multiple observation and interview sessions with them. I followed up the conversations by sending emails to each teacher confirming our discussion (see Appendix A). To conduct the observation, I later pursued and received written permission from the principal of each school (see Appendix B).

The three schools have general music classes that are offered to students in Grades 7, 8, or 9. For all three sites, I observed the teacher and students from the same class on three different occasions. The classes were offered once weekly and the observations at each school were conducted over a period of 3 to 5 weeks. During the observation process, I collected artifacts, including lesson plans and PowerPoint documents, that are instrumental to the contextual understanding of the music programme at each school.

Researcher Perspective/Positionality

I have been a practising performer (classical pianist, choral conductor, church musician) and music educator for over two decades. I have had a keen interest in Jamaican music including its traditional folk music, classical music, and popular music, mainly reggae and early dancehall. My broad-based musical education had a strong western classical music leaning, studies in Jamaican traditional folk music, choral conducting, and arranging/composition (including traditional and Caribbean choral

music), and church music (contemporary, gospel, and classical). With this background, I see music as a journey through different periods and cultures and I am very open to exploring not only my Jamaican and Caribbean musical interests, but also music beyond my regional borders.

I grew up in the relatively early years of post-independent Jamaica where there was an active promotion of Jamaican culture and black empowerment. My studies at the Jamaica School of Music had a profound influence on my musical perspective as folk, popular, jazz, and western classical music were a constant in my education and performances. I taught high school for one year and have over 25 years of college experience observing and assessing teaching practicum, teaching piano pedagogy, teaching and assessing CSEC music, among other music teaching related activities. I am also responsible for the design and implementation of the original performance and music education degree curricula at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, the curriculum used to train pre-service music educators.

I have developed strong views on teaching and the use of Jamaican and other music cultures to enhance students' musical education. Due to my frequent interaction with college music students and musicians in this relatively small country, two of the participants in this research are familiar to me as they are graduates of my college. I am also familiar with the music education landscape, many of the music teachers, and schools that are known for their music programmes. It is due to these experiences and my current professional position that I view myself as a researcher who has an insider perspective (Holmes, 2020). Throughout this research, I tried to balance my researcher

perspective with that of my personal bias by constantly reflecting on how I approached collecting, interpreting, and presenting the data.

Researcher Role

Stake (1995) stated that case study researchers consciously or unconsciously make constant decisions regarding how they operate in different researcher roles including that of teacher, advocate, evaluator, biographer, and interpreter. During the research process, I constantly checked myself by having “internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation” to limit the impact that my “biases, beliefs, and personal experiences” may have on the research process (Berger, 2015, p. 220). I am influenced by the constructivist belief that “knowledge is constructed rather than discovered” and this allowed me to use narratives and thick descriptions to interpret the situations and provide context, and to formulate the discussions and conclusions (Stake, 1995, p. 99).

In this study, my role as a researcher was that of an observer, interviewer, and interpreter. As a case study researcher, I aimed to clarify descriptions and sophisticated interpretations that are particular to these cases and may lead to naturalistic generalisations by the reader (Stake, 1995). I used multiple cases to gather data, made detailed notes on my observation and reactions, and analysed the data during the collection process, while using narrative and clear language to present the analysis (Carter & Little, 2007; Stake, 1995). A key part of my role as a researcher was to triangulate the various data sources and use the observations and interviews to optimise the level of accuracy (Carter & Little, 2007). To mitigate the potential for undue bias, I conducted three interviews with each teacher, kept clear and detailed notes during the

observation and interview process, and reported in the first person (Berger, 2015).

Data Collection

To gather the data in each case, I used “observation, interview, coding, data management, and interpretation” (Stake, 2006, p. 29). It is critical to gather data from multiple data sources as what is observed by one researcher might be viewed differently by other observers. Hence the importance of multiple observations and interviews as a part of the data collection activities (Stake, 1995). The teachers in the studies are of primary interest in each case but observing student responses to the teacher and situations in the music classroom is also important for data gathering, analysis, and my interpretation of the data. The observation and interview sessions took place over a period of 12 weeks, January to March 2021, with a total of three weeks spent at each site.

Interviews

Interviews offer useful ways of gathering rich data and can provide tangible and practical data that is otherwise difficult to capture (Forsey, 2012). Stake (1995) posited that others observe situations that we cannot see, and many times interpret situations differently from us; therefore, interviews are used to capture the “multiple realities” (p. 64) seen by different people. Seidman (2006) asserted that in order for a researcher “to understand the meaning people involved in education make of their experience, then interviewing provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient, avenue of inquiry” (p. 11). Therefore, to investigate this phenomenon, I determined that one-on-one interviews were appropriate to study each teacher’s approach to culturally responsive teaching when operating at their individual sites.

Seidman (2006) stated that interviews require researchers to establish access to sites and contact potential participants, some of whom I might not know. Therefore, in preparation for the interviews, I contacted the potential music teachers by speaking with them via phone calls, sending emails, and text messages, WhatsApp being the most effective means for initial communication. After confirming the participants, I contacted the teachers' school administrations via email and asked the music teachers to make verbal contact with the administrators, so that I was granted permission to conduct the research in the classes. Thereafter, one-on-one interviews were scheduled with each teacher over a three-week period. I also prepared consent forms (See Appendix C) and allowed time for the teachers to read it before signing it. I gave them a copy of the signed form. These consent forms included permission from the teacher to observe and audio record the observation sessions and interviews. I made it clear that I was not a participant-observer, so the class will not be disrupted with my intervention. The letter outlined the type of research being conducted, opportunities for the teacher to review the manuscript draft and transcription of the interview, and a description of my intent to make the school and teacher anonymous by using pseudonyms (See Appendix C) (Stake, 1995).

To conduct the interviews, I used a three-interview series approach recommended by Seidman (2006) that allowed me to understand the teacher's experience and place it in context. Seidman suggested that the model interview series is done in the following way:

> The first interview establishes the context of the participants' experience. The second allows participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the

> context in which it occurs. And the third encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them. (p. 17)

Therefore, I conducted three interviews with each music teacher from each of the three schools (Stake, 1995). The three interviews took place in the following order: one before the day the observation period began; one after observation 2; one within 1 day after the observations ended. The interviews were conducted via a video conferencing platform, Zoom, and lasted between forty to seventy minutes each. I kept each interview within the suggested three-interview series structure.

The interview questions were directly related to the research questions (See Appendix D) and were carefully aligned with the context and objective of each of the three-interview sessions (Glesne, 2016). It was important that the questions were specific to the topic, culturally responsive teaching, but open enough to avoid "yes and no answers" while in each situation obtaining "description of an episode, a linkage, [and] an explanation" (Stake, 1995, p. 65). To accomplish this objective, I used open-ended questions so that the teachers had leverage to reconstruct their experiences while telling their stories (Seidman, 2006). Semi-structured interviews allowed me to ask questions in the moment in direct response to the conversations and interactions with the teachers (Glesne, 2016). Additionally, questions were asked to obtain clarity and respond to queries I had that emerged during the observation. Video and audio recordings of the interviews gave me repeated opportunities to review and reflect on the discussions to better understand and analyse the information (Forsey, 2012). Importantly, I transcribed each interview within 3 days of the engagement by using the Zoom chat to produce

transcripts that had to be edited, removing superfluous terms and excessively repeated words, while extracting important themes and capturing the essence of the interview (Stake, 1995).

Observations

I observed each teacher in their online classrooms via Zoom and Google Classroom teaching the same class on three different occasions. Observations are important to the qualitative research process as it increases understanding of the case (Stake, 1995). Although interviews and observations are both used to investigate a phenomenon, interviews are "influenced by the interviewers" while an observed setting "usually is not controlled by the researcher" (p. 66). I created an observation timetable with the teachers by purposefully selecting a single or double-session class that would conveniently fit our schedules. Similar to the interviews, the observations took place over a five-week period in one instance, and over a three-week period for the other two sites. At Sterling High School for Boys, each session was 40 minutes; Bluecam High School, each session was 40 minutes; and Toledo High School for Girls, each session was 70 minutes. The Jamaican COVID-19 protocols did not allow me to be physically present in the music classroom while observing the music teachers. Therefore, I observed all classes remotely via Zoom and /or Google Classroom, the latter being the official platform recommended by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information and used by many public secondary schools. However, I did not have any interaction with the students in the virtual classroom sessions. During the observations, I made audio and video recordings of the sessions using my laptop computer and a mobile phone, along with copious field

notes, as these were my primary methods of documenting the experiences. I transcribed the observations within 24 hours of the experience while they were relatively current in my mind. Similarly, I transcribed the recordings of the interviews within 72 hours of their occurrence. This process was critical as it allowed me to carefully interpret the meaning of what was said, not only an accurate word-for-word transcription (Stake, 1995).

Artifacts

My main sources for gathering documents (artifacts) were through the teacher's lesson plans and PowerPoint documents (teaching aids). These plans and documents gave me insight as to the intention of the teacher when teaching the classes I observed and discussed with them. In one case, I was able to view artifacts including trophies/awards earned by the school for their achievement at the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission's national competition in the performing arts, and performance videos from a Jamaican choral competition called All Together Sing.

Coding

During the data collection process, I conducted my research at Sterling High School for Boys over a five-week period, and then concurrently with Bluecam High School and Toledo High School for Girls over a three-week period. This was due to the small window for observation due to the Covid-19 restricted class engagement. The order in which the schools were studied was determined by their availability and ease of access. The data were coded with the intention of grouping the information gathered according to recurring themes. The coding related to the research questions stated and also included themes that emerged during the data collection process (Stake, 2006).

In qualitative research, a code is a word or phrase generated by the researcher and is used to summarise the essence of language-based or visual data (Saldaña, 2016, p. 3). Miles et al. (2014) described codes as “labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (p. 62). Codes are used to formulate “prompts or triggers” from the data and assist with categorising and representing the information in a condensed form within units of analysis (Miles et al., 2014, p. 64). Saldaña (2016) also asserted that coding is based on a researcher’s interpretation and is used to distil or summarise data. Saldaña further supported the concept that coding for pattern helps to confirm what he terms the “five Rs,” that of “routines, rituals, rules, roles, and relationships” (p. 6). However, Saldaña contended that codes can change during the data collection process as coding is not always accurate the first time it is done. Hence, deep reflection and “meticulous attention to language and images” are important in capturing the meaning of the data (p. 11).

During my First Cycle coding (Miles et al., 2014), I coded patterns that appeared more than two times as these repeated habits demonstrated dependable recurring evidence gathered from the findings. I used descriptive coding, for instance “[Teacher] Modelling” and “Participative Interactive Methods,” that summarised a theme with a word or short phrase; In Vivo coding such as “Theory to Practical,” “Teaching Style,” “Critical Thinking,” that used short phrases from the teacher’s own language; Values coding reflecting the participant’s “values, attitudes, and beliefs;” including “Teaching approach influenced by personality,” “Application of Theory to Practical,” and “Students’ Examination Focus;” Holistic coding such as “Enabling students,” “Teacher

flexibility," "Teacher philosophy," which were used to capture an overarching idea in the initial coding; and attribute coding signifying the basic descriptive information about the sites and participants including teacher background, participant name (pseudonym), and interview topics.

During the Second Cycle coding, I grouped the many codes into smaller number of "categories, themes, or concepts" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 79). For example, descriptive codes, including "Participative Interactive Methods," "Practical Music Experience," and "[Teacher] Modelling," were later merged into one code, Teaching Strategy. Similarly, holistic themes such as "Evolving Pedagogy," "Responsive Pedagogy," and "Teacher Flexibility," were grouped into one category called Pedagogical Approach. Due to the scope and scale of my research, I coded by hand and did not require the assistance of a qualitative software program.

The codes used had a close relationship to one another and helped to create a unified structure that aided my analysis (Miles et al., 2014). In all three cases, the teachers had their individual philosophies, concepts, and approaches to teaching and learning, different ways they went about music selection, and varied ways in which they facilitated music classes while they navigated online engagement during the pandemic. Codes that referred to pedagogy, music making, and the curriculum, to name a few, were used to formulate themes that applied in each of the three cases. Similarly, across all three cases, codes were generated from the interviews and observation sessions which captured students' experiences with music in the general music classroom. Therefore, I used the coding process to organise the recurring themes that emerged from the data

collected as the information was dense and needed some amount of filtering (Stake, 2006).

Cross-case Analysis

This multiple case study has three cases. Each case was analysed separately and then they were analysed collectively (Stake, 2006). Stake (2006) posited that a cross-case analysis of the data does not include a comparison of each case, but instead, an application of the findings of each case as they relate to the research questions and the phenomenon (p. 47). In Stake's opinion, this is in line with the purpose of a multiple case study as the case is not for generalisation, but for transferability and application to similar cases.

Miles et al. (2014) posited that cross-case analysis is used to "enhance generalizability or transferability to other contexts" (p. 95) while acknowledging that there are arguments against their appropriateness in qualitative research. However, I aimed to see the "relevance or applicability" of my findings in one case and its relationship to the other two cases (p. 95). Although generalization is not the aim, cross-case analysis allows transferability of concepts to similar settings and beyond one case so that we can "transcend the particular in order to understand the general" (p. 95). Therefore, I employed the use of pattern coding to lay the foundation for cross-case analysis. Miles et al (2014) placed the pattern codes under four interrelated summarisers: categories or themes; causes or explanations; relationships among people; concepts or theoretical constructs (p. 80). This supported my use of narrative description and matrix display to present the findings from the data in all three settings (p. 83). Therefore, the

individual cases in this study are chosen for their situatedness so that there can be a better understanding of culturally responsive teaching in Jamaican secondary music classrooms, not only the individual cases (Stake, 2006).

Triangulation and Member Check

The process of triangulation uses multiple data-collection methods, procedures, and data sources to corroborate data for the validity of qualitative research findings ensuring a high level of research quality and rigour (Gall et al., 2007). For this research, I utilised triangulation throughout the data gathering process while the information was being organised, transcribed, and coded. Triangulation was used to see if the newly collected data are consistent across cases and support or extend what is already known about the phenomenon (Stake, 2006). Additionally, this process gave me the assurance that my interpretation of the data, garnered through the observation and interview processes, corroborated with the music teacher. Hence, the process of triangulation helped me to minimise occasions for misunderstanding, eliminate strong personal biases, while allowing me to constantly review the data (Stake, 2006).

The process of member checking is critical to the interpretation of the data. After the interviews were transcribed, a member check was used to confirm the accuracy of the documents. Each teacher was offered the opportunity to read the interview transcripts to determine the accuracy of my transcription and to clarify my interpretation of the meaning gained from the interviews. I also asked follow up questions in subsequent interviews in order to clarify comments and processes seen during the observation. This was the final part of the triangulation process. Therefore, meaning gained from my

interpretation and the teacher's intent was clarified or confirmed, and the process of triangulation also allowed for "repeatability of an observation or interpretation" (Stake, 2006, pp. 37–38).

Limitations

As stated earlier, due to the nature of qualitative research of which multiple case study is one of the approaches, one cannot generalise the results. However, the use of "naturalistic generalizations" is important as it allows the experienced reader to make important connections based on the narrative accounts from my personal interpretation of the observations and interviews (Stake, 1995).

Summary

In this chapter, I described my use of multiple case study methodology to examine how three music teachers practice culturally responsive teaching. In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I describe the data collected for each of the three cases, respectively, and present a summary of the findings and emerging themes for each case. In Chapter 7, I present a cross-case analysis of the emergent themes from the previous three chapters. In Chapter 8, I discuss the implications for music education and propose ideas for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR

KARIEL SKY: TEACHING MUSIC AT STERLING HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

"How is it that I go about selecting music for my boys? … I like these pop music! I like them. ... That also drives my interest to go and look for those kind a things. … I am not gonna be readily gravitating towards classical music … that's one of the things too that channels my decision in selecting music for my class."

(K. Sky, personal communication, April 8, 2021)

Introduction

Sterling High School for Boys

Located in the city of Kingston where there is a population of over 600,000 people, Sterling High School for Boys has a reputation as one of Jamaica's finest traditional high schools. The school is over 100 years old, is a publicly funded institution, and is primarily populated by children of middle-class parents. At the time of my data collection, Sterling High had a population of over 1400 students, Grades 7 through 13,[4] with just over 80 teachers on staff. Since its inception, the school has produced graduates in diverse professions who are influential in various aspects of Jamaican life including academia, sports, arts and culture, politics, business, among other areas (Ministry of Education Youth and Information, Jamaica Schools Profile, 2018–2019).

Based on the high-quality results from the regional Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) subject-based examinations, Sterling High School is frequently ranked as one of the top twenty high schools in Jamaica (my-island-

[4] Approximately ages 12–18

jamaica.com). The school has a general music programme that is taught to Grades 8 and 9 students only. There are extra-curricular music programmes that include a chamber ensemble, conga drumming ensemble, pop/gospel band, and a school choir. These ensembles are open to the entire student population and the members are auditioned or selected to perform with the groups. These ensembles have entered competitions such as the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) annual festival of the arts, where they have been awarded gold medals and competed for national trophies in one of the choral categories. Prior to the March 2020 COVID-19 island-wide lockdown of schools and communities, the school choir also entered the popular local choir competition, All Together Sing.

Kariel Sky

There is a multiplicity of reasons why someone would choose music teaching as their career choice. For Kariel Sky, the decision to study music was due to her non acceptance to study home economics at one of Jamaica's leading teachers' colleges. When asked to choose another major within the college, she decided to select music as the alternate area of specialisation. This choice was partly influenced by her family's music lineage. Subsequently, she completed a three-year diploma in teaching (secondary) with specialisations in Music and Information Technology. A few years later at the same teachers' college, she completed a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) degree with a specialisation in music.

Although Kariel has been a teacher since 2006, she spent the first six years teaching Information Technology at a rural Jamaican high school in the parish of

Clarendon. She moved to Sterling High School in 2012 and has been the music teacher for the last nine years. She is the sole music teacher at the institution and as such, she teaches all general music classes and monitors the after school extracurricular music activities. Her primary extracurricular interest is the school choir, an activity she wishes she could participate in full time as a choral teacher.

When Kariel first started at Sterling High, general music was a required subject within the Grades 7 to 9 curriculum. Due to the heavy workload emanating from the number of classes, the school decided to limit music classes to two streams, Grades 8 and 9. She is hoping that at some point, she will be able to teach advanced music students through to the CSEC music examination level taken in Grade 11. As is the case in many Jamaican public schools, female teachers, like Kariel Sky, are mostly referred to as "Miss" by the students.

Over a four-week period between March and April 2021, I conducted three interviews and observed one of Kariel's Grade 9 classes on three separate occasions. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restriction of face-to-face classes, the music classes were conducted online through Google Classroom. I was not able to directly join the class in Google Classroom as I would need a Sterling High email address to enter the class. That could not be arranged in time for the observation. Therefore, Kariel used two devices at the same time as one allowed me to view the class through Zoom while she taught the class in Google Classroom from another device. Although I was unable to view the chat during the live session, the overall arrangement with the two devices worked very well for the observation process.

Findings for Kariel Sky

In this section of chapter four, I present data and findings relating to the case of Kariel Sky. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews (see Appendix D) and class observations. The data were coded, and the emergent themes were triangulated across the interviews, observations, and through the process of member check with the interviewee (Stake, 2006). The themes that emerged from the data were placed in four main categories. They are (1) Teaching and Learning in Action, (2) Music Selection and Preference, (3) Students in the Music Classroom, and (4) Navigating the (COVID-19) Music Classroom. The chapter ends with a summary of the conclusions drawn from the case.

Teaching and Learning in Action

Music Curriculum. The National Standards Curriculum (NSC), developed by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information (MoEYI) in Jamaica, has music syllabi for Grades 7 through 9. Kariel explained that she used the syllabus as a guide, but she was not dependent on it to plan and execute her classes. The relatively short time span for the lessons limited what could be done during each session. Hence, she frequently adjusted the syllabus to maximise the content taught from the NSC, but she was conflicted about its use and effectiveness:

> I plan the course outline from it, but I don't know ... I don't think I'm a slave to it. I don't think I am a slave to it because of, for one, the time, and I tried to crunch all of these things. As I said, the course outlines have so many things from the NSC, but I have to spend so many weeks to talk about one thing. … I

> don't have first form [Grade 7], is like the continuity for me is like, it just feels like, okay, I'm just teaching them some music for them to go away with something.

Kariel admitted that during her early years teaching at Sterling High, she did not show much interest in the NSC Grades 7 to 9 music syllabi. She said her ambitions changed when she recognised the possibility to move the music programme beyond Grade 9, and that led to a different approach and objective, one that would lead her to preparing students for CSEC music in Grades 10 and 11:

> I used to not pay so much attention to it, to be honest. But that's because I'm just … I don't have the full time with them, so like, you know what, let's give them an enjoyable time. That was when I started [teaching]. Then I said, you know what, I start to move a little bit out of that and say [pause]. Students now actually are asking "Miss, Miss, can I do CSEC? Miss, can I do?" So I say, you know what, I am gonna have to focus now on the NSC.

Consequently, she adapted her teaching approach with the intention of addressing the content in a more in-depth way and at the same time, creating an opportunity for her students to musically progress the CSEC level. In Kariel's estimation, these experiences made her realise that a focus on the content area was needed to better prepare students for the advanced music exams students desired later in the programme:

> So, where am I today? I am now focusing on the content area for music, so that students, at the end of a third form [Grade 9], let's say, I just have them for two forms, second and third…By the end of third form a student can say "Miss, I

> would like to continue with you for, for classes after my third form. So I have developed in that regard. It's not all about the fun, … it's more about what the content is about.

Kariel seemed to realise that there were students who were interested in continuing their music studies beyond Grade 9. For Kariel, this was good and at the same time somewhat troubling as she thought it was necessary to ensure that the content was effectively taught from Grade 8 so that students interested in external examinations, including CSEC music, can be accommodated in Grades 10 and 11:

> About two students say they would love to continue after third form [Grade 9]. And I have to be now thinking about how to accommodate these students because they really said they love it and they want to continue after third form [Grade 9]. … I would like to have at least two or three students sit an exam, whether it be the [Associated Board of the] Royal Schools of Music exam [ABRSM], or some other exam that would say "I did music, and here is my certification for it."

Kariel indicated that she viewed the teaching of CSEC music as an essential element in the development of the music programme at Sterling High School for Boys. She stated that in the early years at Sterling High, she attempted to prepare five students for the CSEC examination. However, this proved to be very difficult with one music teacher trying to teach and manage all areas of the exam preparation including the listening and appraising, composition and arranging, and the instrumental/vocal performance requirements. Kariel realised that this was very difficult to accomplish on her own:

> I tried CSEC one time… I said they had to throw it away and run like a thief

> because it took over my, it took over everything. I thought I gave up easily though. One teacher said to me, I took on too many students for the first go. … I took on five [students]. And boy, I just felt like I was going down. I didn't have anybody to reach out to at the time … I think it was like the second year of my [teaching], you know. My dreams were big and I wanted CSEC.

Additionally, Kariel stated that the classes were offered after school as an extra class, and the students had to pay her an additional amount for the class. Although Kariel claimed that her intention was to give students opportunities to advance and gain CSEC certification, she explained that the weight of the task was too much for her:

> I had evening class, and it was just going well and mi seh "no sah, mi cyaa manage dem five yah."[5] And I just gave them back their monies, and I said "guys, I can't manage this one." I just was honest.

Therefore, teaching and guiding students through the CSEC music examination at the higher grades, specifically Grades 10 and 11, remained a major objective for Kariel. To better prepare the few students interested in pursuing music beyond grade 9, Kariel used aspects of the NSC and aligned them with Sterling High's music curriculum content to provide opportunities for students to advance.

Teaching Style. Kariel Sky described herself as a person who is overly energetic, sociable, bubbly, and lively "like a vibes master." It was her opinion that these traits attracted students to her classes and allowed them to freely participate, especially when classes were face-to-face. From her point of view, her personality, not necessarily the

[5] Interpreted as "I cannot handle teaching these five students."

music programme, was the reason her instructional approach and connection with students developed at Sterling High School for Boys. She noted the following:

> From ever since I know myself, I've always been this exciting person. Always want to emcee something, always want to, you know, be friendliest with the newest member of staff, you know, it's just a part of me in it. … I don't think [it] is the musical background that my family has, not that. I'm just thinking it's just my personality and it comes right down to that.

Kariel appeared to believe that her energetic approach to teaching was demonstrated in her classes on a weekly basis. Her teaching style involved her "bubbly" personality and encouraged her to strive for pedagogical and musical growth. In her classes, teaching was an extension of her personality, and she intentionally aimed to create opportunities for students to develop confidence and musical understanding:

> It is definitely a part of my personality. I'd say I behave like this, like on a regular … and I think that is the reason why I grow so much at Sterling High School for Boys. Because, if it was for the music program alone, ahh [I] probably wouldn't have been speaking [about music] because I put the energy in other things, you know. Whatever I do the energy just comes alive.

In Kariel's estimation, her teaching style was strongly influenced by her personality. The animated and energetic style of delivery was evidenced in the classes observed.

Pedagogical Approach. As a result of her teaching approach, Kariel said she set up her lessons as exciting and engaging experiences from the moment students enter the classroom space. In her estimation, she could do this because she placed herself "in the

students' shoes." For Kariel, students do not necessarily see music as a subject, but something that they engage with outside of the classroom where the purpose was for their entertainment:

> Based on the years that I've been teaching music, I realised that they don't see music as a subject. … They see music as something in their ears, the ear pod, the ear set, listening to music, "Miss, we come to class to listen to music."

In response, Kariel said she did the following:

> I have to take this level of energy, not kill it by saying "guys, sit and write some notes, theory time." I have to use that excitement that they come with now, tie that into what they are expecting and then, you know, try to find my nice little way now to put the theory in it.

Kariel stated that her teaching approach was a direct response to teaching at a boy's school. The boys looked forward to an engaging class (the vibes) and did not expect a music class to be boring or rigid in nature:

> I believe that the approach comes because I'm dealing with boys, for one. I've never taught co-ed music, it's just at Sterling. So, because of the approach, I'm dealing with boys, and what I have observed is like, "you know, Miss, mi need di vibes". … even for the recorder, I have to come with all manner of things to let them love it … So, I think it is the boys, the element of the gender, allows me to just kick back a little bit more, so that they can see that it's excitable.

However, after a few years teaching experience, Kariel noted that she became more focused on improving her instructional strategies. Her focus shifted from making her

classes exciting to merging the "exciting" approach with improved quality in the theoretical and practical music content delivery. In this regard, Kariel explained that she viewed lesson planning as critical to executing her pedagogical approach:

> The introductions will always be the excitement, and then I will … come right down and say, "okay, so here is all of this now." So, all I have been saying, here's the information. Let's find out how this comes to life now. Why is it that I was so excited in the first place? This is it!"

Kariel thought her focus on theory "changed" her pedagogy and stated, "I know I'm focusing a little bit more on what can you get out of the music theoretically, than just looking at the practical element all the times." Hence, she seemed to believe her theoretical and practical content delivery was more effective than her early teaching experiences. To support her pedagogical approach, Kariel, through her actions, was deliberate about the music she used in her classes. There were times when she mentioned using music in the background before the class began as a way of piquing students' interest. Ultimately, she pointed out that there was a lot students can learn about music beginning with music genres they were familiar with:

> They come into class and something is there on the screen, showing or in the background, and I know that is a pop song. So they are going to say "yes! I'm at class. I like it." … I use it just to come in, set the ambiance, and then I would also use these pop songs to say, listen to something. Listen to this rhythmic pattern, listen to identify instruments from this.

Kariel, in a subtle way, aimed to show the students that "they listen[ed] to these things

every day, and whatever I'm saying guys, is in your music." She went on to confirm, "that is the only reason" she used known popular songs because her students were familiar with them.

Kariel's personal music experience outside of the classroom helped to develop her performance-oriented approach within the classroom space. In her estimation, giving students the tools to have a worthwhile experience performing in class, helping them to present well, and showing the value of teamwork, were all benefits derived from her performance background and experience:

> My musical experience outside of college would be just my choir interaction at Church … my singing on stage, and things like that. … How has it helped my teaching? … It's really all about the performance element that comes out. So I would know, okay guys, if we're going to perform, if I give them a piece, you need to have this kinda thing. You need to, come man, [display] energy, and the face [should be expressive], and so, they don't teach you that in college. So, because I know that if you're, you are presenting yourself or you are presenting a musical piece, it has to have a good start, it has to have a good end, yuh cyaa just fall flat. So, I use some of those things to kind a push into how I train the students.

Engaging the students in a more practical way was a deliberate pedagogical approach by Kariel. Although she acknowledged that she was a natural talker, she tried to limit the excessive talking while teaching. She admitted to being a work in progress, but her general aim was to make the class about the students' experience, not hers. She noted that her teaching became more student-centred when activities were focused on performing,

composing and arranging, or listening and critiquing. She also expressed that the students were not properly engaged when teaching was aligned with theoretical constructs only. She avoided constantly "telling, telling, telling" and provided opportunities for her students to have practical "hands-on" or experiential learning inside and outside of class. Her approach was partially demonstrated in the virtual classroom observations as students were able to frequently respond to Kariel's prompts, complete music-related theoretical exercises, and were mostly interactive with her.

When teaching, Kariel consciously avoided being the centre of attention. But that approach, something she found desirable, was admittedly difficult for her:

> I'm still learning how to step back a little bit. When I say step back, I mean… because music is so universal, is like, I don't want to be a tell-tale, "that's one of the things that I like okay, this is the form, rondo means," I don't want to do that. And I want to give the students an opportunity to make music in the class.

Incorporating a range of music, including unfamiliar popular music, was a part of Kariel's ideal pedagogical approach. Although she stated that as her aim, Kariel admitted she had not yet reached a point where she frequently introduced a variety of unfamiliar music in the music classroom. Nevertheless, in her classes, Kariel's stated intent was to meet the students where they are in their musical journey.

Thinking of creative pedagogical approaches seemed to preoccupy Kariel's class preparation. To get a point across to her students, she sometimes thought of and used interdisciplinary approaches. Her expressed concept is that for some students, exploring other art forms or text could possibly engage them in new ways in the music classroom:

> There's so many things that come up in my head to do for classes and I have to scrap them because sometimes I'm like, God [sighing]! Sometimes I want them to even [pause]. People who can't bother with the music, like, to play [an instrument], I wonder if I could let them draw an expression of how they would show me strophic? I wonder if somebody wants to dance a routine? Is like, I had that you know, and I just, I just deleted it.

Kariel explained that she experimented with some of these unusual approaches to see if she could better engage some of the students. At one point, she tried drawing or dance routines to express musical meanings and the students responded "Miss, why we have to dance?" Due to the students' reluctance, she quickly abandoned the approach and told the students that it was just an option, not compulsory. However, during one observation session, she used visual stimuli to generate answers and discussions on form in music.

Kariel referred to lesson planning as an important aspect of her class preparation. She explained that she spent time strategizing with carefully selected music and activities so that she could engage the students in the teaching and learning process. Outside of her vibrant personality, something she deemed an asset, her teaching strategy incorporated pre-planned music examples, sample compositions, and classroom performances. For her, she extended herself to do "all manner of things" in order to help students become engaged while gaining a solid understanding of the materials explored in her classes. Hence, preparation was a critical part of the process:

> For example, if I would say to them "Okay, I want you to create a song," I would have created a song ahead of time, and I would perform the song for them with all

> the vibes and all the energy. So I would give them stuff like that. … If I'm going to teach them how to play the recorder … I will go and learn some pop song on the recorder for them to hear it and say "Oh, Miss, dat can play! Da song deh can play, yes?!" Mi can teach yuh some notes fi let yuh [learn it], yuh nuh!

Kariel also used popular songs as a vehicle to accomplish her goal of helping students learn to play the recorder. Kariel said she was conscious that many of the students were aware of her singing career as a background vocalist with a well-known Jamaican gospel artiste. Consequently, she claimed the energetic vibes she demonstrated and expected were not surprising to the students. During the COVID-19 pandemic when classes moved online, Kariel admitted that she often thought of the face-to-face performance-based classroom experiences she longed to re-live:

> They know that I perform and that kind of thing, so I try to put that into it. I have a mic in class and… it's just amazing when I when I see them in that face-to-face time… it was just so amazing then.

Kariel noted that her in-class demonstration of what was expected of the students was an important element when devising her teaching strategy. She expressed the importance of modelling the behaviour expected of the students including the energy she demanded from their in-class presentations. In her estimation, her role was to encourage them to produce quality work while they successfully complete the musical tasks assigned. When the students asked, "Miss, oh, how did you do that?" she would respond by saying, "well guess what, you can do it too." For her, the students can achieve anything as long as they were encouraged to do well, provided with the necessary tools to

accomplish their tasks, and the material was effectively presented:

> I think, it's really how I present it to them. I don't just say "guys, go and do the work, this is how it is done." I would show them and would utilize it in the classroom … and then they would just take to it, based on my natural excitement about it. ... I would feature them in class, and all manner of things, just to let them do a nice video or a nice recording of some sort. … Face-to-face, I think they love that because I'm just generally excited about it.

Therefore, Kariel's view was that her pedagogical approach was instrumental to helping students attain high academic achievement while engaged in the teaching and learning process.

Music Making. Kariel's stated that her general music classes were structured to engage students in practical music making. This approach was not always possible during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it was a principle that formed a part of her teaching philosophy. When face-to-face, Kariel said she thrived on the energy coming from the students. However, her in-person classes were smaller than the online space as music and another subject shared the same time slot. However, Kariel thought she prepared well for each class and on each occasion, aimed to involve students in music making through basic composition and arranging, solo performances, or engaging listening activities.

Kariel remarked that the concept of music making happening in every class was ingrained in her as a pre-service teacher. She mentioned her pre-service supervisor would state that "you can't have the students come to class and they don't do something music related, music making." In her typical class, Kariel said she tried to infuse discussions,

demonstrations, music exploration, and other elements in the class while ensuring there was a practical aspect where music making occurred:

> They [students] come in, we do the music making. We get to talk a little bit, then we may go back to a little music making. Talk a little bit “why didn’t you do that with? How do feel?” you know, and just get the whole thing come together in a package almost towards the end of the class so that they understand … the terminologies that would support what they were doing.

When in the physical classroom space, Kariel thought she provided opportunities for the students to play in classroom ensembles on a regular basis. She explained that sometimes the music was notated, other times the students would create orally improvised classroom compositions based on the topic explored on the day. The improvised performances would be based on stimuli she articulated to the students:

> Create your own piece of music. I would give them like a stimulus. We’re looking at this syncopated rhythm today [tapping and mouthing the rhythm]. … When you’re creating, I want to hear it somewhere in the music. So they would love to do that kind of thing.

Kariel spoke of incorporating instruments such as the glockenspiel and pianica into the improvised ensemble experience when exploring topics such as scales. She went on to state, “it wouldn’t really be, sometimes, a whole class of ensemble,” but there were times they would be “breaking off into groups” so that the class was easily managed by the teacher. Although music making many times happened as a group experience, there were times when Kariel checked the students individually. This, she claimed, was to ensure

that individual skills were developed and assessed on instruments such as the recorder, glockenspiel, melodica, or any other classroom instrument used to support the practical experience.

Music making incorporating Jamaican dancehall was one aspect of the classroom experience that Kariel said she provided for her students. In Grade 8, the first-year students take music classes at Sterling High, Kariel engaged them in music making at the beginning of each class. She declared that when the students first entered her class, she sometimes played instrumental dancehall tracks in the background or a trendy piece of music "that would speak to some of the gentlemen." She stated that the intention of the background dancehall music was to set the mood for the students to rhythmically introduce themselves to the class like professional dancehall artistes. Kariel said her instruction to the students would be to "introduce yourself on this riddim [beat/track]" while it was played in the background. She related the story this way:

> My mic would be up, my speakers will be up. I would be on the, probably, keyboard playing along with them, if I have to. Some of them don't want the track, you know, because they're like I want to do my own vibe. So, I would give them that experience by just coming up with their own feel on top of what they know already. Right. I want to use the actual melody line … of the song that exists on that track.

She explained that from the outset, the students were engaged in music making by exploring a genre that most students were familiar with, in this case, Jamaican dancehall music. This approach to lyric improvisation was incorporated into other aspects of her

class, especially when they studied composition and arranging topics.

Problem solving and finding workable solutions was important to Kariel. She mentioned that has been a recurring theme since the pandemic discontinued in-person music classes at the school. She cited in-class interaction with the students as an advantage in some ways and spent some time reflecting on the way things were, how they are now, and the possibilities going forward. She described how she would have conducted a face-to-face class focused on students collaborating to create informal (non-notated) compositions leading to in-class ensemble performance:

> If it were pre-Covid … I would put them in groups, I would issue them the instruments. Right! I would give them the criteria. I would say "all right, form must be represented properly. There must be a proper ending, [etc.]." Set up the stage, the mic, the keyboard, the drum. I would just put out everything for the class to create.

Although the music room was relatively small for this kind of exercise, Kariel pointed out that she assigned the groups to different parts of the room and, because of the location of the music room situated on the ground floor, students could create and practice their compositions just outside of the music room.

Kariel expressed monitoring the process at every step by moving around to each group during the creation process. She asked questions like "what's you're A [section]? Let me hear what's your A idea." Sometimes she will ask questions to stimulate and encourage early decisions: "Are you going to add lyrics to your thing or is it just an instrumental?" All of this had to be executed in the forty-minute single session and

claimed that twenty minutes was allocated for music creation and the final twenty minutes for performances by the groups. Kariel gave her account of what took place when each group was asked to make their performance presentation.

> I pull out my phone and say "we're gonna record you guys now." That's when they know I'm serious. When I pulled my phone out, sit down at the back, move all the chairs, stage is big, open there at the board, "let's go." And because of the rehearsal period that I would do during that 20 minutes, [the] first 20 minutes of class, they would be ready.

She mentioned missing this hands-on approach and longed for a return to the interactive physical music classroom. Kariel said she looks forward to the day when she can once again announce in class, "Let's get on stage!"

Kariel missed having tangible physical interactions with students and longed for the participatory environment that fed her energy-driven approach to music teaching. She summarised her classroom teaching experience by expressing her love for the in-person classes. She said that "face-to-face was the thing for me. I really enjoyed face-to-face with my students." In the face-to-face setting, Kariel provided her students with "opportunities to engage in music by doing ensemble pieces." This was in line with her philosophy where active music making must take place in every class.

Facilitator of Discussions. Kariel expressed that one of her roles as a teacher was to meaningfully respond to students who were curious about activities experienced or queried in class. Since students frequently asked questions, she felt it was her duty as a teacher to facilitate discussions. She stated that students sometimes engaged with familiar

repertoire as listening activities, especially music they like. In those instances, they asked a myriad of questions that were not necessarily related to the topic or the focus question:

> Some of them, probably don't even hear half of what I ask them to listen for. So the question would be like "Miss, but, di drum, you say this drum. But that's not a drum Miss? That sounds like a drum machine" ... So, I would have to talk to them like that now "yes guys, it's not a drum, actual, real drum set, it's a drum machine. "Oh, is it a synthesizer?" they will ask a lot. "Miss, dat a auto tune?" They ask everything that you don't even set up to do in the class today. You know what I mean? "Miss, listen to the way how him singing loudly" and you know. So they [are] listening keenly but sometimes to other things than what you're focusing on.

However, Kariel admitted that she found it necessary to address the questions when they arose while being cognisant of the objectives of the lesson. In her estimation, she would prefer to temporarily deviate from a topic rather than sidestep students' queries:

> To be honest with you … I always try to take it. I would rather my class lesson go off and try to get to understand what they're trying to say. Because, really, when they engage in the conversation with me that's how they want to come back to the next class, because I didn't brush them off. So I try to entertain it a little bit and if I realize they're not getting it, I'll say "all right, I'll talk to you after class" in a face-to-face [session], even in online [settings] too.

Some students were persistent and continued to ask similar questions to those already explored. In those cases, Kariel explained that she tried to find nice ways to let

them know it can be addressed after the class. She did not view excessive questions as problematic because the most important part of the engagement was one where "at least you give them the time a day, a little bit." In her opinion, the students were not to be ignored and she tried to find the best way possible to address their queries.

When exploring music selected for listening activities, students' music cultures did not always align with that of their music teacher. Kariel explained that her perceived music culture misalignment led to varied discussions surrounding the period, origin, quality of recording, instruments used, and a range of other dialogues surrounding the recordings. Kariel further explained that she saw this as an opportunity for further conversation that can lead to students gaining a better understanding of their listening activities. Students may ask questions or make comments like "why does it sound like that?" Others may say "Miss, don't you see that that song [is] from [a] long time ago, Miss?" Students asking the teacher to return to the modern era is not atypical: "Come inna today's era nuh Miss. Miss, dat ole fashion… How long ago was that song made?" Frequently explaining the difference in recording technology was the norm when students pointed out the "scratchy" sounds emanating from older recordings. They sometimes described the old instruments sounding "like an old record." These observations all led to discussions facilitated by Kariel as she had to explain ongoing technological advancement by acknowledging that in the past "they never use to have that, that's why it sound so scratchy [while laughing]." She also acknowledged that "prior to cell phone is rough for them [students]," but the students were engaged and responsive, and would eventually move on when the music was placed in context.

Reflective Teaching. Kariel suggested that a key part of planning and improving the delivery of her music classes was her practice as a reflective teacher. She supposedly thought of ways she could improve her lessons even when she felt they were satisfactorily executed. She was quick to point out that not all activities or music selections effectively engaged students when used in class. In her opinion, reflecting on the effectiveness of each lesson helped to address matters relating to content, activities, and music selection. She stated that during the pandemic, when classes were conducted online, she was able to review some of her classes by listening or watching the recordings. When we spoke about the music selection related to an activity observed in one of the classes, she responded in this way:

> After I watched it back, I actually eliminated it from the other classes going down. I didn't show back that video moving down into … the week. I noticed that … this video wasn't really speaking to what I would really want.

In this case, her reflection led to a response that demanded some flexibility with music selection. Her willingness to adjust supported her pedagogical approach, one that was responsive as the activity was not fulfilling the objective of the lesson.

For Kariel, an area for ongoing reflection was an aspect of her teaching she many times noted as one of her strengths, that of her lively classroom involvement. Kariel expressed that she was cognisant of her constant need to assess her possible overindulgent approach in her classes to make sure they were not teacher centred but focused on students' in-class needs. This concern was starker during the pandemic as the classes were online and students were not always very responsive. She concluded that she

must allow her students to excel and "leave a lot of time for them to do the work, to create," and did not regularly insert herself into the exploration process:

> As much as I love to talk, I have to leave room for them to breathe and to just digest the music. Play. Because they love to play. I think I take it a little for granted that we just need to get the content, content, content. They want to play for me, to hear back. You see, if they ever finish and say "Miss, please, listen to mine." I said okay, they want me to hear. And guess what? They want the feedback right there and then. "Miss, it do good?" … Going forward, I have to give them space to really create their music.

She thought facilitating student participation and consistent teacher feedback would be more beneficial to the teaching and learning process.

Limited Time Period. Kariel admitted that one of the difficulties of managing the music class stemmed from the forty-minute slot assigned to music classes. The short periods were compounded by the class occurring once per week. Kariel stated the following:

> I only see my students once per week. And so I find myself almost saying what I did last [class], just to refresh [the students]. And guess what, the refresher takes up the time. It does, it does, it does take time because even if I post what I did last week, most of them are not always going to be looking at that.

In her opinion, the limited timeslot affected student's musical development and restricted the breadth and depth of what can be accomplished in class over the two-year period of music instruction. In a quick survey initiated by Kariel, she asked her students "how can I

better serve you?" The students answered the question by stating "Miss, we need more time," or in another case, "Miss, when we start to have fun, the time is over." This was not only true for the students but was also an inconvenient reality for Kariel.

Music Preference and Selection

Teacher Music Preference. Although Kariel stated that Jamaican music was an important part of the listening repertoire used in her general music classes, her preferred music choice was gospel. Her interest in gospel was directly influenced by her background in the church and her active performance schedule with a locally based Jamaican gospel artiste. She also had a strong preference for US pop music and that genre was often featured in her general music classes. She used pop music to teach musical concepts and support her various listening activities. As popular as Jamaican dancehall was for some students at Sterling High, Kariel said she did not frequently use dancehall unless it was an instrumental version of the original song:

> I wouldn't do mostly dancehall, unless it is an instrumental [version]. … If I were face-to-face with them, and I was gonna clap a rhythm, I would mostly go for the dancehall tracks. Mostly, because it gets them even more excited when I go there. … But now that I'm not clapping rhythms to a particular rhythmic pattern [rhythm track], like a rhythm or so, I just would go for like our regular contemporary reggae song, or so.

Kariel said she used the dancehall tracks mainly because of their strong rhythmic content as many of the rhythms emanated from Jamaican traditional folk music.

Students Music Preference. Students at Sterling High also had their preferred music choices. These choices, Kariel expressed, often included Jamaican popular music, mainly dancehall, and some US popular music genres. Kariel stated that students sometimes expressed their lack of enthusiasm for some of the music used in class. A lack of enthusiasm was sometimes directed at the traditional Jamaican folk music genres and her gospel selections as, Kariel noted, they sometimes cannot relate to them. As a result, Kariel aimed to prepare her lessons with carefully selected music that balanced her preferred music selections and the students' preferences.

Students' music preferences were sometimes intertwined with Kariel's music selection process. Kariel remarked that some students would make requests for music genres outside of the teacher's selected examples and make statements such as, "Miss, yuh cyaa play likkle dancehall today?"[6] It appeared that students were often quite explicit about what they would love to hear in the classes even though it did not mean that their requests were always appropriate for the topic or honoured by the teacher. Regardless, this was one way for Kariel to hear students' music preferences. Depending on the objective of the lesson, Kariel said she sometimes asked students to state their music preference within the context of the topic. She then tried to use the selected song or genre to strengthen concepts and make them more relevant to the students. She admitted that this did not always work the way she anticipated it would and acknowledged it can be a risky move at times. Thus, she routinely vetted all recordings before using them in class as she needed to ensure that the selections had appropriate lyrics for her and the school's

[6] Interpreted as "Miss, can't you play some dancehall music today?"

administration. But this approach presented students with an opportunity to have their voices heard and their choices infused into the classes.

Based on her years of experience, Kariel was aware that, like herself, many of her students were popular music oriented, and they expected their classes to include popular genres. Knowing their music preferences was advantageous for Kariel as she asserted it aided her music selection process. When asked about her students' music preferences, Kariel responded in the following way:

> Definitely not western art music. As much as I sell it and beef them up for it. But I would say they like the contemporary music, not dancehall so much, but contemporary. We're talking about, like the Justin Biebers, and they like to listen to the Post Malone. Those kinds of contemporary music.

Although some students revealed their preference for contemporary pop music, Kariel declared that "I don't really go for those kind of thing, but I find myself bending to it. Finding the cleanest versions of them and seeing if I could bring out what I want through some of those music." Therefore, she mentioned frequently adjusting her teaching approach to accomplish the lesson objectives while accommodating students' music preference.

On another occasion, Kariel pointed out that students' music preferences among her classes varied depending on grade level and possibly student background. Students did not prefer contemporary pop music only, but they also had an affinity to other Jamaican and North American genres. She appeared to believe the all-male situation at her school influenced her music selections and the songs were many times on the

students' preference list:

> For boys, you have to find things that are one, trendy, and two, that are not girly girly. They don't want to hear any Beyonce, they don't want to hear any Ariana Grande. If you're going to pop, they want to hear Raps. They want to hear … dancehall music and they don't usually go for the alternative kind of stuff. But they mostly would tell me "Miss, Rap, Dancehall," you know that kind of thing. So I have to work with them sometimes.

Kariel appeared to believe that students' music preferences did not always align with her class objectives, hence she chose student selected songs very carefully. She admitted that the response of students was sometimes counterproductive to the lesson as they overreacted to their preferred music and their reaction at times became disruptive and diverted from the topic. When students responded in an overly enthusiastic way, she mentioned finding ways of keeping the class focused on the topic while exploring their music preferences. She relayed a familiar situation in this way:

> If I ever bring up a song that they love, they are just wanting more. They don't want you to stop to even talk about why you played this music. Even if I set up the two focus questions, "listen to this piece of music and identify the instruments, using the introduction," I would have to start it all over again so that [pause], they're very exuberant, they're excited, they're excited and they beat [the] desk and, you know. And then I [say] "hey guys, you have to stop. You have to listen. Ah bet say none of you didn't hear what I just say?

She went on and stated that the students were "very excitable when they hear these kind

of music that they love." She often reminded them that "they need to listen" to grasp and appropriately respond to the topic questions.

Another method used by Kariel to find out students preferred music choices was through an in-class process she called "requests" day. She carefully emphasised that it was a "risky" session that took place in one of her regular teaching periods. As she stated, "it would just be a session to get into their heads [to find out] what are some of the things that they like," and subsequently gave her options for her listening classes:

> Because it's one session, sometimes I say "guys, we gonna have a rap session. Today's request day." I will be at the computer and I would be asking them … "tell me which songs you like" picking on random students. And then most of the songs are just very trendy at the time. …One or two [students] would choose like an oldies kind of music, and they [students] are like "Boo," you know, their response. That I would get "boo," that's old-time music.

Kariel revealed that these expressions of students' music preferences influenced how she selected repertoire that engaged students in her general music classes. In her own words, Kariel said, "that is really where I'm coming from when I choose the type of music that I would bring to class." In other words, Kariel tried to be contextually relevant when she used students preferred music.

Teacher Music Selection. Kariel revealed that in her early days of teaching music at Sterling High, the recorder was the primary instrument used in classroom music and traditional notation of music was emphasised. The use of repertoire books, including a popular method book that has Jamaican traditional music arranged for the recorder, was

not necessarily enticing students to participate in class. Kariel said that "as excited as I was, they were not taking on to it." Due to the students' responses, she admitted changing how she selected music for her classes by enquiring about her students' preferences and using their preferred music to develop some of the lessons:

> And so, if I'm going to do the folk song, I have to be jazzing it up a little bit. And it's away from, you know, the real deal of where I wanted, [which is] to read the music and just follow that.

In those early teaching years, some students would complain to Kariel about the repertoire saying, "Miss, it boring." Over time, her assessment of students' responses led her to adjust how she selected her music as she mentioned deliberately including music her students preferred or songs they were familiar with. She said, "over the years, the recorder element of things, like choosing songs for the recorder, will just go to pop music." She would at times ask students "which song is the latest?" and then selected songs that best suited the topic she was teaching. Hence, she claimed her aim was quite basic, to "choose songs that they are familiar with first." Kariel expressed using the selected familiar songs in her lessons to expand the students' notation knowledge. She reported saying to the students, "let's use those letters now. Now that you learn that pop song with those letters, let's go to the sheet music now. It has the same B and the same A." This way she developed the students' music literacy by relating what the students heard with what they saw on a traditional music score.

With the onset of online teaching at her school, Kariel admitted that she gradually increased her selection of songs that were familiar to the students. When she introduced

students to musical form, she seemingly found that it was an effective approach to start with familiar music and then move towards other genres including classical music. When she taught a lesson on form in music, she said, "I have to come with songs they know already" so that she can relate easily related the topic to the students' music. She found it effective to "go [the] pop way first or [use] stuff that they know, and then I now have to move it down to what I want." This was the best way to merge the students' preferred music along with Kariel's music selection that was relevant to the topic. She acknowledged that her approach directly responded to the current needs of her pop-oriented students. Although she implied trusting its effectiveness, Kariel revealed she was hoping that her pedagogical approach would evolve over time:

> So that's the approach I have been taking. It has been working. And so, I hope to continue this way and see how best I can take over and just start looking at what I want first but, that's how it's working for the boys. That's how it's working so far.

Kariel's music selection process involved her students suggesting songs through various means in class. This included the earlier discussed "request" sessions and impromptu suggestions during the classes. In the online classes, students communicated their suggestions either verbally or through the chat feature in the online platform. She stated that using an inclusive approach to music selection comes with its own issues, mainly the students' uncontrolled over-exuberance. The issue of "clean" lyrics, mainly related to language, also formed a part of the selection process. Kariel admitted trying to negotiate these situations without marginalising her students' choices. She also noted that

these music preference sessions were time restricted and were not done on a regular basis. She said she had to manage "40-odd" students and she further explained "sometimes I don't like the choices that they are coming up with." She expressed her concern that students would not always select "gospel" songs or "all the clean stuff." She would follow up with the students by making statements similar to this:

> "Guys, all right, we're not going to focus on the dancehall today. All right? Even though you gave me that song, let us see if we can listen to this other one. It's a pop song, I know you like it." And I have to sell it [laughing].

Sometimes Kariel asked her students to "put in the chat or so your favourite song and let's see if you can relate form in music [or whichever topic] to this." She acknowledged that this approach was one that must be carefully done as she saw it going wrong in her class on previous occasions. With the impromptu in-class selections, she explained that "I'm a little afraid because I would [normally] have to listen to the music ahead of time to see if it is appropriate for class." She said, "I try to warn them before" to select songs that were acceptable in the classroom setting. As a part of her pedagogical approach, she would give examples of the kind of music she was seeking from the students. She specified using the exemplar repertoire to set the criteria for music selection prior to engaging the students in a collective discourse on the repertoire. However, in Kariel's own words, "not all of them would really hit the nail on the head for me." Therefore, she viewed her evaluative process as critical to the music selection process.

When selecting music for classes, Kariel admitted that she cannot please all students. Considering that music selection was integral to engaging the students, the

pieces selected were usually in the general direction of the students' preferred music, but not always. There were times Kariel found it "very difficult" to "please all of them," so she took this approach:

> Sometimes I kind of just say all right, because they like this on a general scale, let's say this kind of music, I would go for that kind of music. So, I'm guilty there. … I don't even please them sometimes, believe me. I just say, "this is it; this is what we're listening to."

Although Kariel stated that she thought about "their musical culture," she reiterated that she did not do it "on a regular basis" when she planned her lessons.

Spending time selecting songs in class with the students was not always the best use of time. The class lasts only forty minutes, and for Kariel, it was not enough time to unfold a detailed lesson or to cover many of the topics from her syllabus. To mitigate the teacher music selection based on students' preferences, Kariel revealed she often attended her classes with pre-selected repertoire. However, these pieces were selected with the knowledge of her students' music preferences and their general music culture:

> So sometimes I just come with the song and say guys, "you are familiar with the song." Sometimes I may ask "are you not familiar with this song?" Sometimes, for some of them [they] are not always listening to that. But yeah, I know, I try not to let them choose all the time.

This was one way she found a balance between students' preference and her music selection process.

Kariel stated that music selection was also associated with the activity to be explored in class. She revealed that the limited time period was often on the forefront of her mind, and it influenced her lesson preparation. Her music selection was not only limited by the 40-minute single period, but also the level of the students. She thought that her students' life experiences as teenagers and their level of maturity seemingly helped with the repertoire that played out in the selected lesson activity. The music examples needed to be relatively short, and the accompanying activities had to be engaging but succinct due to the limited time. Yet, she said selecting familiar music can aid a "deeper appreciation" of the students' own music when next they listen. Although Kariel leaned towards popular music genres, she revealed that broadening student's understanding of music was also important to her. She mentioned the following after one of the observation sessions:

> I would put a little bit of the classical, the Western art music in, because I mean we want to get their ears to another level, listening to different things. And as you noticed, you would have seen me show them the sheet music that is actually going along with that so that they are seeing the relationship between what we teach … [and students may eventually say] "I'm hearing this beautiful song coming from this Western art music." So I think it's just to get them to listen widely, and also to appreciate music of different genres.

This was her way of expanding students' music concepts and exposure to music beyond their preferred listening choices. With Kariel's approach, the students seemed to have opportunities to explore other music cultures in the music classroom.

Students in the Music Classroom

Students Classroom Music Expectations. In Kariel's opinion, students at Sterling High attended music classes with the expectation that music was solely a practical class that was fun. Kariel said that "they just think it's supposed to be fun alone. ... So, I just try to mix it up." Irrespective of the mode of delivery, Kariel appeared to believe that students expected to participate in practical music activities as they deemed them enjoyable. They also expected accompanying written study notes from Kariel, similar to their other academic subjects. She says it in this way: "They [students] want you [teacher] to engage them in musical activities" that prepared them for in-class activity. Thereafter, the music teacher was expected to give them the "notes" for the class. Kariel stated that when students were engaged in the face-to-face setting, they "wouldn't mind doing practical every day." The practical experience was expected in all music classes and reading materials were not.

> The boys. They wouldn't mind seeing the instruments out every class. And they just keep playing as a group or come up and do some presentation of some sort. Yeah. The question would [be] "Miss, do we have a book for music?" That's the first question. "Miss, are we going to do an exam for music?"

When these questions were asked, Kariel relayed that she told the students that an examination is a part of the course assessment. She routinely explained that she was teaching to pass on concepts in music and during the process, assessments were necessary to determine what they understood. Although Kariel did not want students to focus on music as an "exam-oriented" subject, she recognised that the students treated music as

somewhat important when there are grades involved.

Students' Response. When students were attending classes in-person, Kariel revealed that they were more explicit with their thoughts on music used in their classes. In the online setting, they spoke and interacted less as a group. When music was unfamiliar to students, especially pieces that were not from popular music genres, she expressed that they were not always willing to listen to them without expressing their negative feelings towards them including asking the teacher to try another kind of music:

> "That's boring Miss" … I wouldn't get everybody saying it, but once I put, let's say a Western art, a Chopin or something, "Miss, Miss, nuh badda come wid dat, Miss. Yuh nuh know da one yah, Miss."[7] I'm like, "let's take the time to appreciate this music. So the hesitance, I will get that. "Miss, that is an old-time music." Hear our music nuh, Miss?

With these kinds of negative comments and attitudes, Kariel described finding ways to encourage the students by giving them sociocultural contexts and contextual listening. She experienced the same lack of interest from some students when using old Jamaican popular music including ska.

> Take a listen to my thing nuh man. Take a listen to what use to happen back in the day and with this Ska music. Look how they're moving their hands. And I push back the seat and I say "come man!" [showing them the dance moves that goes with the genre]. Craziness just to get them. Mostly second form [Grade 8] though.

She revealed mainly taking this approach with Grade 8 classes. With Grade 9 students,

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[7] Interpretation: "Miss, do not bother to play that music. Do you know this one?"

she had conversations with them to point out the need for serious study and participation at their level. At that stage, she was seemingly less compromising with the students' approach to the content.

There were times when students' responses to music used in class were contrary to what Kariel expected. Sometimes she thought her selections were spot on, but she admitted that the students' responses were not supporting her initial plan or perception. She had the following experience with a Grade 9 class:

> I brought a particular piece to the class. … I think it was some cartoon theme. And right away, I thought that they would have liked this cartoon. Because I was saying okay, theme related, they're saying "Miss, that's foolishness. We don't watch that."

Kariel observed that students responded positively to practical activities when they were in-person in the music classroom. She stated that the instruments were laid out in the class ahead of time allowing the students to move toward the instruments they wanted to explore on that day:

> So, when they come to class and see the layout already, they will gravitate and run towards a particular instrument, and I would say "Okay, I see what you like." And so I would feed from that energy and just allow them to, you know, learn the different skill sets on that [instrument], for that particular class.

Whether online or face-to-face, exploring musical sounds seemed integral to the learning experience students had in Kariel's general music class. In her view, there were times when she struggled to limit her involvement in her classroom activities, and she

thought it was directly related to her personality. However, she was apparently aware that she needed to continuously shift to give students time to explore musical concepts during a class especially when they were creating melodies, rhythms, or ensemble related pieces. She thought it was also very important to provide opportunities for students to create and explore while in the online space. Yet in the online setting, she found it difficult to consistently encourage student participation and stimulate the real-time responsiveness she admittedly craved. Kariel reflected on her students' responsiveness and stated that she "wanted to now give them that space, and I'll be their facilitator, and I give them whatever virtual instrument they'll want to use." She also stated that she "did try that with a class and it flopped." She further stated:

> Nobody wanted to create. I said, "that was the beginning of the activity," and I say "all right, now that we are familiar with the forms and so forth, alright, it's time now for your creation. Use whatever is in your house, anything you want, to do [represent] any musical instrument, whether yuh madda [your mother's] pot, whatever. Create your own. Everybody was silent.

In instances such as these, Kariel noted that she was very concerned about the students' non-response. She said "I started to reflect like, oh my God! How can I get them, like pull them out a little bit more." When she eventually asked the students about their lack of involvement in the class, they were very open with how they felt about that activity, in particular. The students simply responded, "Miss, Miss, we just don't want to do that!" Coming out of that experience, she was determined to find online solutions that would engage the students and the Chrome Lab shared piano was one such option.

Navigating the (COVID-19) Music Classroom

Facilitating Online Learning. At the time of this study, Sterling High music classroom was transformed by the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Face-to-face classes were suspended for an extended period and virtual classrooms were the norm. This was a major shift for music teachers like Kariel Sky as she no longer had access to students in a live classroom teaching general music ensembles. She recognised that a shift was necessary, and she had to make the transition to the online space. Throughout the classes, Kariel's demeanour was welcoming and encouraged participation in class. Her "bubbly" personality was on display and could be witnessed from the outset of each session when she engaged the students as they entered the virtual classroom.

Like many of the public schools under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI), Sterling High School for Boys used Google Classroom as their online teaching and learning platform during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, Kariel taught information technology (IT) and her skills as an IT specialist seemingly helped her to navigate and manipulate the technological space with relative ease. Nevertheless, moving from the physical space to a virtual mode had its challenges, but Kariel revealed that she did her own research and sought help to learn more about virtual instruments and websites that supported online music teaching and learning:

> I'm using virtual instruments. … I found a site and I say "bookmark right away" because it allows them to compose their rhythm, listen back to the rhythm. … It has a staff and everything that they can [use to] compose. It is not a programme, it's just a [web]site.

Although musical activities were explored in the virtual space using available technology, Kariel found ways for students to clap or playback their rhythmic exercises or compositions so that the class could hear them. Ultimately, she and her students learned how to use virtual instruments so that they enabled the class to play together. She stated that the students enjoyed playing their "regular triad chords" and their school song on their laptops. Students were assigned projects that included creating video presentations as homework that would later be assessed. Kariel said that her students enjoyed "playing the keyboard on the computer," hence she incorporated this and other online activities into her classes. Notwithstanding, Kariel noted that most of the students in her class had laptops, but two students joined the class by phone and that limited their participation.

Cameras On or Off. Although Kariel kept her camera on, most students requested to keep their cameras off during the classes. They cited expensive data packages and connectivity as the major issues. Although she understood the various reasons, Kariel expressed her disappointment with students' cameras turned off. In an already difficult online modality, students having their cameras off did not make it any easier for her to communicate in the online space when speaking to students with blank screens or screens with names or pictures only. She constantly spoke about feeding off her students' energy and for her, seeing their expressions of emotion and their corresponding physical responses to musical activities allowed her to better assess students understanding or grasp of concepts.

The cameras staying off did not appear to affect Kariel's determination to help

students become more engaged and responsive in the classes. Students were called by name when questions were asked, and they were mostly responsive when selected to respond. Students regularly communicated in the chat room by answering questions or commenting on arbitrary matters. Students' comments in the chat were sometimes read aloud by Kariel, especially when they were answering questions she verbally posed to the class. Without disrupting the flow of the classes, Kariel skilfully and seamlessly went between talking, manipulating her visual displays, and monitoring the chat, and engaging in musical activities.

Students and Teacher Interaction. Although Kariel seemed to believe that her strength as a teacher was better exhibited in the face-to-face setting, she appeared to adapt well to the online classes. Similar to her in-person class description, each lesson started with an introductory activity specifically designed to get the students participating from the beginning. Through the duration of her classes, PowerPoint presentations and videos were used to stimulate conversations and students were engaged through Kariel's questions and student responses. Students expressed their love for songs used by Kariel and mentioned their preference for both the lyrics and the music.

Similar to her description of her face-to-face classes, Kariel used imagery and real-life experiences to explain her concepts and students responded positively to that approach. But the main part of the interaction between the students and the teacher was enabled by the teachers' use of engaging visual content to support the concepts in the topic. This is consistent with Kariel's expressed interest in using visual content to support her face-to-face lessons. To Kariel's delight, students were very interactive with her,

positively talkative with their peers, and were active participants in the chat room where Kariel responded quickly to questions. For the most part, questions were topic-based and did not veer away from the general objective of the class. The teacher encouraged verbal communication throughout each class and her frequent questions were deliberately posed to encourage the "gentlemen" to speak with her during the session. As Kariel pointed out in the interviews, she expected frequent verbal communication from the students and that expectation was on display in the online setting.

Teacher Selected Activities. Kariel's classes were highly interactive, and she used a wide range of activities focused on listening and appraising and introductory composition. The listening activities were supported by popular songs presented through music videos. Students were asked to identify sections of songs and pieces, and in other cases, to post links to one of their favourite songs for use in class. However, due to the limited class time, a constraint Kariel frequently referenced in the interviews, she mainly focused on short clips and in this case, the first part of the songs. To reinforce and assess student learning, quizzes were sometimes used as a summative activity. Overall, the students' participation in each activity appeared to be important to Kariel and the selected activities worked well in this instance.

Throughout each class observed, Kariel used various activities to engage the students. Introductory activities were used to lay the platform for the later activities in the class. Like her description of the dancehall songs used at the beginning of her in-person classes, she asked topic related questions that piqued the students' interest from the outset. Students seemed to relate well to her use of analogy including relating structure in

life with structure in music. The virtual piano was used by the teacher and students to demonstrate contrasting melodies and to compose simple contrasting phrases in A-B form. Interestingly, she employed class activities that required the students to perform quick Google searches to identify other musical forms. These activities, conducted at different times in the lesson, were done like competitions and performed with much enthusiasm by the students.

Kariel sometimes sought creative approaches to executing her listening topics. In one class, she shared a pre-recorded video of five visual activities requiring students to identify each time a symbol or activity was changed. This included contrasting dance moves intended to represent A-B form; a child using their voice as a beat box performing contrasting sections (A-B-A); a can, a box, then two cans, placed on top of each other with a pause in-between each placement (A-B-A-A). The dance moves recorded by the teacher were popular contemporary street dances associated with current dancehall, so the students were excited about that addition, not to mention that it was done by their "vibes" teacher. Although the students understood the concepts very well, the lesson was not geared towards sound-based music activities. She expressed that the activity was designed for conceptual development as the content will be applied to subsequent lessons exploring arranging and composition. Nevertheless, this activity endorsed Kariel's expressed willingness to explore interdisciplinary approaches in the music classroom.

Music Repertoire and Students Reaction. In all three observation sessions, Kariel used multiple video clips, mainly from YouTube. The repertoire used were based on the teacher's music preference and they were all popular genres. I further noted the

following:

- The song used to introduce form was based on a pop song by Taylor Swift
- Music repertoire used were foreign pop songs most students were familiar with
- A pop/R&B song by DJ Khalid was used to identify form in one activity
- Students selected their own songs, all popular, and posted the link in the chat

All clips were relatively short music examples. However, the third listening example was longer and Kariel presented it in small sections before questions were asked of the students. This approach was deliberate as she thought it offered the students an opportunity to better assimilate the excerpts when preparing to respond.

The video listening example based on a Taylor Swift song was stopped at a point where the band instruments were shown on screen. The students were able to see the instruments and a discussion ensued around them. Kariel was deliberate about using short videos except for the introductory videos. She expressed that students can easily lose focus if the listening examples were lengthy. Many of the clips were less than one minute. However, she consistently asked the students topic related questions about what they heard in the excerpts. She prompted the students using targeted questions and the students were mostly responsive. She also engaged students by asking them to respond to their classmates' answers or queries. This made the class highly interactive throughout. Students seemed generally interested in the activities and with the music selected as they were visibly and verbally very responsive. However, sometimes it was difficult for me to assess students like or dislike of a song as most cameras were off and some students were quiet throughout.

In another session, the music repertoire used consisted of a variety of musical styles that were mostly non-popular music. They included:

- A cartoon video clip playing “Row, Row, Row your boat” (children’s song) demonstrating A-B (binary) form
- Offenbach melody (classical), arranged for keyboard, used as an example for 2-part form
- Rap song (mumble rap) to demonstrate strophic form
- Greensleeves (classical) used to demonstrate contrasting A-B sections.

Students had mixed responses to the music selections. Moderate interest was shown in the “Row, Row…” listening example as students were very cordial in their responses. My first reaction was to question if it was age appropriate. Kariel explained in one of the interviews that she discarded this music example when she taught the lesson to the other Grade 9 classes. She did not find it an effective musical example, hence her change in approach. However, the students responded positively to the rap and the two classical pieces, and they were able to identify the contrasting sections with relative ease. There was a general acceptance of the popular and classical music selected by the music teacher and the music selections did not negatively affect students’ participation and response.

During the session that had an interdisciplinary approach, there were two music video clips used to demonstrate Rondo form. The first example was a “jazz-funk” oriented piece, and the other was classical. Of the two listening activities, the students were not provided an opportunity to listen to any of the pieces in their entirety as the teacher regularly interrupted the class to ask students guided questions about what they

heard. When the listening was truncated, the sense of structure was disrupted by frequent questions from the teacher who was trying to ensure that the students heard the points she was trying to highlight. This seemed to interrupt the students listening at the macro level and did not give a sense of musical continuity. After listening to a minute of the classical piece, the teacher stated to the students that it was “more complicated” to listen to when compared to the previous jazz-funk rondo. She did not say why it was “more complicated,” and the students did not question it. The excerpt was a relatively simple classical piano work by Beethoven, Für Elise.

Teaching Strategies and Music Selection. Kariel used her singing voice to support the musical points she shared in her classes. During the observation sessions, she used a variety of visual aids including videos and charts, and a diverse set of music that did not include any Jamaican or Caribbean music genres. Confirming what we discussed in the interviews, I observed that Kariel was quite savvy using technology including various screens, videos, online charts, multiple websites, and integrating these and the chat feature into her class. She encouraged her students by acknowledging them or their actions, and at times congratulated them for their enthusiastic participation in activities such as the Google search activity. On one occasion, the students expressed their love for the songs used for the homework activity. They were both popular songs from North America.

Within Kariel’s highly structured and organised virtual classroom environment, there was a sense of flexibility in her approach to teaching and engaging the students. She skilfully addressed questions and side matters as they arose and for the classes I

observed, these diversions did not disrupt the flow of the class nor divert her from her objectives. For emphasis, she constantly reviewed her points with the students and was able to provide effective summaries at the end of each lesson. Kariel demonstrated that she was often conscious of the limited time for the 40-minute single period class that was convened once per week. But she was able to limit the breadth of the class so that she could present more depth with the content.

Summary

Kariel Sky was very passionate about teaching and her students. She stated that she tried to adapt good teaching habits and through her personality, engaged students in meaningful ways. She kept her class activities moving rather quickly due to the limited time slot afforded to music classes at Sterling High School for Boys. She tried to fit a generous amount of content and activities in each class in order to engage the students in meaningful ways. Sometimes it was difficult to assess student engagement due to the cameras being off, but there were enough students who responded at appropriate times leading to a comfortable level of acceptance by Kariel.

When selecting music for the classes, Kariel seemed inclined to use pop songs that the students were familiar with. However, she selected her songs very carefully and gravitated to those with “clean lyrics” or using the instrumental versions of these songs. She selected many songs and pieces that were not student preferred repertoire, but they worked well and seemingly did not put off the students. Generally, her expressed aim was to broaden students’ music appreciation and exposure to other kinds of music beyond what they know, expand their understanding of music and their listening skills, while

tapping into their innate creativity through guided activities. To achieve these objectives, practical activities were intertwined with theoretical constructs. She realised that students wanted to be active participants in class, and similarly, she recognised that she was a work in progress as she needed to balance student participation and her natural "bubbly" personality during class activities.

Kariel made her class notes and recordings available to students so that they can review them in their own time. She acknowledged that in her mind, she did not have 100% success with her activities and music selections. But she stated that reflective practice was a routine part of her teaching and she regularly evaluated herself to see how she can improve her teaching. Kariel hoped that in the future she will be afforded a double period so that she can engage students in more activities, deepen their musical skills, and prepare and enter them for advanced music examinations if they continued through to Grade 11.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANTHONY VAUGHN: TEACHING MUSIC AT BLUECAM HIGH SCHOOL

"I find myself … teaching theory first and then teach how to apply the theory to the practical. … I tend to try and use our folk music and our indigenous type of music … as much as possible"

- Anthony Vaughn, Music Teacher at Bluecam High School

Introduction

Bluecam High School

Bluecam High School is a co-educational public secondary institution located in the city of Kingston. The school has been in existence for over 90 years and registers students from a wide range of backgrounds. In the 2018–2019 academic year, Bluecam High had an enrolment of just over 1900 students, in excess of 90% student attendance, and a student teacher ratio of approximately 18:1. Bluecam has a reputation as an elite high school as it has consistently graduated young scholars who excel in their academic pursuits. Based on the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) rankings for Jamaican secondary schools, Bluecam High consistently ranks in the top 20 each year among the over 170 secondary level schools in the island.

The student population at Bluecam High seems to be primarily children of middle-class parents. Due to its academic reputation, some students from rural Jamaica travel far distances or relocate to the city to attend the school. However, many of the students are from the Parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew and adjoining parishes including St. Catherine and St. Thomas. Bluecam High School enrols students from

Grade 7 through 13, and they have over 100 teachers on staff. The school currently has one music teacher who is responsible for the general music classes and the extracurricular music activities including the performance choir and popular band. The school has a rich music tradition and has been very successful in local competitions such as the highly competitive high school choir competition, All Together Sing. They are frequent entrants in the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) annual festival of the arts music competition where they have won numerous gold medals and declared the all-island national champions on multiple occasions.

Anthony Vaughn

With a background in piano performance and music education, Anthony Vaughn saw students' music education as a process that used theory to support practice. This philosophy, he claimed, guided his approach to the music curriculum and his expectations from students in his music classes. Anthony started his music teaching career as a pre-trained teacher in 2006. His teaching came at the end of his first stint in college when he was studying piano performance and pedagogy at a prominent music school in Kingston. Although he was enrolled in a 3-year diploma, his studies continued for an additional year so that he could complete some outstanding courses. His mother had committed to funding his tertiary education for four years only, and it was at that point that he decided to find a teaching job so he did not have to "stress her out" to provide for him. Therefore, his music teaching career came out of a need for a steady job to offset his costs and living expenses. Anthony said that he "looked for a job as a teacher 'cause that's probably was the easiest thing at the time.

Born in rural Jamaica where he completed his early education up to high school, Anthony's dream was to move to the island capital, Kingston. His main plan was to get a good musical education so that he could "tour and play fi artiste," a dream that did not fully materialise. Although music teaching was not his first choice as a career, his teaching experience led him to develop a passion for teaching. He later decided to re-enrol at his college where he completed a bachelor's degree in music education in 2018. So far, his teaching journey has taken him through at least three preparatory schools (private elementary/primary level schools) and two secondary schools. His previous high school experience lasted one academic year and was conducted at a single-sex boys' school in "uptown" Kingston. In some ways, this gave him a unique perspective as he had covered the gamut of music education from kindergarten through to the secondary level. His diverse experience led him to personally conduct comparative and situational analyses as he developed pedagogy to deliver music as a subject and as a life experience to students at these levels.

At the time of this interview, one year after the onset of the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic, Anthony was in his second year of teaching at Bluecam High. The pandemic halted some of the developmental plans he had for his music programme as his ensembles were not meeting during the period and he could not procure the range of instruments he wanted to expand the classroom music experience. However, the music programme continued online with periods of frequent manoeuvring and adjustments necessary to make the classes effective and meaningful. Anthony taught general music to students in Grades 7, 8, and 9. His desire was to re-develop the music programme and return to

entering students for the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) levels in Grades 11, 12, and 13. He also planned to prepare students to enter the theory and practical music examinations through the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM). These, he stated, could be low hanging fruits as they are easily achieved with the school's current infrastructure and access to instructional materials. However, in his estimation, there needed to be at least one more full-time music teacher to accomplish this task.

I conducted three interviews and observed one of Anthony's Grade 8 classes on three separate occasions. This took place over a 4-week period between April and May 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, classes were conducted and observed in an online platform, Google Classroom. My Informed Consent form was sent to Anthony Vaughn prior to the data collection process. He granted me his written permission to observe the classes. After seeking permission, Bluecam's principal also gave me written approval to observe Anthony's class. Like the students and with the teacher's permission, I logged into the Google Classroom and viewed all activities that took place in the virtual classroom. I saw the same screen viewed by the students and had access to comments generated in the chat feature. On each occasion when I joined the class, my camera was turned off and I was not an active participant in the class. Like many Jamaican public schools, students often refer to male teachers, such as Anthony Vaughn, as "Sir."

Findings for Anthony Vaughn

In this section of chapter five, I present data and findings relevant to the case of Anthony Vaughn. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and class

observations. Five major themes emerged from the data. They are (1) Navigating Theory and Practical, (2) Teaching and Learning in Action, (3) Music Selection and Preference, (4) Students in the Music Classroom, and (5) Navigating the (COVID-19). A summary of the conclusions drawn from the case are presented at the end of the chapter.

Navigating Theory and Practical

Philosophical Grounding. Anthony Vaughn expressed that students should be thinkers who spend time deciphering issues and resolving situations. He liked when "students figure things out." In his estimation, the Jamaican society did not routinely partake in the active development of problem-solving skills from a young age. As a teacher, Anthony seemed to believe it was his responsibility to empower students to think critically:

> I like to challenge them. I think that's one of the struggles we have in our society, now. We don't have a lot of people who like to think for themselves or they don't like to figure out things. The critical thinking is weak. So I tend to lean towards that kind of a challenge in my classes.

This philosophical position appeared to influence Anthony's approach to teaching and learning, and the ways in which he managed his classes and treated his students. In his opinion, students should be given the requisite tools and opportunities so that they may achieve their potential. Thus, with a thoughtful approach and with guided experiences, students "should learn and understand" in more effective ways.

It was Anthony's opinion that being a thinker was critical to everyone's existence, not only for students. People in general, and teachers in this instance, needed to be

"deliberate" about what they did and how things were done:

> We don't have a lot of people who are deliberate with what they do, not just in music, just in life, in general. Them just do things and dem nuh know why dem do it. It nuh mek no sense. You haffi [must] know what you doing and why you doing it.

Anthony further expressed that every action should have a deliberate and supporting thought process so that it can be repeated effectively. Ultimately, people should have a general understanding of how and why they do what they do. The COVID-19 pandemic, which triggered some amount of pedagogical adjustments while teaching online, also influenced his "theory influencing practical" philosophy. He stated it in the following way:

> I have a reason; I have a purpose. … So that's the philosophy. That's why I usually tend to lean to theory then practical. But, as I say, it's kind of changing now where I am putting them hand in hand. So, I think online force[d] me to do that more.

Anthony took into the music classroom his "problem solving" philosophy and it guided his overall approach to teaching and learning. He seemed to believe that his philosophy afforded him opportunities to better unearth students' potential in the music classroom, and the approach supported critical thinking and informed decision making.

Balancing Theory and Practical. Another aspect to his philosophical position involved creating a balance between theory and practical. He said he found himself "teaching theory first and then teach how to apply the theory to the practical." Anthony

sometimes found this approach difficult to balance as the theoretical underpinning was needed to support the practical application. He admitted that "sometimes it's not the best approach," but his inclination was to get the "theory out a di way[8], and then we can have all the fun with the practical." Although this approach was his expressed preference and a method he trusted, he admitted that slavishly approaching teaching in this way can have it disadvantages. But overall, theory feeding the practice spoke to his philosophy on music education:

> It tends to be sometimes, feel a little boring. So I've been trying to revamp how I do that and try and intersperse everything. So, you could probably call it that I'm a bit in transition, at the moment. But I lean towards challenging the student[s] to think, and also doing theory, first. I like to get that out the way.

Anthony's explained that his philosophy derived from his personal view that his strength was in the theoretical aspects of music. He said, "one of my strongest musical attributes has been theory and aurals." Hence, his love for theory "subconsciously" took over his entire music thinking process and supported his practical pursuits.

In Anthony's view, there was a symbiotic relationship between music theory and music performance, the end goal being making music come alive. The performance was more successful when there was a solid understanding of how the theory and practical supported each other. Anthony said, "I think they work hand in hand. For me, I don't like to do anything that I don't know." Although he expressed appreciation for his students "who can play something," he much preferred when they were aware of how they

[8] Literal translation: "Out of the way"

accomplished their tasks. For Anthony, understanding the process had some value. He said:

> If you're just going by the seat of your pants and you don't know what you're doing, then guess what, you cyaa[9] educate anybody else. You cyaa uplift anybody. You can just keep showing them what to do, but then, they don't know what they're doing.

Anthony felt this was particularly important for music teachers as they were expected to educate students in schools giving clear explanations and guidance. For Anthony, he seemed to believe that a teacher needs to have a strong understanding of content in music with a solid theoretical underpinning. It was his opinion that these skills were developed through teacher training, experience, ongoing teacher reflection, and careful music analysis. Anthony relived a typical story he experienced at the high school he taught at prior to Bluecam High:

> I remember when I was at Wesley Boys School[10], you had students used to just come in to the music room and say "Sir, I can play the piano." An mi seh, "Really, play sop'm for me?" And they'll play this John Legend song that they learn on YouTube. And so I said "all right, what key is that you're playing in? I don't know, sir. Can you play it in a different key? No." So, they really don't know what they're doing, they just swat [cram] something and … I don't like that.

Anthony pointed out that he made it a part of his duty to educate students so that the

[9] Cannot
[10] Pseudonym

theoretical grounding supported their practical expressions of music. He went further to state:

> If you're playing Mary Had a Little Lamb, you should know what key it [is] in. You should know what degree of the scale, what are the notes. So, if I tell you go up to G and play it, you should be able to probably play it in G by trying to think about what it is. That's just my belief in terms of education, music wise. … We're not very educated in terms of what we're doing. So we can't create.

Anthony realised that people could create music without theoretical knowledge of music, but he thought his mission was to help students become musically literate without losing their creativity. This, in his estimation, would raise the level of understanding of music and improve composition and performance in schools. He stated that a sound theoretical knowledge would give opportunities for learners to broaden their understanding and creative approach to music.

Anthony went further and expressed his viewpoint that Jamaicans "create a lot based on feel. And while that is good, there still needs to be a bit of a thought process" when creating music. Although an overly general statement, Anthony lamented that Jamaicans in the music industry were musically talented, but there were times when the modern local music had a sense of sameness to the sound:

> I think that's part of the reason why the music in Jamaica just sound so one sided. Somebody do one type of rhythm, then everybody do that one type of rhythm. Nobody is creating and going around and tweak this, tweak that, turn that upside. Like we're not doing it.

This was a direct reference to music tracks, known as "riddim" tracks, used by multiple singers, in particular sing-jays and dancehall artistes, to create songs. He noted that Jamaican performers and producers promoted the use of one riddim track with multiple creators of lyrics. Anthony said he found this approach somewhat limiting in scope and created a disadvantage when compared with overseas musicians. He stated that "we're brilliant in terms of getting the information, but they [overseas musicians] can [better] manipulate it [the music] because they know it. They know it. Inside out." In his estimation, this disparity was "partly because we don't understand the theory behind it and how it operate[s]."

Theory and Practical in Transition. Anthony was of the opinion that the unfolding of his philosophy in the classroom was in "transition." Due to his face-to-face experience and the advent of online learning, he apparently recognised there needed to be a careful balance between theory and practical. He modified the execution of his principle, that of "heavy theory and then practical," as he did not want to lose the students focus and attention. He noticed that students lost interest if the theoretical aspects outweighed the in-class practical experience, and that seemingly led him to regularly "incorporate" both aspects. He continued by stating, "you can't just do theory alone. Students gwine sleep pah yuh."[11] The change in Anthony's pedagogical approach appeared to make him rethink his teaching strategy. He said:

> I have to now incorporate little activities, whether it's sop'm weh dem click, or dem go and blow sop'm." … I try to use the practical to bring out the theory and

[11] Interpreted as "students will fall asleep in your class."

> vice versa … it can't be just one sided. So I think I'm in transition now.

He mentioned coming to the realisation that leaning towards a practical application of theoretical concepts was important, not only for him, but also his students as it kept their interest.

Teaching and Learning in Action

Music Curriculum. Anthony did not use the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) designed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI) for Grades 7 through 9. He said he took aspects of the curriculum and formulated his own music syllabus for Bluecam. He declared that he has some philosophical issues with the NSC because it did not cover some of the contemporary issues students faced in the modern music classroom and argued that the pedagogical approach needed attention. He also asserted that other aspects were not age appropriate and should be designed for lower grades:

> I use some aspects of it [NSC]. But the truth is, I don't I don't know [if] I agree with a lot of what it's teaching, so to speak, in this day and age. In this age, I think it has good topics in it and good concepts, but I think we need to pull it more into the 21st century in terms of how we teach these topics. … We need to add more of the modern-day music into it. While there's the composition and the appraising and those things, I mean, a sound collage for high school work? That nah really work.[12] No, dat nah really work!

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[12] That does not work well.

When Anthony adapted aspects of the NSC, he expressed modifying the tasks and outcomes to suit the students in his classes. He sometimes added technological elements to the requirements if students already had a technology-based background. He explained his use of the content in the following way:

> If I do that [use the NSC suggested activity], what I tend to have to do is, I have to use the drums and cymbals and the recorder. So I can't use, "oh, I'm going to make a storm." I say, now, we a go mek[13] a dancehall beat. So, alright, what is the boof? Boop, boop, boop, boop (while clapping the rhythm). And that's how I have to do it. So I can go back and say "let's create a storm."

Anthony stated that he chose more contemporary ways to introduce his topics, ways that were relatable to the students and more familiar to their contexts. He spoke of trying a similar activity when he was teaching at the boys' high school, and they refused to do the activity as they thought of it as child-like. He went on to say, "I don't know if I try that at Bluecam if it will work. But, Wesley [High], probably worse. [They] won't do it. 'Cause those kids are like, 'Sir, really?'" Ultimately, Anthony appeared to view the curriculum as something broader than what he observed the MoEYI had to offer. At Bluecam, his stated desire was to broaden the scope of the music offerings to include possibly CSEC music, but definitely ABRSM music theory and practical examinations for students who continued music in the higher grades, mainly 10 and 11.

With the current syllabus, Anthony disclosed he was not able to utilize his performance skills as much as he would have liked because he was mainly covering

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[13] We will create…

theoretical concepts in the general music classroom. He said, “we don’t get that much to do within the scope [of the class].” This was mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic that forced the classes online. But he was hoping to incorporate his performance training more when the classes returned to face-to-face and if students advanced to take music in Grades 10 and 11. He stated, “probably when I start doing more, probably CSEC type things, I’ll be able to pull on that more for the students for that aspect of the curriculum. But not for lower school so much.”

Anthony stated that his concept of what the music curriculum should be was influenced by his teacher education training. At the time of his music education training, one of his methods teachers spoke to the nature of music in the Jamaican classroom and this was his account and reaction:

> What we do in Jamaica is a lot of appreciation of music. And at first I didn’t understand as I was saying what’s the point of learning to teach music if all I’m going to the school to do is just do an appreciation of music.

Apparently, his initial reaction was “I don’t need to learn to do that” because, with his training and education, he would be doing a lot more than teaching music appreciation. Now that Anthony has taught in the secondary school system, he claimed he could easily relate to his college lecturer’s claim of music appreciation being prevalent. With his experience in the school system, he appeared to realise that music appreciation is dominant because “not a lot of emphasis and importance is placed on music.” This directly affected the general music curriculum in a number of ways including the scope of the classes. Additionally, he stated, “most times you are hired to run a choir or a club”

and classroom music teaching is not as critical. He noted that it “just comes down from, I think, a societal kind of a thing, where the arts on a whole is not that important.”

Anthony revealed that he had a lot of leeway to determine the music curriculum used at Bluecam High. He reportedly designed the curriculum structure from Grades 7 to 9 and the NSC, although limited in its input, was featured. He said the following about the curriculum:

> So, in a sense, yeah. I still go to it and pick out the concepts of what they want to teach and I bring it in with what I am teaching. But really and truly I think they need to revamp it … ‘Cause I have a Grade 7 student who making beats. We need to tailor the curriculum now to suit those kids because that student nuh really waan hear notn ‘bout collage an dem sup’m deh. What I am more teaching now is how he should texture his instruments, while he’s making a beat. We would want to teach him that. At Grade 7 he is 12, and he can sell beats and make money. He is going to understand the value of music more through that, than if I am telling him music in my environment and dem sup’m deh.

With this approach in mind, Anthony contended that he saw a pathway to develop a music curriculum that responded to the needs of the Bluecam students:

> So I’ve been trying to set up that kind of setup at Bluecam. I think I want them to do Grade 2 [music theory] at Grade 8 [in school]. I’m working on it. I’m working on the syllabus and the timeline, so.

In the meantime, Anthony declared that “as long as I’m here, I’m trying to develop everything as best as I can. As between me and you, I’m not so fond of CSEC music. So,

I think it's so much work."

Anthony projected that the future of Bluecam High School music curriculum would include modern technology. Additionally, he claimed that students in the upper grades would complete a minimum Grade 5 music theory from the ABRSM. He expressed his leaning towards preparing students for the ABRSM theory exams because he thought it would be a good grounding for upper school music students in Grades 10 and 11 if they selected music. Although he admitted that the CSEC music syllabus was more rounded than ABRSM theory, he asserted that the ABRSM Grade 5 exam was more accessible to students:

> But I tend to lean towards ABRSM though. I think Grade 5 [music theory] usually gets them a bit grounded enough. … And if they have the aptitude for it, I let them do practical. But theory, theoretically wise, I want, I would love to get them by Grade 11 to have, to do ABRSM Grade 5. So, by Grade 8, I would probably want them to do Grade 1 or 2 [ABRSM].

Anthony claimed that including the CSEC syllabus as a part of the curriculum was difficult because he already had a full teaching load. He also expressed that the addition of a second teacher would eliminate teacher overload as the CSEC curriculum was diverse and to a certain extent, intense. In a WhatsApp group with other music teachers, some of whom were teaching CSEC music, he spoke to comments made by other music teachers with the music specialist at the MoEYI:

> I've been observing in the WhatsApp group that they have. And I'm not sure if I want to take on some of those stresses and especially with the workload that I

> have at Bluecam. … I'm working on getting them to probably think of getting another one [music teacher]. But I have to sell the programme well enough for them [administration] to do that.

He admitted that there was value preparing students for the CSEC music exam even if it did not take them to the level he would prefer to see at Grade 11. But he had a plan to further develop the Bluecam curriculum to include some aspects of CSEC music curriculum and at least one of the external music examinations:

> I would probably do ABRSM ... I'll take the composition and the arranging and the [pause], I'll do it with the students, but not for an exam, per se. I'll do the information and do that as a coursework kind of thing, then let them do ABRSM.

Although Anthony declared "that's where my headspace is" at that point, he was aware that his plans might change in the future.

Contextual Teaching and Learning. Anthony's opinion was that in the school system, music, as a subject, was not shown the respect that is generally accorded to the core subject areas of English, mathematics, and traditional sciences. Therefore, he asserted making an added effort to encourage student participation in his active teaching and learning classroom environment. He acknowledged that behaviour management was sometimes problematic in some schools, including the boys' high school he preciously taught at, but it was important to understand the teaching context in order to deliver a good quality programme. While chuckling, he stated that modern students in the school system are a "different breed a kids" and should be approached in various ways as "each setting is different." Wesley High School, a boys' school, had an attendance rate of less

than 80 percent, ranked in the top fifty for CSEC results with a pass rate of less than fifty percent. Bluecam, a co-educational institution, had a pass rate above eighty five percent. In general, two different sets of students in two different contexts.

However, Anthony thought his former Wesley students many times showed significant potential, and in his opinion, teachers needed to tap into that. He expressed his awareness that students were from “different social make up,” and at Bluecam, “the kids are little bit more sophisticated.” Additionally, when compared to average high school students, Anthony thought that Bluecam students were a “little bit more widely read” than students he interacted with in the past. He also noted that the Bluecam students were “quicker to state their point of view and [what’s on] their mind.” With these outspoken students, Anthony said he was comfortable challenging them in his classes and giving them opportunities to develop and excel.

Pedagogical Approach. Anthony stated that he was aware his pedagogical approach had “evolved a little” and developed over the period of his teaching career. He credited some key teachers for their ideas that he said, “stuck with me from high school days.” The teachers had a profound effect on him, and he tried to combine what he deemed were their strengths along with his training, education, and experience.

In his initial years as a pre-trained graduate teacher, Anthony spent much of his time teaching students at the primary level. At that time, his approach to teaching was seemingly geared towards fulfilling assessment requirements, and due to his students not having musical instruments, his focus was mainly on theoretical exercises that were easily graded:

> What I've found in my early years, thinking about it, students usually didn't have a lot of instruments ... So when they come to class, I used to just go to the theoretical aspect, and then the schools used to be a lot of assessment based kinda thing. So at the end of the term there has to be an exam and there has to be a test.

As a result of his approach during his early years of teaching, Anthony noted that he did not consider using "a more practical test" as a part of his assessment. He said, "I used to just teach a lot a theory, so that I can give them a written test at the end of the term" and satisfy the assessment goals of his administration.

As he became a more mature teacher, Anthony said he realised his approach was not ideal and students who studied music could also be practically assessed in effective ways. He recognised that "music has a practical part," and he should aim to "incorporate that some more" into his assessment methods. Although Anthony claimed he adjusted his approach, the general music classes were still heavily skewed towards theory. It was later when he was teaching at Wesley High, that he seemed better able to "merge the two a them," that of theory and practical. He noted that this included giving he practical activities the "heavier weighting" of the grade depending on the task. For Anthony, a "balance between the two" areas demonstrated a significant transition in his approach and one that was more desirable for and beneficial to his students.

Anthony credited his music education training with an improvement in his teaching approach. He pointed to the teachers of his music methods courses having a profound influence on his pedagogical approach:

> They used to break down some things. There were things that I would've done to a minor scale, probably because of experience, but then, when they broke it down and started explaining, I was like "oh!" It was like a whole different world came about and I think that kind a probably started a catalyst for this transition period as well.

He acknowledged that the education also made him aware of multiple ways of approaching a topic including adding demonstrative and practical elements. His new awareness of practical pedagogical approaches was enlightening, and he saw where it could make his class more meaningful to students:

> I realized that hey, there's a lot more ways I can make this theory fun, instead of just be hey, this is a crotchet, this is a quaver, that is a [whatever]. I can now say, "oh, a crotchet" [clapping a steady pulse], just to get them animated. 'Cause a lot of times music isn't animated enough. So, people just keep "oh, theory, ahh".

By "animated," Anthony was speaking about his students doing practical activities that encouraged active participation and brought musical concepts to life. He mentioned incorporating a range of ideas from his teacher education and training and spoke to using them to validate his trained music teacher status.

Although he did not discount the experience he acquired prior to becoming a trained graduate teacher, he was seemingly appreciative of the knowledge and skills gained from the music education training. He spoke of deliberately incorporating practical elements of music and used it to influence student involvement in his classes. His deduction, based on the results, was that the students usually liked the classes

because they were done in practical ways and not just as theoretical classes:

> They [students] usually like them [practical classes]. … especially because they are doing it. That's one of the things I got from out of the whole education training. Getting them to do it gets them more involved. So when they're doing it, they like it more than when they are just sitting there.

He appeared to be convinced that incorporating more practice-based elements into the general music classes provided the students an opportunity to better grasp the content taught. This was noticed even when a practical activity was related to music the students did not prefer. Anthony said it this way:

> So I realized that they'll own it more when they're doing it, even if they don't really like the song and it's not their song. Because it's something that they're doing in class and their friends might be doing it, everybody is doing it, at the end of the day, they grasp it. I can't complain because they grasp the concept.

To deliver the curriculum content, Anthony mentioned that he frequently related real-life contexts or tangible experiences. In his estimation, this was done to show students how music can operate in their own lives and not in hypothetical terms. Discussing the importance of music notation, Anthony related this story of a class he once had with his students:

> I remember once I was teaching how to use [music] theory. I was teaching note, notes, notation. We were talking about, just "why is it important?" And I was able to tell the kids, alright, so I was playing in a group, a band at one point, and we had a number of people to play for, and you have to learn different songs, and

> different intros. And how I remembered a lot of them is that I had to notate the rhythms and sometimes noted the melody of the introduction so that I don't forget it. You pull from the experience.

Anthony expressed his thinking that it was important to contextualise education so that students could see the possible benefits of what they learned inside the school when related to real-life experiences outside of the school system.

The onset of online solutions to general music education classes appeared to lead Anthony to make pedagogical adjustments to the delivery his course content. He sometimes found the situation difficult to manage, but Anthony stated that he exercised regular reflective practice, sought creative solutions, and made necessary adjustments to his teaching strategy:

> What I find I probably have to do now with the online thing is, I have to put it in an activity where they listen to it, and then I give them a question on it. Or I give them something to do like probably, clap the rhythm you hear, or, tell me what words, do you hear this interval, or something like that.

He noted that the classes had fewer performance-based practical activities when compared to the face-to-face sessions. At times he incorporated performance-based activities with individuals, but not as a group. With the online setting, he stated that latency with the sound was a real concern and created problems for group playing activities:

> Because they are in different spaces, you can't get them to clap together, you can't get them to sing together, you can't get them to play together. I have to tell

> them "look here, play that piece and send it on one a di online platforms." And then I end up sitting down for hours listening to Mary Had a Little Lamb [while chuckling].

It was not the ideal situation, but he made it work for himself and hopefully for the students.

Teacher flexibility was an important part of Anthony's pedagogical approach. There were times when he disclosed having to adjust his approach as there might have been issues with the students' interest level, understanding of the materials, or the activity selected might have had underlying issues on that day. In those instances, the activity would be temporarily discontinued:

> Sometimes I will be doing an activity and it's not working, and I just switch and do straight theory and that gets a bit more ground. And then I can come back to the activity and then it gathers some traction. Sometimes you just have to abandon it altogether and just leave it. Probably come back the next week or a week after or two weeks later.

Anthony mentioned being cognisant of his students' state of mind at that time. He said his employment of a flexible pedagogical approach was also needed in other situations:

> Sometimes you overestimate what they'll be able to do. Sometimes you underestimated what they will be able to do, because sometimes the activity might be too easy, so it doesn't challenge their thinking enough. So you have to revamp and probably add another component to the activity to get them to pull out what you want them to pull out.

Interestingly, teaching online had some advantages for Anthony as he acknowledged easily adjusting an activity when necessary due to constant internet access to execute quick searches. This, he remarked, was more difficult face-to-face, but access to the internet proved to be an important element in his online teaching and learning space:

> Sometimes you have to switch and find a next activity on the fly. That's one of the plus[es] with online now where I am trying a video and they're not, they don't seem to be getting it and I can just go and grab my next one and bring it up. You can do that somewhat at school [face-to-face] if you have a projector and a computer, but it nuh always work so far for us. Yeah, that's the beauty of it.

This suggests that Anthony demonstrated a pedagogical approach that was responsive and aimed to address students' immediate needs. He also stated that when students finally understood a concept, their responses were at times very expressive:

> "Oh, yes! A dat yuh wenna talk bout a while a go, doah?" I said "Yeeeessss! He didn't know that." … And sometimes yuh hear dem seh "Sir, a it inna dah song deh?" [Teacher:] Yeah, not so much, but it's close [Laughing].

In standard English, it is interpreted like this:

> "Oh, yes! That is what you were talking about a while ago, isn't it? I said "Yeeeessss!" He didn't know that prior." … Sometimes they can be heard saying, "Sir, is it in that song?" [Teacher:] Yeah, not so much, but it's close [Laughing].

Anthony declared himself as a "man of analogy," and he appeared to believe this was a good way to get his students to exercise critical thinking. This practice was more prevalent when he was teaching at preparatory schools, but he found the approach equally

effective at the secondary level. He made it clear that his aim was to engage students by starting with what they know. He stated that "I use what they do and where they come from … But, not all the time you get … a knowledge of all those things." He also indicated that when he has the information, he could use the students' knowledgebase to inform his pedagogical approach.

Engaging students using familiar music was a part of Anthony's pedagogical approach. He stated using this approach when teaching the recorder as, based on his experience, it is not an instrument that was liked by his high school students. He contended that using popular music with limited note choices helped to create performing and compositional opportunities for the students:

> Especially if they're doing the recorder and I get them to play a melody from one of those popular songs that they like. "Ooooh…" I know dem excited. The school disturbed because the recorder a blow from my classroom go straight back to class. Because they can play the song now.

Anthony revealed that he took the same approach to music creation in his general music classes. He said, "if I teach them three notes on a recorder, I tell them mek up[14] a melody. Use these three notes to mek up a melody. Come back and play it." This encouraged the students to exercise some amount of creativity while engaged in the process of learning musical concepts. However, he claimed his methodology was deliberate as he used a "staggered approach" to teaching. He expressed that there were times when students just played "a bunch of notes" with very little "thought process behind it." But he had little

[14] "Mek up" is interpreted as "create."

complaint about it as they tried and were engaged in music making. In his estimation, he easily worked with those students because they showed an interest in the class. Referring to his staggered approach to teaching, he said, “I’ll teach them note values first, then I’ll teach them the notes and the staff. Then I’ll try and combine the two of them.” He saw each concept as a building block to a larger concept leading to student independence, hence his choice to use scaffolding techniques as a part of his teaching approach. He expanded his earlier explanation:

> I teach one concept, then a next concept, then combine the two of them. And each concept I teach after that, I try and combine to the other concept so that there’s a holistic learning experience of all the concepts, not just one by one itself and they don’t know how it relates. ‘Cause I like relating things. You must know how tempo work with beats, how tempo work with emotion, how tempo work with all a those things.

Teaching online, although difficult in some respects, offered Anthony an opportunity to prepare for future teaching assignments whether face-to-face, online, or blended modality. In his estimation, a combination of theoretical and practical approaches, done in creative ways, were still ideal for a successful general music class. He was apparently convinced that he had to be adaptable whenever there were classroom challenges. He described his adjustment in the following way:

> In terms of the teaching and change now, I’ve had to be using more of the theoretical aspect of the music and also finding creative ways to get the practical across. … Mostly the computer, the technology component has increased, so to

> speak. We try to facilitate as much and I still try to get them to think, and just think outside of the box.

These changes also spoke to Anthony's self-described evolving pedagogy that was responding to specific contexts and changing situations. He articulated building on his pedagogical concepts gleaned from his high school mentors and assimilated through his professional education:

> I think I'm kind of going into my own world. Trying to evolve and be a bit more relevant, a bit more facilitating, to be the facilitator [of] students and so forth. So, it's evolving but it had a big impact, those three teachers.

It was his view that the basic concept in his pedagogical approach remained the same, but he adjusted to accommodate the contextual situations he faced in his music classroom.

Students' active participation in class activities was an important learning indicator for Anthony. In his estimation, students' participation gave him a good idea of what they were thinking and their level of understanding of the content explored in class. He leaned towards using guided questions that encouraged students to think, seek answers, and respond to a task or a musical activity. He mentioned that sometimes when questioning students, he said "the answer is within the question," but the students have to spend time to "figure it out." For Anthony, questions should guide students to a deeper understanding and once again, theory should lead to practical application.

Sometimes Anthony had to coax students into participating in class or, in some cases, to be attentive. However, he admitted that there were a few times earlier in his career when he reminded students to show more interest in the class as they will be

assessed in the end.

> Sometimes you threaten[15] them and say "whether or not you learn this topic, if you don't pay attention and you don't learn the topic, I still putting it on the test. And you cannot say I didn't teach it, you know. That is always the excuse, "Sir never teach mi dat!"[16] [while he laughed].

For some students, test results and attaining acceptable overall averages was important to them. He was aware that the warning could be effective with some, not necessarily all students. For Anthony, it was worth trying different strategies to enable students' active participation in class. He noted that his "coaxing" and test-focused teaching approaches were centred on effective classroom management and ensured that grades were generated and submitted, but the primary focus was not necessarily student learning.

Anthony stated that some students participated in after school extracurricular music classes outside of Bluecam High. Those students were many times enrolled in private instrumental and vocal lessons and often took music theory as a part of their study. These students were placed in the same general music classes with students without music background. Anthony indicated that this was sometimes problematic as the students who studied privately were many times ahead of the students who were mostly being introduced to formal music studies:

> And then you have the ones who have been doing music, extracurricular, and they come to class and they are like, they want to push the class ahead because they

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[15] In Jamaican parlance, "threaten" often means "warn" in this context.
[16] Interpreted as, "Sir did not teach me that topic."

> already know this. I'm like, no, you can't do that. "Here's an exercise to do in the meantime."

Ensuring that all students were involved in the classes seemed important to Anthony. Finding other ways to occupy the students who were already ahead was deemed critical as he did not want to lose their interest in the class. Anthony said, "you have to try. Doesn't always work."

All activities were carefully selected to fit into the 40-minute period allocated to music classes. If an activity was not considered effective, Anthony sometimes changed the activity or found ways to execute it without taking up a lot of time. He claimed that "it makes no sense spending 15 minutes on a[n] activity that [is] not getting through to the kids." In such cases, substituting the activity or trying another method were alternative options.

Anthony thought his pedagogical strategy involved tapping into his students' emotions through carefully selected repertoire. This approach, in his opinion, aimed to guide his students to hear and delineate intervals, chord qualities, and other aspects of listening and appraising music. He did this through aural exercises, emotional connections, or through discussions. Referring to his approach, he stated:

> Sometimes a discussion. Sometimes I tell them close their eyes and tell me what they feel, how they think. Even with the intervals, when we're teaching it, I would tell them when I was playing it, I tell him "tell me what it feels like. What does it say to you?" And you will hear them say that the minor interval [is] dark.

Additionally, Anthony invited questions from students as he seemed to believe this showed their curiosity and interest in understanding concepts explored in his classes:

> At Bluecam, you can bank on getting one or two. You can bank on getting some questions. At Wesley [Boys' School], the kids would just si dung and soak it all up. … If you don't ask them if you have any questions, or if you don't question [them] to find out what they have grasped, you probably won't know.

Teaching at his previous high school for boys versus his current co-educational high school with generally high academic achievers, required different approaches even if the objectives were the same. Anthony stated the following:

> Boys are just boys. … Which is why I had to tailor my teaching at Wesley more to the practical side. They are doing it. So [it] is more of an instant manifestation if they learn the topic or not. Where [as] at Bluecam you can give them a more written paper and find out, or you can give them a written assignment and find out. Because they're going to do the assignment and two, they're going to read a little [more and] understand a little more. So, that's usually the case.

Although both sets of students can be assessed in similar ways, he found that leaning to practical assessments for that boys' school was more successful as they generally liked practical class involvement.

Learning from student experiences and having moments of reflection were critically important to good teaching strategies. Anthony spoke of making time to learn about the likes and dislikes of students and described using the information to develop his lessons while focused on achieving his targeted objective:

> But I usually look at what happens, look at what they like, look at what they respond to and then I usually then now try and adapt that, tweak it and turn it, twist it up. Try use the same exercise in five different ways or take it from a different angle, just so it look different. Usually that's how I try and do it.

The students were not always as responsive as he would like, but he thought this strategy was mostly successful in his classrooms.

Facilitator of Discussions. Anthony spoke of facilitating student discussions as they were critical to his interactive music classroom. Although many of these discussions were initiated by students, Anthony said he guided these discussions and left room for the students' opinions during the exploratory process. Prior to and during the period of my observation, Anthony said he was mindful of online fatigue for students as they were living in virtual classrooms for extended periods each day. For some students, the experience was sometimes continuous without significant breaks. He mentioned allowing the students to express themselves through conversations or in the chat feature of the Google platform before starting his class:

> Sometimes they'll come to class, especially now that it's online, they'll come to class and they're just stressed because they've been online all day. And I'll just talk. We just talk. Talk 'bout music, talk about different things. And you usually, through that, you hear what they listen to. And they'll be in the chat room in the Google meets and they're just typing away, and you just read, and you observe, and you learn a lot by just doing that.

While students shared their ideas or thoughts in the chat, Anthony facilitated discussions

with them and took the opportunity to "pick out what they might like or what they might not like." The engagement was two-fold in that it fostered cultural discussions and seemingly made him aware of the students' music preferences.

Anthony facilitated discussions about music genres and music culture experienced in his classes. He mentioned being particularly keen on students knowing their traditional music and culture including background information on the music. He related a story that took place in his class as to the classification of one of Jamaica's popular young female dancehall artistes:

> I remember in Grade 9 one year, at Bluecam, we had this big debate. Because I gave them an assignment … [to] research three types of Jamaican music, two artistes from each, [and the] songs that they did. So they came back and they say Koffee is a Dancehall artiste. An' I say, "Koffee don't do Dancehall." They tek mi on and seh "Sir, how you mean? Koffee do Dancehall." I say "Oh, no, no, no, Koffee don't do Dancehall. What she do is not really Dancehall, [it] is crossover. An' dem tek mi on. We had this big debate about it. Yeah.

He acknowledged that he treated students differently as they came from a variety of situations and backgrounds. He said, "what you'll find is different schools have different students who have different knowledge base and different kind[s] of enlightenment, so to speak." Therefore, he responded differently in each situation as the students had unique needs. When he compared his current students at the co-educational Bluecam High School with the all-boys Wesley High school, he spoke to the difference in their academic levels and the nature of their responses:

> At Bluecam, you'll find the kids are quicker to throw back the question, "Sir, wha yuh mean?[17] Sir no! Sir, a dance, a dance. Sir, but everything ina di worl' dem consider it as Reggae." And I say, "Yeah. But in Jamaica, we need to know the difference." And so we have all a those discussions. At Wesley, dem nuh business[18] [while laughing].

Compared with Bluecam High, Anthony stated it was more challenging for him to have the conversations at Wesley High, but he tried to have them, nonetheless. On other occasions when conversations were focused on students' music used in the class, he spoke to the supportive nature of the students even if the suggested songs were not their preferred choice:

> They usually listen and they'll give their comments. I think they'll probably appreciate it. They'll be more interested in letting theirs be heard though [laughing]. They want their piece to be heard and once they post it dem say "you listen that yet?" But, other than that, … you don't hear them degrading anybody's thing [music choices].

In this case, students showed respect for the preferred music choices of their peers and having differing views on musical taste was not an issue.

Teacher Perceived Role and Responsibility. In the music classroom, Anthony regarded himself as a person who had a holistic approach to teaching. His opinion was that his role as a music teacher was to educate his students, guide them to becoming

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[17] Interpreted as "Sir, what do you mean?"

[18] Interpreted as "At Wesley, they do not care much."

productive citizens, create critical thinkers, and be involved in some aspect of mentoring his students:

> Personally, just as a teacher, I think my role is to educate, not just for music, but just overall. So, there have been classes when they come and I don't touch one topic on the lesson plan because they might have said something [that needed immediate discussion]. And I just think as a teacher, it is my responsibility to correct misinformation or to correct error in thinking or thought.

He explained that these exchanges sometimes took place when he was awaiting other students to join the class. The exchanges were sometimes triggered by students making general statements that inevitably led to conversations. He spoke of immediately addressing their questions:

> I prefer to do that, and they leave the class with the right type of thinking, or the right concept of something than I teach a music lesson and they still have the wrong thought or the wrong thought process, you know. 'Cause at the end of the day, we're there to educate. Yeah, music is the subject, but life is bigger than music, so to speak, in a sense.

Anthony said he took these roles seriously as they all worked together to form a more rounded individual. Ultimately, and in his eyes, this was a teacher's role which was something much larger than teaching music or any other subject.

Practical Music Making Experiences. Anthony reported that in his music classroom, many of the live music making activities involved the recorder. At Wesley, his previous high school, classroom instruments were prevalent, and congas were also

available to the students for both melodic and rhythmic exploration. During the period of online engagement, Anthony used Chrome Music Lab as a collaborative tool for music making. Of the several online options, he thought it was accessible, “easier” for the students to understand, and had a low learning curve. Hence, he felt the students were able to manipulate it in a short time span. He also explored other online resources such as BandLab, because it had “pre-recorded loops that you can just punch in and put in together.” In his estimation, the students enjoyed creating music in that site.

Anthony concluded that conducting an online practical class was much more difficult than the in-person experience. When classes were face-to-face, Anthony said it was possible to move around the class, monitor the process for individuals or small groups, make suggestions, and generally be more participatory. That was not the case online:

> It’s a bit harder to monitor them, one, and it’s a bit harder to gauge what they have done. They always have those one or two students who don’t do anything and want the grade. So it’s easier when I let them do it in class, so I can go around and monitor them and say “Okay, yes, this person participated, this person contributed.” It’s a bit harder online because you don’t know what they are doing.

However, Anthony saw practical online participation as a work in progress and one that he hoped will evolve with experience.

The extracurricular clubs and music organisations were an important part of the music experience at Bluecam High. Anthony was required to monitor the Steelpan, Guitar Club, and oversaw the hand drummers even though they had a designated teacher.

However, Anthony was primarily responsible for training the Music Club members which consisted of a choir and pop band. They were expected to lead many of the internal activities at Bluecam and they often had to be prepared:

> The choir performs at almost every event or somebody from choir gwine [will] perform at almost every event. If they need Praise and Worship, if they need whatever, it's always [the] Music Club. And dem gwine [they will] call me today fi [for] tomorrow [while laughing]. So is like you always have to be prepared and always have something going [ready].

Although the majority of the Music Club's repertoire was contemporary, he stated that they explored a wide range of styles within contemporary genres: "So you do the musicals, you do the Jamaican stuff, some American stuff like the ones from the movies, and those things." They had been very successful as a school, and he noted that they were planning more performance engagements beyond the pandemic era.

The general music classes were sometimes used to identify talent that may do well in the Music Club. Anthony admitted that he used the music classes to lay the foundation for those who may want to audition and perform with the group. He said, "I've been trying to use the classroom to inform … so that if and when they come to [the] club, they're already informed, and you already have a good footing to start on." Sometimes other students sought to audition without being identified through the music classes. Anthony recounted an incident with a student who auditioned for the club but did not make it as he was not at the appropriate standard at that time. The following year, the student auditioned with a recording:

> He just recorded that thing and then sent it in. And when we were listening to it were like, “hey, this boy dangerous” [laughing]. Some things he was he was singing [was outstanding]. … Probably other students can do it, but I don’t discover them yet. It was marvellous. The talent that we have in this country is crazy.

He said the same about his former boys’ school: “Even at Wesley. You have a lot of talent there. But then, the culture at Wesley is singing is not a manly thing.” He found it unfortunate, but their aversion to singing was a situation he had to address while he was there as it influenced classroom music selection and activities.

Facilitating Popular Music Education. In an age of contemporary popular music, Anthony seemingly thought that students often saw the music class as a place to explore modern popular music. This was done in a variety of ways and for Anthony, these approaches should be accommodated when possible. He also saw the inclusion of popular music education as a social duty and formed a part of his response to counteract other social ills prevalent in the society. Anthony related a story about a student from Wesley High who routinely saw violent crimes in his community, including murders. Anthony asked himself the question, “what do you do with a student like that?” Anthony said that the students attended the classes with their own “baggage” and the system expects them to act “normal” and learn in class. He stated that some of these students saw music as a way to uplift themselves or to get out of their communities if they made dancehall “riddim” tracks or became producers. He said they attended the music class and made comments like “Sir, you can build rhythm? Mi want a riddim.” This was not the typical

request in his classes, but it did happen. In his eyes, building tracks should be addressed in a meaningful way through the music curriculum. To address these needs, he planned to incorporate beat-making and other aspects of basic production into his music classes.

Anthony expressed his desire to expand his students' understanding of the possibilities and scope of music and music technology. He said some of the students were very talented with music technology and he would love to have music classes dedicated to honing those talents and educating them in key areas including intellectual property rights. He said the following:

> Students like those, I want to just get a hold of them and get them to understand the possibilities. 'Cause if him sell one of those beats, him good. Worse if him sell it while keeping the rights, becomes a hit, him have money. The parents don't have to worry [thereafter].

It was his view that teaching students to create and monetise their products should be a life skill honed within the high school system.

After school Music Club and performance groups were known and revered at Bluecam High. They won major awards with their Music Club including the first-place prize at the popular choir competition, "All Together Sing," which aired on the largest local television station. On multiple occasions, they won the all-island trophy as the most outstanding school in the annual Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) music competition. It is a reputation that was not lost on Anthony. He called the Music Club a "very vibrant" group, but some of the vibrancy went when the former music teacher left, and the COVID-19 related closure of the school disrupted his temporary

rebuild of the club. He spoke of his early rebuilding task as one where he needed to get the club “back on track.” At the time, he ensured that the former students were empowered to lead the club. He noted that they “did a very good job” as they were “very self-sufficient in terms of their operations.” Hence, when he first went to Bluecam, all he had to do with the club was to “shine it off and place it, put it out there to the world, [and] let them see it.” The club was once again doing well under his direction, but he had a sense of humility about it:

> For All Together Sing, I didn’t do a lot. And people keep saying “congrats!” It wasn’t me, it wasn’t me [laughing]. I think for All Together Sing I arranged one song. And it wasn’t the entire song, because the original concept for the song came about from the students I’m telling you about. Yeah, the only thing I did was I probably cut and chopped the other songs they were doing, because the songs were longer than the requirement for the competition. So what I do is tell them that I’m cutting it here, and cutting it here, we putting it together here, we’re tweaking this a little, we’re tweaking that a little, and that’s all I did. Nothing much otherwise.

Another way of facilitating music experiences through extracurricular activities involved converting the music room to a soundproofed space for recording. This supported Anthony’s plan to make contemporary music an integral part of the overall curriculum. He said, “as it relates to probably clubs now, they had started working on a studio in the music room. I want to finish it. I want to be the person that finish it.” He stated that a studio space would help the school to produce good quality recordings when

needed and eliminate the noise level when groups such as the hand drummers were practicing. He was adamant with his pronouncement, “so I want to finish that aspect of it. I want to get the equipment in and all a those things, that it can be fully equipped to be a recording studio slash rehearsal studio.” This development seemed important to him as he saw the studio setting as one way to reach his students and respond to student needs.

Music Preference and Selection

Jamaican Music Repertoire. Anthony’s love for Jamaican music dated back to his young years growing up in rural Jamaica. He stated that his bias was towards older Jamaican music as opposed to the newer genres including dancehall. He relayed the following story:

> One of my favourite memories growing up used to be the Sunday evening when this disc jockey named Bob Clark use to play the oldies. So, I know that I’ve always been kind of fond of that genre of music. So, rocksteady, reggae, those older types of music. I tend to like those a lot more than even some of the dancehall stuff now, I think. I just think that those music used to come more from the heart than just from a need to make music to make some money. That’s what I think. So genuinely normally lean towards those things.

He admitted that his love for older traditional music from the 1960s and 1970s influenced his preferred repertoire for classes. However, this did not necessarily translate into his final music selection as he noted there were other factors to consider.

The use of Jamaican traditional folk and popular music genres were a part of the syllabus content at Bluecam High. Although Anthony said he had not yet incorporated

many of the Jamaican traditional folk forms into his classes at Bluecam, he regularly used them at Wesley High, his previous school:

> I haven't really worked the traditional forms into my teaching at Bluecam yet, because I haven't really fully settled in as I want to formulate how I would incorporate it. When I was at Wesley, I used to … Because the boys are more active, I used to do a lot of traditional folk in terms of the same mento, dinky-mini, brukkins, not kumina, but revival and all those things. Give them the beats [drum rhythms] and they would play them, and that would be a part of their exams.

Many of the Jamaican traditional folk forms incorporate hand drumming and that, he mentioned, was possible at Wesley High because they had hand drums. He thought these classes were very successful as they were practical oriented and at the same time educational. At the time of the interview, Anthony revealed he was working on acquiring hand drums so that he could incorporate drumming into his classes if or when they returned to a face-to-face modality. Until that is in place, he said, "I have to kinda work with what I have now."

Anthony seemingly recognised that students were more familiar with a few popular reggae artistes but were not familiar with other Jamaican artistes he considered to be relatively popular. He said that students were familiar with "the more common Reggae type stuff, like the Dre Island that we played last week," referring to music he used in one of the sessions I observed. He also noted that his students were mostly familiar with other Jamaican repertoire similar in style to Dre Island. He said, "a lot of the Reggae artistes

now are not as known [to the students]. So, like Raging Fyah is not known. [Further] Notice not known. They'll know Kabaka Pyramid, they'll know Protégé and Chronixx, and that's probably it." Anthony is referring to reggae artistes who perform reggae music in a traditional style like Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Third World, and others. He mentioned that most students consider that style "old" and are not interested in it. He later added that the young popular female reggae/dancehall artiste, Koffee, is known by most students. In one of the sessions observed, Anthony used Koffee's music, eliciting positive reactions from students.

Teacher Music Preference. For his general music classes, Anthony intentionally used Jamaican music as his first-choice repertoire. He claimed that whenever he cannot find Jamaican repertoire to support the content taught in his classes, he broadened his search to the wider Caribbean. It was only at that point that he sought to use other foreign repertoire to support his topics. He constantly spoke of his "love of the Jamaican and Caribbean things," and expressed his observation of a "lack of interest from the younger generation" for the inclusion of the Jamaican music and culture. He seemed deliberate with his intention: "I tend to want to expose them more to those things [Jamaican music] than anything else." This education was important as, in his estimation, many of the students could not readily identify the different kinds of Jamaican music genres:

> Most of them anyway just see everything as reggae. I have to be educating them and telling them, look here, that's not reggae, that's dancehall. What you doing now is not even real dancehall, this is kind a fusion, that was Mento, this was Ska, you know.

He did not only tell them the name of the genres, but he also identified the different features that placed them in the category of reggae, mento, and so on. This was not a fixed science as he spoke to in-class debates on the classification of Jamaican genres.

Anthony's music selection was sometimes directly related to his music preferences, but not always. His preference for Jamaican popular music genres was noticeable in his classes and they were many times featured as listening examples. He stated it in the following way: "But I always go Jamaican first. If it's not mento, ska, reggae, rocksteady, dancehall, one of them. And I tend to lean to the dancehall first because it's what they kind of like nowadays." Although some students liked dancehall music, his opinion was that they did not appreciate the gamut of Jamaican music repertoire that exists from the old to the new. He linked students' music preference to what he considered a broader issue in Jamaica where Jamaican youth culture gravitated to North American practiced culture:

> I am a believer of Jamaican music and I think this generation nuh [does not] so much appreciate it. You ask a child what happens in October and the first thing they say is Halloween. But we are Jamaicans! So we shouldn't really be talking about Halloween, we should be talking about [National] Heroes Day.

As a Jamaican music teacher and performer, he expressed his belief that it was his duty and responsibility to educate students about music in general, but Jamaican traditional and popular music must be an integral part of that exposure:

> So I tend to try and use our folk music and our indigenous type of music. So mento, reggae, dancehall, as much as possible, because then it also brings that

form of excitement to the lesson.

Although Jamaican repertoire was his first choice for his lessons, he was not all about Jamaican music only. He integrated other music genres during his listening classes and his preference was "the one that best suits the topic." Ultimately, it was the repertoire that worked best for his class even though he had a Jamaican leaning:

> I really don't have somewhat of a preference in terms of which one I use. So, for example … doing intervals now, I've used both dancehall and reggae. That's where I found the concept I wanted … and if I found it in a Mento song, I would probably use the Mento song as well. I don't really have a preference. Even though personally, I like Reggae more, but I really don't have a preference.

Anthony's preferred Jamaican traditional folk form was mento. He stated that "most time when we do folk, we use it as mento," therefore it was the most featured folk form in his classes. He spoke of using folk forms that have "call and answer" and at times would incorporate them in an "introductory activity to settle down and get them going, or anything like that." Calypso, hip hop, R&B, Afro beat/Afro-pop, and classical music repertoires were some of the other genres that were featured in Anthony's music classes. These, he explained, were his preferred genres and he often found music examples from these genres to support his lesson topics.

There were musical reasons for Anthony's preferences and selection. With his preferred repertoire, he listened for specific musical elements that can be used in his classes. He stated the following:

> You'll find that some classical music will tend to help more with the subtler side of dynamics. And then you'll find that the dancehall and stuff gwine [will] deal with probably texture, probably the rhythmic aspect of a lesson, probably instrumentation and so forth. So, you tend to pick it in that aspect. Yeah, usually that's how it works.

Throughout my interviews with Anthony, his passion for Jamaican music as his preferred repertoire choice was evident. When we discussed one of the classes I observed, he mentioned the following:

> Aside from the Buju Banton and the Bob Marley, I was trying to find some more music that would have been monophonic or simple homophonic with vocals alone or instruments alone, but I couldn't find it. So that's how I ended up putting the Adele in there. But a nevva [I didn't] really waah [want to] put it in there.

Anthony demonstrated that he had an unwavering love for Jamaican music culture and took every opportunity to share his preferred Jamaican repertoire with the students.

Teacher Music Selection. Selecting music repertoire was partially based on Anthony's philosophy of using Jamaican music as his first option. He spoke of using a variety of music genres and repertoire to develop his lessons and broaden the musical understanding of the students he encountered in his classes. However, teacher and student music preferences seemed to play an important role in determining final music selection.

> If I can't find a Jamaican or a Caribbean [piece], then I tend to go back to what they might like. Or, I might mix it up and give it a balanced effect where I do one song I like and I pick one that they like.

To keep his students interested in his classes, Anthony concluded that a combination of the students' preferred music along with other repertoire made the classes more relevant or palatable to the students.

Anthony said it was not always possible to find music from his preferred genres that related to topics or the level of the students. He noted that it was important to have a variety of options when contemplating music selection. A part of his strategy in selecting music was to sometimes use songs that were familiar to the students. Anthony said that he tried to "use the melody of the songs that they sing over and over every day" as a part of their classes. That means that North American music and other international artistes were featured as they would be more relevant to the context or topic:

> Sometime yuh haffi [you have to] give up the ghost, so to speak, and find a[n] American song or a Caribbean something that fits the bill, you know. Most of the Hip Hop songs are mainly shells. So it's easier to find a 5th or a 4th, or a minor 3rd, with those songs than the reggae music or the dancehall music.

He pointed out that Jamaican dancehall artistes "don't really sing melodies," so finding melodic content would be limited to traditional reggae, at best. But he found dancehall content to be rhythmically interesting.

When planning his lessons, Anthony revealed that he selected a topic then found music that represented the content he wanted to explore. Sometimes he selected Jamaican songs that were not "that popular" or "nuh dat great [not so great]." When this happened, this was what he claimed to do: "I try and find a Caribbean one otherwise. If I can't, then I just go to the American one." He also stated there were times when he explored music

from "the African side of things first," as "it is more relatable to our culture." After using these foreign examples, he claimed that he would "come back" to local settings to contextualise the materials and repertoire that were explored.

On other occasions, Anthony stated having a mental plan of what he wanted to accomplish from his lessons before selecting the music he used to enhance the class:

> Sometimes I'll have the lesson plan[ned] out in my head first and then I go and choose the song. Sometimes I will be just on the road and I hear a song and I say, "dah song deh wudda nice fi teach a particular topic."[19] And then I will say, alright, let me see how I can use this song to teach the topic.

On other occasions he selected songs that he heard on online platforms such as Instagram:

> The funniest thing is it happened that I was going on Instagram, and I saw the video with the piano, where they were playing the tap piano, I saw that on Instagram. And like I say, you see something and you say "that would be nice." … Sometimes they turn up, sometimes you have to hunt them. And I try and find stuff that covers all angles, because it's not one angle, it's two, or three different angles when it comes on to certain topics. So we have to try and find them.

Anthony used students preferred music as one of his criteria for music selection. He explained that a good way of knowing students preferred music was through casual listening. He relayed his experience in this way:

[19] Interpreted as "That is a good song to use with the topic."

> Sometimes also when I'm walking through the school, I listen to what they like to listen. But as I said, they don't really listen [to] Jamaican music that much, you know. The craze these days is this Korean or Japanese thing name K pop.

But he did not seem to object to new music. Conversely, he appeared to view his exposure to new music as an opportunity to learn new repertoire; music that would not have been an initial choice. He said, "I have to be educating myself on it, now. 'Cause, I don't know what this K-pop business is all about. So them teaching me sop'm [something]."

For Anthony, classical music was not the most common music genre used in his classes. Although he was very specific with its usage, Anthony stated he knew the value and effect that it had when carefully chosen. He said, "I use classical music more for dynamics than anything else." He recounted a story of a lesson using extreme dynamic effects from the first movement of Haydn's Surprise Symphony:

> I like using that, where you get that big bang. And I tend to make the softer part a lot softer [laughing] and then I amp it [make it louder]. So I put it in a program and I amp up the sforzando. … Just knock them out of their skin, just for the dramatic effect.

According to Anthony, the piece worked well as it got the students attention for that moment. However, in general, he was drawn towards characterisation of moods that he periodically explored through instrumental classical pieces:

> I haven't really tapped into that a lot, but if I'm doing things like how music affects emotion … then I'll go for some of those classical pieces or romantic

pieces that tends to give you a certain kind of feel and a certain kind of emotion.

Explaining how he interpreted and used some classical pieces in previous classes, Anthony said the following:

> A lot of people think that the [Beethoven] fifth symphony is just an angry man. Ta ta ta taaa, Ta ta ta taaa [singing the main motive]. And everybody thinks angry … So I use that as somewhat of an angry thing and then I'll use Debussy, the Arabesque, as that kind of a spa day kind of thing. ... So depending on what the topic is, you can use different things.

Once again, his preferred Western art music repertoire demonstrated his specific interpretation of the classical pieces he sometimes selected for his classes.

When selecting popular music for his classes, Anthony indicated that he ensured he was aware of the lyrics contained in the songs. This, he claimed, was particularly important as Bluecam High was a public school partly owned by a Christian denomination, and he recognised that the content of his songs must reflect the basic morals of the organisation. In the past, he spoke of eliminating some student-suggested songs that he found inappropriate. That did not prevent him from selecting songs students liked, but he had to "taper" the students' selections to fit the class objectives. He said, "they are still students and they're still children." So, he preferred to educate them rather than dismiss their song selections outright, but some songs, he contended, cannot be explored in his general music class context. He recounted a typical encounter at Wesley High, his previous boys' school, and his current experience at Bluecam High:

> The funniest thing is, whether it be boy or girl, they think the same. … Bluecam is a little different from Wesley [boy's school]. Wesley would be more the school that you would really have to watch what you play. … Those boys are like "Sir, why, [implying use of expletives]?" An' mi warn them an seh, "no, nuh come inna mi class.[20] … At Bluecam, the students will do it under dem [their] breaths. They're not gonna be "Sir, what is that [expletive implied]!" They're not gonna do that, but dem do it under dem breath.

During online classes, students were sometimes excited about teacher selected music that they liked. At that point, they would sometimes type inappropriate statements in the chat. He related this story:

> There was one class last year, I disabled it [the chat feature], because two students had a full-on fight in the chat. Yeah and it was because of sop'm I had played, too. … And who was saying that whatever, and who was doing whatever. … and the arguments start.

Anthony was also conscious that his role as a teacher made him answerable to his students' parents and guardians. He stated, "You don't want even a parent be watching or a parent be listening and they're like 'what is that you teaching?'" He pointed out that some of these Bluecam parents were "complainers," and to eliminate the complaints, he tried to be responsible with what he did.

In Anthony's opinion, selecting music for Bluecam's Music Club public performances was a simpler process than the general music classes. Anthony stated that

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[20] Interpreted as: I warned them stating "do not use expletives in my class."

he selected music based on the age and maturity of his students. With the lower school students, including Grades 7 and 8, he ensured that the repertoire was appropriate for that age level as well. But he stated that he had "a little bit more leeway when it comes on to the 6th formers [Grades 11–12] and the Grade 11's because they're almost adults." He recounted a situation at a competition where one of his 12-year-old students sang a song that the adjudicators thought was above his understanding:

> For a 12-year-old, him nuh [he did not] understand that and that [song] is above his is age range, for real. But it's when they [the adjudicators] stop[ped] me I realised that for real, this is too old. … he [the singer] was working with one of the other students and I was doing other things. … I have to really watch what you do with them and what you select and all a dat [of those things].

Anthony said this situation made him more alert to age-appropriate music selection. He thought that age and level appropriate repertoire were important for the classes and the performance groups. But Anthony asserted that "you still want them to learn life skills and important lessons out of what you're doing." He also thought that as a practicing Christian, he had a moral responsibility to guide his students. He said, "especially as a Christian, you don't want to lead nobody astray or nobody child astray. I have that responsibility." As a result, music selection was done with various parameters in mind as they were selected from a personal and moral perspective, but the students' preference was an important part of the selection process.

Teacher Activity Selection. When classes went online, Anthony expressed having a contrasting experience to what he was accustomed to face-to-face. That included

selecting activities he deemed effective for his online music classes but were not necessarily used prior in an in-person setting. When face-to-face, he selected activities that were used for practical classes, listening and appraising, and basic composition or arranging activities. Over his teaching career, he said he realised that his theoretical classes should better support the tasks or activities selected. During this period of transition, he attempted to balance theoretical concepts with his selected activities, so that his students had an effective blend of the two.

> I think there is a period when I did more activities than theory and I have to catch myself and I said no, but, I just giving them stuff to do and they're not doing right because they don't really understand the theory. And then theory part when they are dropping asleep because they're not doing enough activities to exercise them.

Anthony appeared to believe it was important to balance both areas so there was no extreme reaction from the students and the objectives were effectively accomplished. Activities were used to "demonstrate their understanding of the theory," conduct music analysis, and for the teacher, present materials that could be assessed. Anthony said "it's hard to do a lot of activities online" because practical activities were not easily managed in that setting. But he pointed out that activities can be relatively successful if properly planned:

> Sometimes it's [activities are] targeted and then sometimes [it is] just how I feel. You know. I might find an activity and I'm thinking "this could bring out a particular topic or bring out a particular point, … like the jeopardy wasn't somewhat a targeted activity, it was just me just thinking "hey this could be fun."

> Let me just bring across some questions, put them in, see what they know.

All activities were pre-selected by Anthony, and they were all designed to fit into the 40-minute time slot allocated to the class.

The limited 40-minute time slot seemingly had a strong bearing on what was selected as an in-class activity. Anthony knew the importance of restricting the activity to fit the period but ensuring the content was adequately covered to effect student learning:

> You don't want the time to run out, as you say, as what happened with Jeopardy or anything like that. … not just the time slot, you also have to think about the students you teaching. … They'll be involved, but they won't be as rowdy as [another class]. .. . So I'll probably get through Jeopardy and have a few seconds to spare. … So it's not just the timeframe, but also the students you have that determine it.

The outcome of an activity might differ depending on the class taught. But for the most part, Anthony mentioned that he realised he had to demonstrate effective time management skills to successfully oversee the activities in the online space.

> I think, I probably sometimes I want a little more time and sometimes I have some class when I wish it would a jus end earlier. Yeah [laughing]. It determines how you tailor the activity, how you chop it or, how much of the activity you use. … And depending on how much of the activity you can use determines as well if you use it.

Anthony determined that some activities did not "bring the concept across clearly enough for everybody" or that they were not effective in the 40-minute slot. These situations also

appeared o determine Anthony's activity selection. Importantly, Anthony said he aimed to make his selection compatible with his overall objective of developing critical thinkers through the music curricula. He was cognisant that he wanted to develop his students with sound musical understanding and the limited time affected that. However, in relation to musical growth, he said the limited class time "probably affects how fast it happens, but I don't think it affects if it happens." He was confident that students were able to achieve effective musical growth even with the time constraints.

Students in the Music Classroom

Perception of Music as a Subject. Anthony was of the opinion that the general music class was not seen by parents and students as an important subject in the school system. He seemed convinced the lack of importance was a general problem in the country, not just one related to his school. At Bluecam High, he thought parents were more interested in the academic reputation and status of the school, so any other subject such as music, or the performing arts as a whole, was not important to them. Anthony stated the following:

> A student will look at you point blank and say, "Sir, my daddy tell me that music is not important, so I don't need to pay attention in class." I say, yeah, "but it is going to affect your overall grade." [They] Still don't care.

He asserted that some parents "don't see music as that kind of a subject that they need to focus on or pay attention to." Unless subjects such as music seriously affected their overall average, Anthony's view was that some students, most of whom are in the minority, were not always inclined to produce quality work or expend any energy to

participate in class as it was not a core subject. He was quick to point out that most students participated in class and got their assignments done and submitted on time. However, he recognised that students' perception determined how they treated music as a subject.

Students Music Culture and Preference. Knowing students' music culture and music preferences was not always straightforward. Anthony's students were individuals with varied musical tastes, from different backgrounds, and life experiences. He tried to stay abreast of the students' music culture and preferences as, in his view, it afforded him an insight into their world and gave an inkling as to which music he might explore in lessons. He admitted that he learned from his students, but he did not always cater to their music preferences as he wanted them to become diverse listeners. He said, "I don't think I've ever paid much attention to that [music culture]. I usually just go based on how I feel and what I think they'll like." But he admitted that the students' music perspectives were critical and sometimes should be incorporated in order to pull them into the class experience.

Anthony took different approaches to learn about his students' music preferences. He indicated that "sometimes I just walk around and listen to what they're singing or what they're talking about." He said, "I use it back in the class sometimes. 'Cause you always hear them talking about the artiste and ... sometimes in class I'll just … start a conversation just to hear different things." He said he was very aware that the students were from similar or varied backgrounds, but they all had different experiences, so collectively, they rarely agreed on musical taste. Anthony emphasised that there were

students who “close[d] their ears” when dancehall songs were used in class “because in their homes, that’s defiling themselves.” In those students’ eyes, dancehall music reputation was not conducive to anything positive or uplifting, so it was a conflict with their personal morals.

When first introduced, students were not necessarily open to music outside of their preferred listening choices and that included Jamaican music genres. Anthony stated, “I’ll play a Bob Marley song, and while Bob Marley is the big thing, [the students responded] “Sir, a old people song that.” He also said the same for other genres: “I’ll play a gospel song and they’re like, “Sir, weh you a go wid dat?”[21] Despite these different music preferences, most students were open to practical music engagement whether the music was preferred or not. Anthony confirmed this by saying, “when we get them doing it, like doing the physical thing, sometimes they don’t really care” about the selected music, only the engaging activity. However, not all students loved all aspects of Jamaican music culture as it depended on their perspective, and the students did not have a monolithic view on music and Jamaican culture. Hence old Jamaican popular music and Jamaican traditional folk music were not necessarily first choice music for students. Anthony stated that many students did not like dancehall because in their minds, it represented a culture they are not a part of. He also mentioned that careful selection and planning did not guarantee full acceptance of current popular music but satisfying students’ music preferences was never his sole objective.

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[21] Interpreted as “Sir, where are you going with that music?” Meaning, “Why are you playing that music in my class?”

Students generally responded positively to music they were familiar with, and students preferred different genres of popular music. Anthony said students' music preferences were seen in their responses when he compared his use of current popular music with older popular music:

> If it is a popular song, like a song that is running the place[22], they'll be happy. If it's a not so known song, it's usually [a] mixed [response] or just "alright." And then, if it's probably a[n] old song, then dem [they are] like "Sir, dat [that is] boring."

Knowing how students think, in general, helped Anthony to formulate multiple teaching strategies to navigate students' preferences. He noted that this became tricky with online teaching as "you won't necessarily all the time know if they like it or if they don't like it." Internet connectivity was sometimes an issue, so students did not frequently respond with the frequency or clarity Anthony expected. Since connectivity can be an issue, he was many times direct with his questions: "What [do] you think about this song? Do you know this song?" That way he got direct responses about songs that may be used on the spot or in subsequent classes.

When students loved what was done in class, especially practical activities, they responded in positive ways that Anthony admitted was a surprise to him. He stated the following story that occurred at his previous boys' high school:

> There is this old-time rhythm name Gully Creeper [teacher singing it] that was just a number [of] A's, G's, and B's. And when they learnt that, from dem [as

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[22] "Running the place" means "Popular."

> soon as they] reach a di [reached the] classroom door, you hear it ringing out all over the school. And sometimes I get a call on my phone, "Mr. Vaughn, the recorder is too loud, it's noisy."

Anthony admitted he was genuinely proud that his students enjoyed playing his selected repertoire on the recorder outside of the classroom. There were other times when Anthony taught a lesson and the students' preferred music was used. But the students did not necessarily respond in the positive way he expected, and that left him unsure about their thoughts as there was no adequate feedback. He said, "sometimes you don't think they're paying attention, or sometimes you don't think that they care." But later on in the day, he "will be walking down the corridor and then you hear them [students] singing." It then occurred to him that the song the students were singing or playing was the one he used in class. He said it this way: "wait, nuh dat mi wen a use iina class?"[23] That was when it occurred to him that the students "pay attention," even if he did not notice it at the time.

Although Anthony was partially aware of the students' culture and in the past used aspects of their culture in his classes, he stated that "I don't think I do enough." He mentioned constantly thinking of more ways to appropriately include the students' preferred music culture in his classes. He saw it as a delicate balance between their preferred music and his preferred music selection as their music was a gateway to his intended topics and the teaching and learning process. He reiterated that the students' preferred music "probably comes [as] secondary … because most times what they like is

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[23] Interpreted as "Wasn't that the song I used in class?"

not Jamaican and I tend to jus' go Jamaican most times." Nevertheless, he used their music when possible.

Unfamiliar Music Culture. Students at Bluecam were exposed to music they were not familiar with and in most cases, would not be their preference. Anthony's opinion was that exposure to unfamiliar music was important, and he spoke to the broad-based approach he took when using music in his classes:

> We give them different music to listen to each week or each month. An' dem [and they] just talk about it. Just talk about how they feel about it, or that's what it does. Because, I think, we don't listen a lot in Jamaica. [We don't] Listen widely. That's more the appreciation of music side a things where they're exposed to it and dem [they] can understand it, talk about what it does or how they feel, and so forth.

Despite this approach, he claimed that students sometimes were not open to listening activities that did not include their preferred music. They might question the teacher's choice by asking "what is that?" but using a Jamaican expression, "Sir, wha dat man?!" The negative student responses did not deter Anthony from exposing students to the broad-based curriculum he mentioned music education should provide.

Students' Response. Students were generally responsive when classes were face-to-face. Anthony routinely called on students as they were easily accessed due to the layout of the music classroom. Anthony said students responded well to practical activities, and they enjoyed playing instruments. He stated that students responded better to Jamaican music when it was included in a practical activity. He said, "I think they

prefer to have it in an activity that you're doing. That's when I get the best response." His selected practical activity was usually an outcome of an earlier theoretical process explored in class.

For Anthony, students responded to practical activities in a variety of ways. He claimed that the activities were easily demonstrated when the students "play it, say, with a clap or a stomp" or when Anthony demonstrated on a conga drum. There were times when a listening activity was planned and music was selected for a particular section or excerpt, but students heard the answer in another section where the teacher did not expect them to. In a case like this, he immediately responded to affirm his student's listening and analysis skills:

> One of them surprise me in class actually because … where I wanted them to pick up the major third, they picked it up somewhere else. And I purposely didn't think about that one. But then she said, "Sir, right here, right here," and I was like, "Good ear! I wasn't expecting you to pick it up there" [while laughing at himself].

According to Anthony, students many times responded to music in descriptive and emotive ways. It was not uncommon to get responses like "the minor interval just sound dull. Just sound ominous. Scary." At other times the students responded saying "the major interval, Sir, it sounds a little happy, it sounds a little bright." There were those students who showed little interest and made comments like "Sir, it's just two notes. It boring!" But whichever way, Anthony stated there were responses to his prompts in the face-to-face classes.

Students in the face-to-face setting responded to other practical activities

including rhythmic and melodic exercises, performing, and listening activities. When Anthony explored some topics, he stated that students were asked to clap rhythms, play instruments, or even arrange classroom ensembles for some students to play parts of melodies. Anthony said he built dancehall tracks for students to play along with. This practical involvement, for the most part, brought the lesson to life for them:

> I'll build a dancehall track [clapping and singing the rhythm] and they're playing on it with the rhythm and playing all a dat. When they realize now that they're doing sop'm and they are actually getting it done, they are lot more excited about that.

When students were engaged in the in-person setting, "they learn it, and they doing it." The face-to-face setting was preferred to an online platform where Anthony said he was less successful. In the physical classroom, he got "a better response from them" when they were engaged in activities, and there were times when he would "play [pieces] online and dem just singing it, or listening to it, to analyse it." Anthony further stated if a piece was unfamiliar or outside of the students' music culture, the usual first-time reaction was, "Sir, that boring," or "Sir, a whe yuh a go wid dat?"[24] Or "Sir, mi nuh like dat."[25] After a lesson was taught and the context and content were explained, the students' approach would mostly change and then they become "more open" to exploring the unfamiliar music they initially did not like.

Anthony stated that Jamaican music did not inherently elicit a positive response

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[24] Interpreted as "Sir, where are going with that piece?"
[25] Interpreted as "Sir, I do no like the piece."

every time it was used in class. In his estimation, students' response to old Jamaican artistes like Alton Ellis, popular during the ska and rocksteady eras, mainly in the 1960's, would "probably be like a [yawn]." For most students, old Jamaican music was understandably outside of their regular listening and music preference. Anthony pointed out the following:

> Unless their parents listen to it on a regular basis, or dem have a uncle who has a sound system an' him always playing it. And they say "Sir, a big tune dat, enuh!"[26] [And I say] "Oh, you know tune man." But the others would be like, "Sir, a ole people song dat!"

He argued that students' concept of "old" songs was fluid in that it could mean 40 years, 5 years, old style reggae, or music that was not popular at that moment. Anthony spoke about a traditional reggae song that was recorded within five years of his use for a listening activity:

> I played a Raging Fyah for the boys at Wesley one day, an' dem seh "Sir, weh you a go wid dem ole man song deh?"[27] I said, "Hello, this song was played last year." Can you imagine, sir, a ole people music dat?

He found these classifications somewhat hilarious, but it was the reality in his music classroom.

Students responded to songs by popular artistes by asking questions about them or their music. Although Anthony said he encouraged such conversations, he realised that

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[26] "Big tune" is a highly rated song.
[27] Why are you playing these old people songs in class?

they were not always critical to the topic being taught at that moment, but relevant to the students' understanding of music in the public context:

> They don't always ask questions. If they ask questions, it's not usually relevant to the class or the topic. Sometimes "Sir what you think 'bout Koffee?" Or, "Koffee and Macka Diamond, who better?" Or, stuff like that. Sir, "Gina King or Shenseea, which one a dem better Sir?" "Who you think win di [sound] clash?"

Anthony reiterated that he many times addressed the issues and formulated responses as connecting students' in-school music experience with their out of school lives is important to their educational experience. But he could not entertain the "who is better than who" conversation for anything but a moment as it could cause rancour among the students. However, it was important to address student queries in skilful ways so that he did not dismiss their genuine interest in contemporary Jamaican music culture.

Although students sometimes seemed disinterested in the class, Anthony recognised that he could not treat the situation as a lack of respect for him or his class because students were often tired coming from other classes. Whether the students determined on the day that the listening repertoire was happy, sad, or nondescript, their reaction was many times interpreted as indifferent. Yet, their reaction did not stop Anthony from delivering his music lesson in the best way possible. He went on to state that they would "do the activity" and then "dem gaan" [leave the class]. When Anthony heard the same students with the material the following week, outside of his music class, that was when he again realised that they assimilated the information while looking disinterested the previous week. He concluded that some students often showed interest

in the classes irrespective of their personal situation. He also stated that there were times when students sent him a text message regarding an assignment or an activity: "Sir, remember you're supposed to send that." But there were others who really did not show much interest regardless of what was done in class. Irrespective of the situation, Anthony recognised that he had to respond to his students' needs in different ways to ensure the quality of his class was not compromised and the students were engaged as learners.

Students Response and Online Teaching. Students' response to online teaching was a mixed bag experience. There were times when the classes were very effective as students were interactive and generally showing interest. But there were other occasions when the classes were not working as planned and student participation was poor. Irrespective of the situation, Anthony claimed he knew that he had to respond in positive ways to keep students' attention and trust. In the online setting, students responded to questions as best as they could while they experienced poor internet connectivity. That sometimes affected the communication with Anthony and in response, he asked them to "raise your hand" using the reaction tool or said "do you understand?" if they cannot verbally respond.

Anthony reiterated that activity-based engagement was very important to the success of his online classes and, as compared to in-person classes, he elicited much more positive responses to focused musical activities. There were times when he was not sure about the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process until he checked students individually:

> Online you don't really know what they're thinking or how they're feeling. 'Cause they're behind the screen, or behind a camera, or behind the muted microphone. So you tell them to do an activity, I really don't know if they doing it unless you call on them individually.

Anthony also mentioned that students' responses were sometimes displayed "in the chat" because they were routinely "posting the answers" after he posed his questions.

Anthony and his students routinely kept their cameras off for the duration of each observation session. He explained that it was the norm to keep the cameras off because, based on his understanding of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI) directive, it was not compulsory for the students to keep them on in public schools. He also stated that students had issues with internet connectivity and limited bandwidth, and it was no longer a requirement as it would place them at a disadvantage during their classes. He mostly conducted his classes with his camera off and the students did the same. This created a dynamic that might seem impersonal in some ways but based on the students' responses to music and activities, it seemed to work well in this context.

It was noted that during the observation sessions, the three classes went relatively smoothly with the cameras off. Students communicated well by opening their microphones to speak when asked or after verbal acknowledgement by the teacher. Students were generally communicative throughout, but many contributed to the class through the Google Classroom chat feature. Anthony appeared to be very comfortable engaging the students with cameras off, but he admitted that cameras on would improve the interaction necessary for a good rapport throughout.

Overall, students in the online setting seemed to better respond to theoretical activities and Anthony surmised that with "the theoretical activities, they are done in their own space, in your own time." Due to the online setting, he did more theory-based activities and less performance-based activities. From what I observed in the classes, students liked to participate in activities that had specific tasks such as notating rhythms, responding to a listening exercise, or even reading a definition, as the activities piqued their interest in the class. Additionally, Bluecam High School students were generally keen on grades, and they expected their activities to be graded. Anthony thought it was one of the reasons they leaned towards theoretical activities as that approach was what they were accustomed to in other classes. Anthony did theory-based classes because it was difficult to consistently have practical classes online. But he worked to resolve that situation as practical engagement was preferred. He did many practical activities that did not involve playing or singing, including spot quizzes or games. But the responses from Grades 7, 8, and 9 were contrasting:

> Like Grade 7, a don't haffi worry 'bout them, dem eager.[28] Yeah, they are eager. Grade 8, it's in-between. Grade 9 are the ones wha, like "I don't really care. I don't wanna be here." … When I get Grade 9'svery active, … I walk on the moon. [laughing] … You can't spoil my day after that.

Although Anthony found it challenging to teach practical online classes, he said he made a significant breakthrough over the one-year period leading to our interview. Generally, in his opinion, teaching music on the online platform was a work in progress.

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[28] Interpreted as "I do not have to worry about them because they are eager."

Anthony mentioned that he was determined to improve the offerings to better deliver the curriculum and make the class a much better teaching and learning experience for his students.

Navigating the (Covid-19) Classroom

Navigating Online Technology. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Anthony shifted to an online modality to deliver his classes and used his school's Google Classroom platform. He focused on exploring various websites to enhance the online experience for his students. During that period, he mainly used Chrome Lab including the virtual piano, YouTube clips for his video links, Nearpod to view some activities, and a website called Song Maker. He explained that for online activities, it was difficult to manage the students playing their examples on the Chrome Lab virtual piano as sometimes it became a kaleidoscope of unwanted sounds when they all decided to play at the same time. There were times when he asked his students to do a task for homework; "Go to Chrome Labs piano lab and play a 3rd and send it to me. Send the link to me and then I'll assess it afterwards." This approach afforded students an opportunity to work at their own pace prior to electronically submitting the assignments.

Students and Teacher Interaction. Anthony seemed deliberate with his teaching strategy encouraging student engagement and rapport during each session. His classes were visually stimulating with charts, videos, and graphics, and he used a wide range of repertoire that underlined the discussions and responses. Anthony used introductory activities to present the topic for the day, generate initial discussions with the students that were topic oriented, and to review content from the previous lesson. In the initial

stages of each observation, the students were relatively quiet in the class. Anthony gradually pulled them in as active participants using questions, short discussions, and listening activities. As he disclosed in the interviews, he used imagery to stimulate students' thoughts when he introduced texture in music and when he explored intervals. He also used real-life examples the students related to as a part of his explanation of monophony, polyphony, and homophony. At the end of a session on texture when students were asked to post reflective comments, one student posted the following: "there are three different phonys and they all have different textures." In another session, students posted their summaries about their learning experience using the collaborating board called Nearpod.

On one occasion, Anthony and the students were engaged in a Jeopardy contest that had music categories, was hosted on an online platform, and populated by Anthony. At first, most of the initial questions were enthusiastically answered by three male students as they used the raised hand feature. To diversify student participation and aid student involvement, Anthony called students by name, directed them to select new categories, and thereafter required them to answer questions in the select category. Although student participation was sometimes inconsistent, some students were generally excited to participate as the activity was competitive in nature.

The chat feature was used to communicate different ideas or instructions. Anthony often acknowledged the students' comments. The chat was also used to communicate links to join a keyboard in Chrome Music Lab, and to enter the Nearpod online platform for other activities. Only ten students could enter the Chrome Music Lab

room at any one time. Anthony selected students at different intervals to enter the room and complete activities while the others watched and offered comments or feedback. In general, Anthony interacted with the students' using questions, responding to interactive activities, assigning tasks, and having discussions through their microphones or in the chat.

Teacher Selected Activities. Anthony's selected activities were diverse and supported his stated pedagogical approach. Most of the selected activities were music specific and involved critical listening. He introduced students to texture through a video after which students were asked to type music related responses to the video in Nearpod. Anthony asked students to state the key points heard in the video, read definitions, and respond to the listening examples used throughout the class. In one session, he had a Nearpod activity that asked students to match music terminologies with definitions and post what they learned in the collaborating board. It was a relatively short activity, but appeared to be engaging, nonetheless. The lesson observed that used the Jeopardy game as the main activity was theoretically focused. There were no listening examples, critique, or music performance-based activities, and the game lasted the entire session. However, the Jeopardy activity provided an opportunity to review the theory content previously taught. The review was comprehensive, and the questions were broad-based. The teacher mentioned that in setting up the jeopardy, he had difficulty including audio tracks in the program. Hence, he could not include audio clips for a listening category.

Anthony planned activities that required students to identify and play intervals on the virtual keyboard in Chrome Music Lab. Song Maker, an online music mixer software,

was used by the teacher for a listening activity with Row, Row, Row Your Boat. The chart was colour coded delineating each section of the A-B-A structure. Students were asked to identify the texture and state the reason for their answers. For another activity, Anthony led a detailed discussion followed by a 2-minute video listening activity with a Marimba player performing the Super Mario theme. Initially, less than fifty percent of the students willingly participated in the activities, but the participation level significantly increased when Anthony requested students' response by name.

Music Repertoire and Students Reaction. Anthony used music representing diverse genres. For his listening activities, Anthony's selected YouTube video clips were approximately 30-seconds in length. For the most part, the music used for the observation sessions were Anthony's preferred music selections. Anthony used a variety of genres and artistes for the listening and appraising activity demonstrating texture in music. There were two Jamaican examples used in each of the three categories, monophony, polyphony, and homophony. The music examples were traditional reggae songs, choral music using Jamaican folk style known as mento, dancehall, British pop, classical, and a semiclassical works. Each of the three texture categories was assigned three music examples. Two of the three music examples in each category were Jamaican music genres. The music examples used to demonstrate texture were as follows:

- Monophonic: Reggae, British Pop, Reggae
- Homophony: Reggae/Dancehall, Semi-classical, Mento (Jamaican)
- Polyphony: Traditional Jamaican folk, Reggae, Baroque

The traditional Jamaican folk excerpt in the polyphony category was a recorded performance by the Bluecam school choir and performed at the popular local television high school singing competition, All Together Sing. Students appeared to relate to that quite well. Anthony showed a photograph of Jamaica's most popular reggae singer and musician, Bob Marley. However, a student asked if it was another reggae artiste, Jah Cure. Bob Marley, considered by many to be the main face of reggae, was not easily recognisable for some of the students.

In the chat, students commented on different aspects of the music used in the class. A student posted that "polyphony was basically just chaos." Another student supported the comment and responded "Yes." In response to the Bach, one student stated, "Lord this is ancient." For the semi-classical work by a non-English foreign artiste, another student posted, "I swear these words aren't English." Another comment aimed at the Bluecam school choir song, stated "This song slaps," and I understand that to mean "it is really good." In the same vein, another student responded, "Slap harder than my mother's belt." I also understand that it also meant the song was "really good."

In another session, Anthony carefully selected a few pieces to help students identify different textures in music. Anthony included two versions of Row, Row, Row Your Boat that he arranged and recorded in an online sequencer called Song Maker. Two contemporary and highly syncopated arrangements of the song were used to demonstrate polyphony and homophony. The other listening examples included:

- Video of a modern guitarist playing a melody with a band accompaniment.
  Reggae

- Bluecam Music Club Choir signing a traditional folk song. The voices were using polyphonic interplay, but the overall texture with the folk band was homophonic.
- Solo guitarist playing the Jamaican National Anthem. Melody and accompaniment.
- Super Mario theme. Homophonic. Played on a marimba by a soloist using four mallets.

During the observation, the students initially thought the arrangement of the Jamaican National Anthem for solo guitar using melody and accompaniment, was monophonic. This took some discussion and directed purposeful listening by the teacher. Anthony was very patient with his explanations and the students eventually understood the concept. There seemed to be a positive acceptance of the varied repertoire used in the classes observed.

Teaching Strategies. Anthony employed various teaching strategies in his classes. The class was filled with active listening activities involving the students. The selected songs made sound listening examples and at times generated vibrant discussions. To demonstrate polyphony, the teacher introduced a visual aid showing overlapping lines on a continuum with different colours. This chart made it easy to follow each melodic line, and the colour-coded lines were explained to the students prior to Anthony playing the music examples. Anthony designed a set of follow up homework questions for the students and they were based on two of the videos.

During his classes, Anthony demonstrated empathy with his students without compromising the quality of his work. When student answers were not exact or correct,

Anthony ensured that he provided the students with basic triggers to guide their responses. Anthony found ways to encourage student involvement with asking and answering questions. When students respond to questions, he asked them about the reasons for their answers, even if they were correct. He later explained that he wanted to ensure that the student answers were based on reasoning and not guessing. His approach confirmed his philosophy of requiring students to be critical thinkers. Explanations from students were all assured. Generally, students were encouraged to think through their answers as Anthony asked for explanation. The students were not robotic with their answers, but instead, quite thoughtful.

Anthony's teaching strategy included involving students in performance-based activities. Anthony encouraged involvement by selecting some students to play intervals in the Chrome Music Lab. He guided students in the lab with the identification of intervals – quantity and quality. Of the two arrangements of Row, Row, Row Your Boat sequenced in Song Maker, one demonstrated homophony (creative and rhythmic arrangement) and the second version demonstrated polyphony and used the same melody in a round with two voices. These arrangements were created as instrumental pieces.

Summary

There were several factors that contributed to Anthony's development as a music teacher. His performance background, years of teaching experience as an untrained graduate, experience at the primary level, experience at the secondary level with a single sex and a co-educational school, along with his eventual trained teacher status, all combined to make him the teacher he became. He had a strong Jamaican music

philosophy but saw himself as a teacher who broadened students' understanding of music and life in general. Despite his intense Jamaican and Caribbean music allegiance, his music preferences often included a relatively wide range of non-Jamaican repertoire.

In Anthony's view, the COVID-19 pandemic created a few changes to his teaching strategy and approach, but not his philosophy. Existing in the virtual space without the instruments that were normally at his disposal in the physical music classroom proved to be a challenging experience. However, he found workable options that engaged his students and saw the online options as a temporary solution. He considered himself to be a work in progress and he spent time analysing and strategizing to successfully engage his students in the teaching and learning process, whether in the virtual space or face-to-face. Therefore, embedded in his teaching approach was his philosophy of guiding students to a point of thoughtful critique and analysis.

Anthony was concerned about the traditional nature of the National Standards Curriculum as, in his opinion, it did not fully speak to the modern student and the modern music classroom. That was the reason he articulated designing a curriculum that he thought worked well with his students from Grade 7 through to Grade 9, and his next aim was to prepare students for specialised music exams by the time they reach Grade 11. He saw himself as a teacher who prepared the next generation to be better persons but at the same time, he learned a lot from them as their views and awareness were important to the success of his classes.

Based on the observation sessions I viewed, Anthony found various ways to actively include his students in class activities. He constantly listened to their opinions,

and he guided his students’ thought processes towards worthwhile discussions about music and life. His casual but purposeful demeanour projected an inviting presence when teaching his classes.

CHAPTER SIX

PETER TARGETH: TEACHING MUSIC AT TOLEDO HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

"I try to keep my classes fun, but educational … I try not to teach music in a vacuum"

- Peter Targeth, Music Teacher at Toledo High School for Girls

Introduction

Toledo High

Toledo High School for Girls is a publicly funded single sex high school. The school has strong Christian affiliation, is located in the city of Kingston, and has a student population of over 1700 students. There are over 90 full-time teachers employed at the school with a student teacher ratio of approximately 20:1. The school has a reputation as an elite school in academic subjects, performing arts, and sports. Based on the 2019 Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination results, the school was ranked as one of the top ten schools on the island of Jamaica. Toledo High is one of seven single sex female schools ranked in the top ten of which three are from the city of Kingston.

Many of the students who attend Toledo High are from the parishes of Kingston, St. Andrew, and St. Catherine. However, due to its strong academic reputation, female students from other parishes selected Toledo as their first-choice high school and passed the island wide government-run entrance examination with very high scores, allowing them to attend the school. Students are enrolled from Grade 7 through to Grade 13, and the average student daily attendance is over 90 percent. The general music classes are

offered in Grades 7 and 8 only and are taught by one full-time and one part-time music teacher.

Several students take private music lessons at the school and there are a cadre of part-time music teachers teaching a wide variety of instruments through their very active extracurricular music programme. The school has several large ensembles including a choir and steel band, and other music ensembles, most notably a relatively new pop band. Toledo High frequently enters local music competitions including the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) annual festival of the arts. Many of their extracurricular music students who take private lessons, enter and are successful in the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) and the Trinity Guildhall graded music examinations. The general music classes use a double period that lasts 70 minutes.

Peter Targeth

Peter Targeth is the sole full-time music teacher at Toledo High School for Girls and has been employed at the institution for approximately four years. In his first year he was hired as a part-time teacher but became a full-time music teacher in his second year. Peter is a modern electric bassist who is trained and educated as a jazz and popular music performer and as a music educator. He attended the only visual and performing arts tertiary institution in Jamaica where he completed both a diploma in performance and a bachelor's degree in music education. In addition to his general music classes, Peter is a homeroom teacher with the responsibility to monitor and manage an assigned class for one academic year. His primary extracurricular responsibility is the pop band, and he

continues to be an active performer on both electric bass and the double bass.

Teaching was not Peter's first career choice, music was. He had dreams of performing full-time and that was his reason for completing a performance programme. But he went into teaching by default and states that he has not regretted it. He was in his final year of a 3-year performance diploma when he thought of teaching. Peter said:

> I did not want to be a teacher. It was after my third-year recital, my father just give me an ultimatum, "you going back to school? You're not staying in the house and not doing anything." So, I think it wouldn't harm to, you know, become more qualified. And then [I] realised that the more I start[ed] to do it, I realise[d] that I actually liked it. I don't mind it as much as I thought I would. So it has grown on me.

Peter started his teaching career in 2013, immediately after graduating from his music education programme. In the early years of teaching, he was not always a full-time music teacher as he combined an active performance career with his teaching, and at one point, was performing only. He taught music at two co-educational high schools prior to teaching at Toledo High School for Girls.

I interviewed Peter approximately one year after the COVID-19 pandemic created a physical lockdown of educational institutions in Jamaica. All classes at Toledo High had migrated to online portals and Peter's general music classes experienced the same fate. He had to make several adjustments to the delivery of his classes, and he performed personal research to become au fait with online engagement and resources.

I conducted three interviews and observed one of Peter's Grade 7 music classes

on three separate occasions. The data collection process took place over a three-week period between April and May 2021. Although many government operated institutions were using Google Classroom as recommended by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI), Peter conducted his classes using a free Zoom account. Prior to the data collection process, the Informed Consent form was sent to Peter Targeth. Both the Principal and Peter gave me written permission to observe one of Peter's Grade 8 classes over the three-week period. I logged into the Zoom classes, kept my camera off, and was not an active participant. My virtual classroom experience was similar to the students as I shared the same view and was able to see the chat feature. Like many Jamaican public schools, students often refer to male teachers, such as Peter Targeth, as "Sir."

Findings for Peter Targeth

In this section of chapter six, I present data and findings relating to the case of Peter Targeth. Data were collected using class observations and semi-structured interviews. There were four main themes emerging from the data. They are (1) Teaching Philosophy Enacted in the Classroom, (2) Teaching and Learning in Action, (3) Students and the Music Classroom, and (4) Navigating the (COVID-19) Music Classroom. The chapter ends with a summary of the conclusions drawn from the case.

Teaching Philosophy Enacted in the Classroom

Philosophical Grounding. Peter's music education training seemingly had a profound influence on his philosophical approach to teaching. During his music education training, he was introduced to the Suzuki method of teaching, a system he

appeared to believe in. Peter also said that he was “a big fan of Bandura,” the social learning theorist known for his contribution to the self-efficacy theory. Peter contended that teachers should encourage students to thrive by being themselves and explore education and personal development using local contexts and their intellect:

> I just like … allowing students to be themselves, and in being themselves I try to get the concept, or what we need to get done. As opposed to be forcing what I want them to know unto them. So I try to have them create their own opinions and tailor it to suit what we’re supposed to know as opposed to forcing you to know what is written on the paper.

Therefore, it was Peter’s viewpoint that students should be guided through their educational experiences to form their own opinions and become critical thinkers.

Peter claimed he was a believer in the Suzuki method where familiar music can be modified and presented to students in a meaningful way. This approach seemed to influence his philosophy in that he created his lessons around familiar music and incorporated Jamaican music, culture, and language into his classes:

> I’m a big fan of Suzuki method … So I try to use things that would be songs or examples that students … are more familiar with, to get the points across, as opposed to using traditional music. So, if it means that I’d have to edit some songs that they know just to create the point, I prefer to use songs that they would be listening to, to centre lessons around … things that they would know already.
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> So I like the mother tongue, so things that they are already familiar with.

Influenced by the way he preferred to be taught, Peter thought that music was a “fun”

subject that led to fruitful educational experiences. He asserted that he incorporated strategies and activities that engaged the students in his classes while making the presented topics real-life experiences. He said:

> I think music should be fun. It shouldn't be like, "oh alright, we're leaving maths class, oh alright, we're going to music now." So I try to keep my classes fun, but educational. Educational but fun at the same time. So I try to implement games and … music that they would be listening to, and stuff like that. … I try not to teach music in a vacuum either. So I try to tie other subject areas into it, other life occurrences and stuff like that, while teaching the prescribed topic, the selected topic or concept for that day.

Performer and Music Educator. Peter credited his music education training for providing him with the tools to support his philosophy on teaching and ultimately, his pedagogical approach. He stated that knowledge gained through the education programme taught him how to "keep things simple," especially when providing a "definition and things like that." Among other things, he was aware of how to "cater to different learning styles." This, he contended, was achieved through carefully "planning and executing" each lesson as "you can't be using the one method all the time." He appeared to believe that without these educational perspectives, he would not have had the "foresight" needed to prepare for teaching in the secondary classroom. Peter concluded that his music education training taught him how to "avoid some issues that may arise and how to doctor them when they arise." This awareness continued as a helpful guidepost in his professional teaching life.

Peter's performance background, combined with his education training, influenced his approach to teaching. He said that "both work[ed] to help each other." He continued to be an active musician playing with different bands, mainly with "dancehall artiste, [and] reggae artistes from Jamaica." Peter explained that these gigs required certain professional responsibilities and deliberate collaborative efforts with his fellow performers. Speaking of his performance experiences, he said the following:

> I'm not always in charge. Sometimes I'm the one getting the order. So I have to learn to listen and I have to learn to execute what I've been told to do. I've had to learn to play as a team player. It's not always my show. And learning all those life lessons I think I've been able to pass on some of those to the students in the lessons, or in the classroom.

He saw collaboration among students as important to successful teaching and learning experiences in the music classroom.

Jamaican Culture in Music Education. A hallmark of Peter's teaching involved the exploration of different cultures through music. Peter said he recognised that for his young students, this "different" culture was not only overseas, but it was also a local phenomenon. He noted that students were not often aware of the rich musical heritage and legacy of Jamaica, so he felt he had a responsibility to enlighten his students through discussion, listening, critique, to help them understand the situational context from which the music arose. He said the following about his approach to teaching his students when their lessons were centred on unfamiliar Jamaican music:

> I use it … to explore different cultures. Sometimes, and depending the on lesson, we'll explore what's happening at that time. … It sort of became a civics lesson with music involved. … So even though they are not familiar with [it], by the end of the lessons, because it spanned over a couple classes, students were telling me that … their new favourite genre for music was Ska.

That was the reason Peter said he did not discount the value of students' exposure to music outside of their preferred listening repertoire. He thought it was necessary to open their minds to other possibilities and not develop a myopic view of life.

Peter infused Jamaican music repertoire and culture in his classes. He mentioned his preference to use repertoire that spoke to the topic he was teaching at the time. Hence, his choice of repertoire was dependent on the topic to be covered. He used "primarily reggae or dancehall" as Jamaican listening materials in his general music classes. Although Peter expressed his love of Jamaican popular music genres and would have inserted them on his own, a part of the syllabus developed by his school focused on Jamaican popular music. Since the pandemic interfered with face-to-face classes, Peter "opted to insert more music appreciation and just having them more appreciative of Jamaican music." This, he stated, was important to him as over the years he discovered that students "weren't very familiar with Jamaican music," and in his eyes, this was an unfortunate situation. Peter claimed that the situation was "getting better" as "there are some positive responses" from the students regarding Jamaican music. However, students sometimes shared their preferred music with Peter "and again, some of them not fit for classroom play [while laughing]." He recognised that some of the student proposed songs

contained lyrics and content that he felt were inappropriate for his classroom. Peter noted that he was aware of the importance to carefully select repertoire that supported the content while catering for the needs of the students.

Peter wanted to see aspects of traditional Jamaican culture operating in the school system and in his music classes. He said: “I don’t think it [Jamaican culture] is playing as big as a role as it should be playing.” To rectify this situation at his school, Peter was “taking steps to include as much from my culture as I am allowed to.” His broader curriculum vision was stated in this way:

> It’s my aim to use more indigenous music, and even the [indigenous] instruments, to bring across the [musical] concepts. I think for far too long, it has been, you know, Jamaican music has been seen as [on the] left while music from the Americas and Europe are seen as [on the] right, where there is no middle ground where… So, I don't think there is enough emphasis placed on Jamaican music as it’s based on other types of music.

He contended that the lack of emphasis on Jamaican music in schools could be due to unfairly prejudiced ideas. Peter stated that in some circles, there is a belief that Jamaican music was “the type of music where it doesn’t require as much musicianship.” Peter, through his teaching, said he was trying to eliminate that mindset where everything foreign was good and everything local was treated with scepticism and in some instances, with disdain. He said, “I’m trying not to have that continue to be the norm or the general thought process.” This was not only true for Jamaican popular music, but a stigma Peter felt was sometimes attached to Jamaican traditional folk music. For Peter, the inclusion

of Jamaican traditional and popular music in the curriculum was his way of attempting to address the issue.

Teaching and Learning in Action

Music Curriculum. Toledo High had its own general music curriculum. The music syllabi from the National Standards Curriculum (NSC), developed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI), was not featured in the school's music programme. The syllabus in Grade 7 had a range of topics including a unit on Jamaican music, and the Grade 8 syllabus was "primarily geared towards the Grade 2 ABRSM[29] [music theory] syllabus," as students in Grade 8 prepared for the ABRSM Grade 2 music theory examination over the course of that academic year. The ABRSM practical (instrumental and singing) and music theory examinations were the main external examinations taken by students registered in the afterschool extracurricular private lessons. The classes were taken at an additional cost to each registered student. However, the ABRSM Grade 2 music theory examination preparation was a part of the general music offering at Toledo High School and was offered to each student without an extra fee for the classes.

The Grade 7 curriculum was built on listening and appraising, performing, and a combination of basic composing and arranging. Peter shared that when classes were face-to-face, students explored practical music making through classroom ensembles and creating compositions:

[29] Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

> The practical aspects sometimes would have students creating their own music and performing them. Sometimes with traditional notation or with alternate [notation]. … I try to have them exploring their creativity and their compositional skills, just allowing them to be themselves, sometimes.

When he first went to Toledo High, Peter stated that there were topics he felt he needed to include in the curriculum that were easily addressed through listening and critiquing music. When the in-person classes were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Peter said both he and his colleague embraced the opportunity and included more Jamaican music in the classes. This involved the insertion of Jamaican music history as a part of the syllabus.

Music as Holistic Education. Peter seemingly thought of education as an experience that should influence positive change in individuals. For him, the topics taught in class had a bearing on what students did beyond the classroom. His philosophy on education appeared to drive his teaching approach and allowed him to see music as a part of a holistic educational experience. His viewpoint was that his approach to teaching was influenced by his student learning experiences as he found it difficult to make connections across subject areas. So, he wanted to make those connections for his students:

> It was sometimes a little bit difficult to make connections between different subject areas, as everything felt like it was a different bubble, and sometimes I find things irrelevant. But along the line I realised how they actually relate to each other. So I try to make the connections from early so that students can actually not

> think of music as [just] another subject, but another subject that relates to everything else.

To support his position, he spoke about the relationship between “Italian terms” used in music that were “similar to some of the other foreign language[s] that they would study, like Spanish.” There were times he directly made “the link” when teaching or sometimes gave “hints” when engaged in an activity like a quiz or game. He explained that on other occasions he taught about Jamaican music heritage and its connection to the general history of the Jamaican people:

> If we are doing classification of instruments and I taught about the Abeng, and then at that point … I would talk about the Maroons, which I think would be prior knowledge, but coming from primary school or our history classes. I try to use it to make music more relevant.

Peter’s philosophy also seemed to guide his approach to teaching both general music and private instrumental classes. He thought it was important to make music, the subject, “come to life” when engaging his students. He was of the view that his teaching should answer probing questions for the students. That would include, “why are we doing the subject? Why … is this important?” Peter went on to state that “questions like that I try to answer for the students” during the teaching and learning process.

Peter acknowledged that his teaching had “evolved” over his 8-year career and will continue to change with each new experience. He discussed his growth from his early years of teaching stating, “at first it was just about getting the song, learning the song, moving right along. But now it’s more of a more holistic approach. Fostering things

like teamwork and team building among the students." He also saw himself as someone who operated as a teacher in the classroom, but with a societal responsibility. He claimed he was "using the classroom as the lab, for lack of a better word, to hopefully impact the society." Peter spoke to the holistic needs of his students, learned from them, had discussions with them, and shared life experiences with them while he educated them in music.

> I think, as a music teacher, it is part of my duty to engage students in our culture. And to open the appetite or their pallet with different art forms, different music from different eras and cultures. And just to bring different subject areas or different aspects of life together in class, so they can see the relevance of most, if not everything, in their surroundings.

Pedagogical Approach. When teaching students from diverse backgrounds, Peter expressed that it was important to acknowledge their cultural understandings and he spoke of finding ways to successfully teach them within their cultural contexts. For Peter, this began with careful lesson planning, creative exploration, and clear objectives, all combining to facilitate teaching and learning. He claimed that his pedagogical approach evolved over the years, but his guiding philosophy had not. He said this about his teaching:

> The concept might be the same thing, but delivery may have gotten better, I think. Things like time management … has improved. The ability to tie strands of different aspects and different subject areas together has improved. And I guess just being able to bring the concepts alive has gotten better.

Peter said his lesson plans were "usually done after the PowerPoint" document was completed. In other words, he structured a PowerPoint document of his activity-based lessons before documenting it in a traditional lesson plan format. He created and used his PowerPoint documents as his guiding plan during a lesson, and since the online classes started, he routinely shared them with his students.

Creating opportunities for students to explore and make decisions appeared to be an important part of Peter's pedagogical approach. His opinion was that students, among other things, should have the opportunity to create, experiment, question, and collaborate in class. He found that discussions in class, especially when they were face-to-face, were very vibrant and productive. He recognised that it was necessary to adjust his teaching approach during the pandemic so that his lessons had the vibrancy he enjoyed prior to online classes. That, he purported, was the reason he changed and included more visually stimulating presentations, less collaborative activities due to latency and internet connectivity issues experienced by the students, and more individual tasks:

> [My] teaching definitely has changed. I've had to be … one, using more slides as opposed to dictating, or music charts, or notes. Two, a lot of the in-person activities had to be substituted for videos or me performing, or having single students, or having solos from different students, as opposed to having them perform in ensembles. A lot of the activities that would have been graded as a group had to be graded or had to be revamped to be individual assignments.

Although the online platform was restrictive for practical general music classes, for Peter, it opened other opportunities for pedagogical exploration suitable to online

learning. He stated that in-person engagement "was not always easy." He spoke of an advantage he experienced with his online engagement:

> When we had the projector, we would not want to be searching through YouTube while the class is there. But while we are online, it's easy for me to be playing one video or showing one slide while searching for something else.

With the added experience of online teaching, he acknowledged a blended approach as the way forward in his face-to-face classes. He stated the following about online music teaching as a whole:

> We're not having enough, you know, guided performance. That's just the only part I think that's negative. Otherwise, I think it's a positive. If I had a choice, it would be a mixed approach where there'll be some face-to-face contact learning, while, maybe assignments would be submitted online.

Peter decided that expanding on the positives of his online experience combined with the best aspects of his in-person teaching would be ideal going forward. Peter said:

> As it relates to the distribution of notes, it would be a mixed approach where some content could be submitted online, some they would have to write. … For assessment where they are performance based, I definitely [do] not see where I would not want to have them exploring their video editing skills and that sort of creativity. So I am definitely willing to use either or both.

In the online space, Peter appeared to believe that students had "all the freedom to explore whatever creative way they want to submit their assignments." Peter was convinced that a continuation of this approach was important and would be beneficial to

his students. He said he contemplated what his overall approach will look like when he returned to in-person teaching. Reflecting on his face-to-face student engagement, he noted:

> The practical aspects, sometimes, would have students creating their own music and performing them. Sometimes with traditional notation or with alternate [notation]. … I try to have them exploring their creativity and their compositional skills, just allowing them to be themselves, sometimes.

Whether online or in-person, Peter said he used interactive methods in the music classroom to encourage students' active participation in class. His exposure to online student engagement made him aware that going forward, his pedagogical approach would be adjusted, but his philosophical grounding would remain intact.

In Peter's view, a strategic approach to teaching was of utmost importance when students were exploring familiar and unfamiliar music. He carefully navigated his classes to meet his lesson objectives, while at the same time aimed to satisfy the educational expectations of his students. What students desired in music classes seemed to be closely aligned to students' music preferences and influenced their response to the teacher's music preferences and selections. Peter acknowledged there was a delicate balance between these potentially conflicting areas and he aimed to address this in his classes.

Students often suggested songs for the teacher to use in class. Peter stated that "if I can get the concept taught from those [songs], then I would use those." If that was not possible, he would "have to go to search for other music." There were times when students' preferred music choices were deemed inappropriate for the classroom, but the

songs had qualities that satisfied the objectives of Peter's lessons. In such cases, Peter said it was not uncommon to use student suggested songs, but when they contain inappropriate lyrics, he "would try and find the instrumentals."[30] This approach seemed to work well as it satisfied the students' desire for their preferred music and the teacher's need to meet his specific objectives.

Peter expressed that his experience taught him that students' preferred music can limit the scope of his music selection, but it did not have to. Whether students' preferred music restricted or expanded their experience depended on how the students' preferred music was treated in the overall curriculum. He mentioned using students' familiar music as a gateway to explore unfamiliar music genres and cultures. His teaching strategy, he claimed, enabled student participation and encouraged them to listen, critique, and discuss musical aspects of familiar and unfamiliar music. He said:

> It depends on, one, how long I play the song for and when I play the song. … If I play the song before something, before music that they are familiar with, … it doesn't get much of a positive response. But if it's like in the middle of something that they know, then it's more of a "Oh, alright. So, we hear it in this. What type of music is this? Alright we hear it in that too." As opposed to starting with the unknown where you kind of lose them and then have to try and get them back with what they know.

Peter felt it was important to start with current popular music the students were familiar with as it pulled them into the class and encouraged student participation and interest.

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[30] Instrumental version of the song.

At Toledo High, Peter observed that when he called students by name it was an effective strategy that encouraged student participation in class. Sometimes the same set of students asked or answered questions with little participation from the other members of the class. Peter thought it was important to get all, if not most, students involved in the teaching and learning experience, and he did what it took to make it happen:

> I go through the list [of students]. So persons that are not responding, I pick on those persons from time to time. But at the same time, I try not to, for lack of a better word, bore the others who are responding, by waiting on those who are not responding to respond. I try to strike a balance.

During the observation sessions, Peter sought responses from his students while teaching. He frequently asked his students if they understood his points or explanations and the students generally responded. Peter said he asked them those questions because "every now and then I would get a response that would share a different perspective or different point of view on the concept or the topic that's being taught." He admitted that it was a "learning process" for him:

> Sometimes in explaining, or when another student explains what they understand, it will clarify for other students. So, student A would be explaining what they understand, and it would clarify the concept for student B. So I find asking them, it allows you to get feedback on … how I express different concepts, one, and it allows me to think of, or it forces me to think of other ways sometimes to reiterate the same.

Keeping students actively involved in his classes seemed to be another primary

objective of Peter's. He spoke of using a variety of music styles and genres that were intended to keep their interest and he carefully placed his music selections at different points in his lesson. He explained that he had different reasons for the placement of music at different points in his classes. While students were participating in certain non-listening in-class activities, Peter used music in the background to accompany those activities. He said the music was used to "keep the dead air silence … at a minimal." He went further and explained:

> I find that students get distracted when they aren't actively involved, when they are not engaged. If they just doing something and not hearing anything, it sometimes feels disjointed. So I try not to have that dead space in the lessons.

Another teaching strategy involved the carefully edited audio and video clips used in classes. Unless he was examining larger scale works, Peter seemed to keep his listening examples no longer than ninety seconds. He said, ideally, sixty seconds or less worked best for many of his Grade 7 students. He stated that "when you have clips running for too long, you tend to lose the point" and, he added, students' attention. He realised that short clips were effective "when you're looking for a specific concept" like themes or sections in music. He said: "if it was maybe, an explanation, [an] explaining video, it would be less of an issue" if the video was longer than ninety seconds, but not too long. Importantly, Peter recognised that when he was "trying to find especially new concepts that … they're not familiar with, I find that keeping the clips very short and to the point works better." This was effectively demonstrated in the classes observed.

Peter sometimes used students' preferred music and aligned them with the general

objectives of his classes. Peter admitted there were times he used students preferred music mainly to satisfy their craving for known contemporary music. However, in addition to the students' music, he stated that he frequently had his pre-selected music prepared for the class. He tried "to strike a balance" between the students' preferred music and his selected music. He said, "I would play that song that maybe ten persons like, and in the other lesson I would try to incorporate another song that the other remaining numbers would like." This did not always work, but it lowered the dissatisfied responses that sometimes emanated from his students' impatience with music that was not their preferred choice. With this approach, many of the students, at some point, interacted with their preferred music choice in music class.

With unfamiliar music, students sometimes seemed to become distracted if they were not made aware of the content or context. Peter stated, "when they don't like it, sometimes they become distracted, and they'll be talking about it or talking why they don't like it." This was an opportunity for Peter to "address the issue and then restart the clip." After that was done, he noted that the class "usually flows" and in the process, he got the "concept done." Peter dispelled the notion that unfamiliarity with a piece of music, or a particular genre, meant the students will never like it. He demonstrated that students were willing to learn more about unfamiliar music if they were introduced to it in a meaningful way. That was the reason Peter said, "I don't recall having an issue where the student would refuse to participate in class because they didn't like the song." He felt that educating them beyond what they already knew was one critical step to broadening the students' understanding and appreciation of unfamiliar music.

Peter noted that collaborative work in the music classroom was diminished during the pandemic. Due to the difficulty of managing latency that comes with many of the online platforms, Peter explained that with collaborative work, “I try not to do it as much online.” He did not find online collaboration an effective means of participation in the virtual music classroom:

> I find that it didn’t work. It seems to be more stressful on the students because they complain about it a lot. And sometimes the work becomes sub-par because they are not meeting as much. So, they are complaining about having [no] time to meet, and all that. So, I try not to do as much of it online. In person they would have done a whole lot more, but due to the current situation, not as much online.

Prior to the pandemic, he pointed out that students participated and collaborated in music making by performing and exploring arranging and composing in the classroom environment. Peter said the students mainly played melodic and percussive instruments including the recorder, the primary melodic classroom instrument. The students also participated in basic arranging as Peter was able to provide “a blueprint in front of them as opposed to be creating from scratch.” In other words, he created parameters for the students so that he guided their arranging process at each step.

Broadening Cultural Experience. Exposing students to Jamaican traditional cultural practices and heritage appeared important to Peter. He had the opinion that many students were not familiar with their traditional heritage and were mostly au fait with what was current. However, Peter’s stated intent was to broaden students’ musical experiences beyond what they were familiar with including music and cultures outside of

Jamaica. He designed his course to include familiar music, unfamiliar Jamaican music, and unfamiliar music and genres beyond Jamaica. In his opinion, this approach helped to develop a more rounded person, something the education system should aim to do.

In his classes, Peter mentioned using music his students were many times "not so familiar with." He said the selected music were not used "just as a teaching aid for the concepts that we're doing in class, but to explore other cultures and other eras." Peter liked to compare elements in students' familiar music with that of unfamiliar music and cultures. He spoke of phrasing his questions similar to this: "This was recorded in 1950. Does it sound like this song recorded in 2005?" These kinds of questions, he claimed, led to discussions about genres, style, period, or relevant topics related to the music. Peter said there were occasions the students made statements such as "they listened to 'older recording[s]' at school," or "sounds like stuff their grandfather would play," or even comments that included the word "jarring." Peter pointed out that the students were "very descriptive, especially [with] the things that they're not familiar with."

Peter said he embraced the opportunity to expose students to unfamiliar music and to "explore different cultures." Depending on the topic, he would sometimes "explore what's happening at that time" when the music was created. He shared the following:

> For example, we're doing Jamaican popular music and we got to reggae. And we're talking about the earlier … form of rebel music and the oppression. … It sort of became a civics lesson with music involved, right. So, that's some of the approaches I take. So even though they are not familiar with [it], by the end of the lessons, because it spanned over a couple classes, students were telling me that …

their new favourite genre … from Jamaica was ska.

Peter claimed that he used a large proportion of Jamaican music in his class and eventually, the students could "identify that most Jamaican music have some similarities or common thread" with linkages to Jamaica's colonial heritage.

Peter said these listening discussions would make it "easier for them to identify Jamaican music." He noted that he was mindful that the expected result was not guaranteed, but he contended that his process of broadening students' understanding through exposure to new repertoire, was a successful approach. Peter included "other aspects of life" in his classes so that the students can relate to the story or appreciate the circumstances surrounding the repertoire. For a class I observed, Peter gave his students a contextual background to the Jamaican traditional folk song, "Hol Him Joe," used for a listening activity. He told students the "little story behind it" with the intention to "solicit their responses" and to "hear their thinking pattern." He used the information garnered from the exchange to "tailor" how he "address[ed] the class in the lesson" so that the pertinent points remained his focus. This was how he managed to bring relevance to his students' education and made the connections with life outside of the music classroom.

Teacher Learning from Students. Peter realised and acknowledged that with the help of his students, he too could broaden his cultural understanding by learning about his students' culture and music preferences. It was his opinion that understanding students' mainstream culture took patience and a willingness to listen and learn from the students. During one of the three observation sessions, a student responded to a piece of music in a much different way than Peter expected. Although the student liked the song, she said she

would have responded with enthusiasm six years prior, not now, because the song was too old. At the time, the song was far less than six years old, but was no longer popular. Peter acknowledged his position by stating: "When it comes to mainstream [culture], it is more [like] I am the student, and they are the teachers." He provided further explanation:

> I would showcase what I am aware of or what I am familiar with. And then based on their feedback, then I would know I need to go and do some more research, or I know I am on the ball. … It's a teach and learn process. Not that I am addressing it, it's more of I am trying to figure it out with them also.

When Peter exercised flexibility with his teaching approach, the students responded in a more positive way to in-class participation and he got "better participation and reaction from them." Students were encouraged to share their ideas when Peter delivered his course materials. This two-way symbiotic relationship also benefited Peter as he said he was provided an opportunity to "learn things from them or see a different point of view from concepts that I thought I knew." This helped him to improve his approach to teaching and learning.

Teacher Music Preference and Selection. A recurring theme for Peter was that music used in his classes "should be relevant" and also include "something that they [students] would listen to." In his view, music selections relevant to students were topic appropriate, student-centred, and used as a vehicle to include the student's music culture in the class. Hence, when Peter was selecting music for his classes, he explained that he preferred to use repertoire where "at least one or two of the excerpts will always be something that they are familiar with." This was done in the context of broadening the

students' understanding and appreciation of music.

In his classes, Peter spoke of including students' preferred music selections and used non-Jamaican music such as jazz, American pop, Korean pop, afrobeat, western art music, and music from the wider Caribbean including Soca. He stated that this approach gave students a broader platform for critical listening and more importantly, created an awareness of other music cultures. He primarily used reggae and dancehall as Jamaican popular music selections, but he also spoke of including some aspect of Jamaican traditional folk music.

There were times when Peter selected music that did not elicit the positive responses he expected from his students. At that point, without compromising the content, he thought some amount of flexibility was required with the selection. He stated the following:

> If I go to a class and song A doesn't get the response or doesn't get a response, and they suggest song C, and I realise that, okay, song C does that, then I just keep [song C]. Omit song A and continue doing song C.

He also acknowledged that this level of flexibility afforded him the opportunity to increase his personal repertoire and create options for future music selection options for his classes.

Reflecting on one of the lessons I observed, Peter spoke to his process of music selection for that day. He found that his repertoire selection had an overt demonstration of the concepts he portrayed to the students. In preparation for the class, he "tried to find a Jamaican indigenous form" where the concept to be taught would be easily identified

and "doesn't have to take too much analytical listening." He wanted the initial concept to be obvious. For his repertoire selection, he stated:

> If whatever I was trying to achieve could be found easily, could be heard easily, … I would probably use them. But if it's something that they have to be listening very attentively, or it wouldn't be as much at the forefront, then I would change the repertoire.

Peter liked to use music that he was familiar with. When planning his lessons, he would "probably think of a concept and like, 'Oh yes, I know that song has that,' and then I would go to that song first and maybe listening to it." On other occasions, Peter spent time listening to a range of repertoire and then selected music with the necessary clarity that aided his students' listening and appraising sessions. He noted that "in the introductory phase [of the piece], it would be very clear for them to hear the differences, and then as we progress, it became a little more subtle." His intention was to ensure that students gradually progressed to higher level listening skills. But this was achieved through careful selection of repertoire that aided incremental teaching of a concept. However, his current approach to song selection did not change and was "usually based on familiarity."

There were occasions when Peter described browsing a number of videos on YouTube to find appropriate music videos for his lessons. He said this of a video he used during one of my observation sessions: "I was searching for content and sat and watched quite a few of them and that's the one that stood out." He found a variety of examples of what he needed, but he selected the one that he thought best represented the material he

taught. He pointed out that the video "went straight to the point. It had the little graphics and everything. So I found it very, to the point." The video he chose had qualities that he often sought, that of clarity and simplicity.

Students and the Music Classroom

Students' Music Preferences. Peter appeared to believe that in his class, students' music preferences were often based on their musical exposure and immediate culture. Some students, in his view, assumed the music class was many things including a continuation of the "sing along" culture they were accustomed to with their preferred music. Peter declared that students' "singalong" culture was a common Jamaican cultural practice at concerts. He said it succinctly: "Play it and allow them to sing along." So that the students were not disappointed, Peter sometimes "entertain[ed] it." This had some bearing on the students' responses in class as music, for many students, must contain lyrics and was for personal entertainment. For the sing along to work well, the situation demanded "good classroom management" so that "if they're going off, I can stop, and get them back [on track], and continue the lesson." Peter also sometimes took this opportunity to identify "talents" he incorporated into the performance ensembles.

In Peter's estimation, students preferred to listen to foreign music including, but not limited to, R&B and other North American songs. He also said that in his classes at Toledo High School for Girls, there were "very few that would like dancehall." He further stated that "the dancehall songs they are telling me to play, those definitely aren't fit for classroom. So, when they suggest songs sometimes, I would try and find the instrumentals [instrumental version]." With the instrumental versions, he did not have to

contend with inappropriate lyrics.

Peter said he found different ways to unearth what his students listened to. Students sometimes responded with song names when Peter played a “variety of modern tunes,” mainly popular music from North America and Jamaica. There were times when he was outside of class “listening to them talking” about their “favourite artiste.” He said that being a homeroom teacher had its “benefits” because his homeroom sessions with the students in his assigned class many times revealed the music his students were listening to. When Peter selected songs for listening in his class, he spoke of carefully gauging students’ responses to determine how to address their music preferences. Peter said his students at times commented that “they don’t like this particular song, or they don’t like this particular artiste.” At that point, the students gave Peter a list of other songs they preferred, and he conducted his “research” on each song to ensure their usability.

Peter said that the student demography at Toledo High was comprised of an “interesting mix” of students, but he would say they were “predominantly upper middle [class].” He thought the students demographic background had “a great impact” on the students’ music preferences:

> I do realise that persons who are not upper class, they tend to gravitate to a certain type of music. Or, what I find common is that they all tend to like pop music. … Some of them would be Korean pop, some of them would be American pop. But then, persons that are not necessarily from the upper class would have a better, a greater appreciation or familiarity with like modern dancehall music. While the

others might not be so au fait with it.

Although students' favourite or preferred music choices may change on a regular basis, Peter realised that "there are some songs that you can get away with for a couple of years." He said he kept these in his repertoire list for his listening and critique classes until students considered them "old." The positives Peter drew from students' music preferences was that he learned new repertoire. He said: "It forces me to play more music from outside of Jamaican music" and it also "allowed me to go do some research and become more aware of other songs."

In Peter's general music classes, he stated that students sometimes shared their music preferences when given the opportunity. When the music was shared, other students in the class may remonstrate their dislike for a suggested song. Peter pointed out that it was not possible to "ever get around that" because "it's just a matter of opinion." He was pragmatic about the situation and stated that students often had "different [music] preferences, and I don't think there will ever be a time where the entire class would unanimously be in love with one artiste or one song." In Peter's opinion, it was a matter of how students' preferences were utilised by the teacher to enhance students' music experiences in the classroom.

Students' Response. Peter expected his students to actively participate in his classes although this expectation was not always his reality. Peter's analysis was that he had a relatively high response rate from most classes when they were face-to-face. He described finding it more difficult to solicit regular responses online as students' responses varied from one class to the next. As a result, Peter regularly reflected on his

teaching and this process helped him improve his class delivery and student participation.

Based on his own assessment, Peter thought his students mostly liked the music and activities he incorporated into his classes. He sometimes got slightly negative comments like “that song is from last year” and they would “want to hear something from this year.” But generally, students positively responded to his music selection as Peter saw them “dancing or hear some of them singing along after they did [the activity].” During the online sessions, if cameras were on, a similar student response was noticed as they were rhythmically moving to the music and singing along with the recording.

Peter’s view was that using familiar music or students’ preferred music in class was not always effective and, in some cases, was a distraction for the students. Peter said this about his students’ responses to music selection:

> If they are familiar, it takes away from what I wanted to get to. They start singing or they start telling me about, telling me that they don’t like this particular song from this artiste. I should try that [another] song instead, and stuff like that. But, for the most part, I think it does explain the characteristics or the concepts that we’re discussing in class.

Among his students, Peter noticed that there was a “negative connotation” often associated with some Jamaican music, “especially dancehall.” He surmised that dancehall lyrics had strong negative perceptions and dancehall’s reputation provoked mixed emotions from many Toledo students and their parents. However, Peter saw many positives in the instrumental aspect of the music and its direct link to Jamaican traditional

folk music and dance traditions. He did not use some of the music due to the lyrics, but he used some dancehall tunes and played the instrumental versions that related to the day's topic. This approach generally elicited positive responses from most students. But there were some students who could not disassociate the negative perception of dancehall culture from the instrumental recordings played by Peter in his classes. He said it this way:

> Instrumental or not, they're going to tell us that Vybz Kartel[31] did this [whatever] and they're not allowed to listen to this type of music. … It's one cap fits all. If one person did this, he sings dancehall, therefore dancehall isn't allowed.

In this case, some students' perception of dancehall was a roadblock to learning anything musical from that genre. He pointed out that there were positives taken from students' recent responses to Jamaican music overall in that Peter observed an improved situation as students were mostly willing to explore musical concepts using dancehall. Due to his experience, Peter successfully navigated these situations without alienating students' music choices.

Many students showed their curiosity by asking questions about Jamaican music they were not familiar with. Peter said they ask questions such as "who is the artiste," "the name of the songs," and "if that person has created other songs." The students' intention, "if they like it," was to find out "where they can find more music from this person" they heard in class. There were times when students tried to "downplay the music from different cultures," and Peter addressed these situations through discussions

[31] A popular dancehall artiste who, at the time of this study, was incarcerated.

with the students:

> I try to encourage them not to do that because different persons, they have different experiences, therefore, they have different resources. … They would sound different, they would be different with how they sing, and their creation would definitely be different.

In that regard, Peter thought it was necessary to teach his students differences and similarities in musical styles through exposure to music they were not familiar with.

In class, students were generally responsive when Peter encouraged conversations. He noted there were those who regularly responded, but for a small number of students, "getting responses from them is like pulling teeth." However, Peter emphasised that most students were "pretty responsive" and positively "react[ed] to what's in class." When Peter tried to get students to sing in the general music class, the outcome was different from having a conversation especially when students were face-to-face versus online:

> In class, it was easier, or they were more compliant because then they couldn't have the excuse of poor internet. For the most part they will be doing it as a group, so there will be no solos. Internet, with the zoom now, with the difference in broadband and the latency between different persons, most performances have to be done as a solo. So, most students are a little bit reluctant. But sometimes I can persuade them to, sometimes it just doesn't work. And I realised that if I do it first, then they probably feel a little bit more comfortable and do it afterwards.

Students were also presented with opportunities to explore music making using

instruments or creating music. Peter said some students "would be doing it gladly," and others would treat it as "just another assignment." If a music making project was to be completed outside of the classroom setting, Peter stated the students "don't necessarily do it willing." Students' expectation of music being "fun" sometimes did not translate to students completing assignments. Peter seemed convinced that when something was "dubbed an assignment, it creates a negative connotation for them," even though they generally completed them.

Peter mentioned that when he had activities that included little interaction with music, students were not as "excited" about it, but they participated. He noticed that in one of the lessons I observed and admitted that he "felt" the lack of excitement. He continued by stating: "It's at that point I realised that the class went a little bit more theoretical than I'd imagine." For that class, he had no intention of making it all theory, but he did not include the listening examples he had planned. He also admitted that what he planned was skewed to "more of an in-person setting than an online [class]," and that is when he said, "that's probably where I dropped the ball." He further explained that the concept in his "mind" was not executed as he thought it would:

> If it was more from a place of seeing them in person, we could have better discussion or having more practical activities as we went along. As opposed to online where it was, it is more like just black and white. So that's probably where I fell short, I think.

Peter stated that he learned from this and other similar experiences and in the future will adjust to engage his students in meaningful ways.

Students often responded differently to what they deemed “old” songs versus current popular songs. In Peter’s view, they were not necessarily enthusiastic about songs that were not currently popular, but Peter encouraged them to respond to all music. He also said, “so rather than have them burden the lesson with the thought that the song is boring, I try to move on.” Nevertheless, Peter noted that his students listened and responded to the selected songs even when they were not their preferred listening choices.

Whether his activities were practically or theoretically based, Peter thought the students had similar responses to both. However, he claimed that if the class involved singing, “then the majority of the class tends to shy away from it.” He continued by saying:

> We may have to clap something or maybe match something, or draw something, more persons would respond, or more person would volunteer. But, whenever they are required to sing or asked to sing, then the numbers are significantly less. It kind of would take some coaxing.

In the face-to-face setting, students were reluctant to perform vocal solo excerpts in class. When they had to “sing in a group, it’s usually not a big deal for them.” However, Peter’s students mostly gravitated towards using instruments in his general music classes. He stated, “they’ll be quicker to volunteer to try the instruments” instead of singing. His Grade 7 students had an affinity for the boom whackers, but not necessarily a common classroom instrument like the recorder.

> The ones that they're accustomed to, like the recorder, it's usually like "okay, the recorder again," [said with disdain], but the ones that are not so familiar with … or they don't have readily available to them, they tend to be very experimental with it, and quick to respond.

Peter's analysis was that the students routinely participated in practical music making activities that involved classroom instruments. Their enthusiasm and willingness to explore the instruments was at times uninhibited. Peter related his in-class practical experiences in this way:

> I'll tell you, willingness and just how much effort I see the students put into it. And how they explore different instruments. So maybe they started out using pre-percussion … then they'll be using the drum, all parts of the drums. [They] would have maybe the floor toms, the snare drum, the hi hat, and the boom whackers. And then maybe they try that [and] they don't like how that sound. They switch up the parts and they have the drum, the floor toms, the snare drum, the maracas, and the xylophone. So, they explore, try to mix and match until they are more comfortable

It was their curiosity with sound and eagerness to explore melodic and percussion instruments that many times piqued students' interest in practical sessions.

Student Activities: Face-to-face Versus Online. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, Peter's students prepared to present in-class performances. He stated that they made "their own compositions and perform them" either "as a group or individually." Students utilised the available classroom instruments and sometimes "the

occasional student that plays the piano." He noted that the students also had opportunities to "compose in groups." Students engaged in projects like creating "their own version" of Toledo's school song using instrumental accompaniment created and sent to them by Peter. In one instance, the students did not know the song was Toledo's school song as they were new students beginning in Grade 7. Peter said that one accompaniment was "an afrobeat, [and] one was a dancehall." He explained the assignment:

> Their homework was to fit the lyrics on the beats that were sent to them. So they performed it how they wanted. And some of them would sing the lyrics of the school song as close to the lyrics of the actual song as possible. So, in that case, the song guided their performance.

This kind of activity was interactive and excited the students as they worked with what they eventually found out was their school song. Additionally, it was an opportunity to be creative with a new song and their popular music background track. They liked the project and musically benefitted from doing it.

Since the pandemic forcibly shifted music classes to the online space, Peter stated that students became more involved in individual composing and arranging projects. Group activities were limited due to a challenging online space especially with the issue of latency and the lack of in-person monitoring of projects. With the addition of online sites like Chrome Music Lab, students had opportunities to "create their own beats" and engage in similar computer-based activities. He said the students have been "dabbling with [it] a little bit" and sometimes "rearrange the music that they had in front of them to create their own." Peter admitted that some of these projects took "a lot of processing"

space on the computer and not all students navigated that issue well. He further stated that the activities were not "as successful as [he] … was hoping it would be."

When students' cameras were off, it was difficult to know if students were "paying attention" or not. Peter said, "sometimes [it] feel[s] like I'm talking to myself. Thank God for those that are always responding." It took Peter a while to accept student cameras turned off, but eventually he did. He said, "I've gotten used to it, or I am getting used to it, so it's not as bad as it used to be."

Peter acknowledged that there was little difference in the materials used to engage students online when compared with those used for in-person classes. However, his methods were adjusted to fit the online delivery mode. Live performance in-class was almost fully eliminated, therefore, Peter utilised "videos to show the concepts or online exploring them through performance." He also stated, "where the objective would have included a lot of performing, we would have to now change it to observing." Peter found this aspect to be "negative" as "music is a performing art" and for the online music classes, they were "doing less than 50 percent performing." This reality affected his learning outcomes and he declared that the lack of performance time resulted in his class "not being as effective" as he envisioned it.

Navigating the (Covid-19) Classroom

Facilitating Online Learning. For Peter, the COVID-19 pandemic created a necessary shift from face-to-face classes to the virtual classroom. The online mode of delivery was not his preferred approach, but he conducted his own research to find ways to facilitate the teaching and learning process. At Toledo High School, music classes

were double periods that lasted 70 minutes in total. Although the school used Google Classroom, Peter used a 40-minute free Zoom license where students were asked to re-join the virtual classroom after the initial 40 minutes ran out. This created a 2 to 3-minute break in the class, but it did not seem disruptive to the students.

The virtual classes presented an opportunity for teachers to interact with their students in new ways. Prior to the pandemic, Peter's engagement with students was solely in-class and paper based. With the new situation caused by COVID-19, Peter adjusted his approach and provided his students with online "notes" that they had the opportunity to review after his class. These notes were in the form of slides that would be sent to them at the end of the school week. Peter liked to have "instant access to the internet" during his classes as it afforded him chances to go to different sites and smoothly incorporate them into his classes:

> It's much easier now to switch to a YouTube page, find a video that would probably explain it in that perspective. Share [video] with the class. Use it for assessment. So things like Nearpod, Google Forms, Edulastic, and … they submit recordings of themselves. So they get to tap into another art form, [including] video editing.

With these and other resources, students explored multiple creative ways to complete their music assignments.

Students and Teacher Interaction. Peter kept his camera on for the duration of each class, but apart from the roll call at the beginning, most students kept their cameras off. The cameras off did not seem to affect the teacher-student communication and

interaction. There were several ways that student-teacher interactions took place during the classes. There was frequent communication between the students and Peter especially within the chat feature. During one class, some students were individually asked to sing a Jamaican traditional folk melody after it was played at the beginning of the lesson. Students were responsive to Peter when asked to name the tune, and they actively participated in singing the song they correctly identified as “By the Rivers of Babylon.” Students were enthusiastic throughout the class and were involved in a variety of activities as they read the slides, responded to questions, and identified different parts of the notes (flag, note head, stems). They demonstrated their involvement through their responsiveness and used the “raise hand” feature to get the teacher’s attention to answer questions. Some students did not wait on the raise hand feature, instead, with Peter’s permission, they opened their microphones and gave quick responses.

Peter guided his students through his selected classroom activities. At one point, Peter counted aloud to help students grasp timing concepts. He also individually listened to students and provided critique as they clapped rhythmic exercises. To ensure that many students were actively involved in the classes, he deliberately asked different students to answer questions or make comments. The dynamics of the student-teacher interaction changed when Peter explored a class activity using a musical treasure hunt. The teacher asked for the students to “show and tell” their answers to the activity but told them that they must turn on their cameras to show answers. During that session, Peter checked to ensure that students were understanding the class content and frequently asked, “does everybody agree with that?” Many students answered in the affirmative. There was a

"note value chart" activity where students were individually asked to turn on their cameras and show their work. In another activity, Peter asked the students to use rhythmic patterns explored in the class to create their own rhythmic patterns with the intention of having them performed in the next class.

Frequent feedback was a hallmark of the student-teacher interaction. Students asked Peter questions about the homework, and he clarified their queries. Peter also had students singing a Jamaican folk song and it included improvising lyrics at specific points. Students were asked to read definitions placed on the shared screen and Peter followed up that task with an interactive guided listening activity. Again, the listening activity had multiple hearings while the students participated in discussions and responded to questions. When Idina Menzel video of "Let it Go" from the movie *Frozen* was played, Peter asked the students to show "lots of energy" dancing when section 2 began. He was testing their understanding of the form. That specific activity did not really materialise as the students did not turn on their cameras hence, they could not be seen. Overall, students were responsive when the teacher called on them, but they willingly participated at that point and the interaction was very dynamic.

Teacher Selected Activities. Peter used diverse activities throughout the observations. Students were asked to name tunes he played on his guitar, sing their responses, and respond to visual activities related to "symbols used to represent sound." Students were asked to sing a melody with Peter while he was playing, but this was done with the students microphones off. The students were asked to use "aahh" with the melody for the first part of the song only. Although there was a delayed response on

Zoom, the students appeared to enjoy singing the melody to “aahh,” with open microphones, as required by the teacher. At another point in the same class, the students signed into Nearpod as it was used for a note name matching activity.

Peter selected activities that supported his theoretical and practical objectives. For an activity that was built on clef, staff, and note comprehension, students were shown slides with several music symbols. All students were asked to circle the various types of music notes in Nearpod, and different students were asked to draw the various notes beside the note names. As a culminating activity, Peter added a traditional Jamaican Rastafarian drum pattern, Nyabinghi, while a student sang the melody introduced at the beginning of the class. As a part of the activity, Peter played the bass drum and asked the students to state if the pitch was high or low. Identifying high and low pitches was not a major objective of the class, but it was checked to see if the concepts were understood as they were explored in previous classes. Several students took the opportunity presented by the teacher to sing the melody while they were accompanied by the drums. This they clearly thought was a “fun” activity.

On another occasion, Peter introduced a musical treasure hunt as an ice breaker to get the students participating in an active way while reviewing concepts studied in the previous class. The students watched an introductory video called, Read Music with Pizza, that compared note values with dividing a pizza. For many students, this video solidified the note value concept and was a good segue into the subsequent group activity where students were asked to combine two notes to create a one-note answer. There was a 3-minute activity asking the students to draw and label, from memory, a note value

chart that was earlier used in the class. Students demonstrated a liking for this activity and they willingly opened their videos and showed their charts to the class.

In another activity, Peter used his guitar to demonstrate note lengths. He placed three notated rhythmic patterns on the screen and on each occasion, he played one of the three short examples then asked students to state which one was played. This was a follow up on a class on rhythm he completed in a previous lesson. Peter played an instrumental pop song and asked the students to identify the bass drum pattern while using the single-syllable utterance pattern "walk," representing quarter notes. The bass drum pattern mirrored one of the rhythmic patterns used earlier in the class. Playing the same excerpt used for the drum pattern, Peter asked students to identify the rhythm played by the piano while saying the two-syllable utterance pattern "running," representing eight notes. Students participated in the activity by clapping and vocalising the utterance patterns with the rhythmic patterns. This approach made it easy for students to understand the rhythmic concepts, and they seemed to willingly participate in the activity. The teacher was able to see and address the minor issues that presented themselves during the activity.

Peter explored form in music by incorporating theoretical and practical activities. At one point he used a Jamaican traditional folk song, Hol' Him Joe. The song included a call and response section where there were blank spaces in the latter part of section B to fit words the students chose. As requested by Peter, they willingly suggested contextually appropriate words that could be placed in the blank spots when it was sung. Peter used the same song to demonstrate both binary and ternary forms. He created an activity that

asked the students to think about and suggest ways that the binary form structure of Hol' Him Joe could easily become ternary form. Students made many different suggestions, and a few students were asked to individually sing the folk song demonstrating either the binary or ternary form structure. The demonstrations were successfully done.

In a subsequent listening activity, students were asked to identify song forms. The music excerpts were sixty to ninety seconds long. For this activity, the teacher used another Jamaican song written in a traditional folk style, a song from a movie, a Bob Marley song, and an excerpt from a Beethoven symphony. Students were asked questions about the genres, form, country of origin, and composers. Many of the questions were correctly answered by the class and discussions associated with the excerpts enriched the experience. The final performance-based activity combined form in music with the rhythm exercises from the previous week. Overall, the students generally participated in the many class activities. Although students asked questions about the songs they were not familiar with, they participated in the activities whether the songs were familiar or unfamiliar, or whether the classes were theoretical or practical oriented.

Music Repertoire and Students' Response. Peter employed a wide range of music examples in his lessons. His selections from Jamaican music repertoire were diverse and included music from traditional folk to popular music repertoire. He also used a variety of non-Jamaican repertoire, most of which were North American or European repertoire.

Although some students were shy at first, they appeared to generally like singing the songs or responding to rhythms. For one of the classes, Peter played background

music to accompany the students while they were engaged in a note circling activity. He softly played the song "Like" sung by a popular Jamaican singer, Chronixx. In another activity, Peter played on his guitar the melody of a traditional Jamaican Rastafarian song "By the Rivers of Babylon." This was later sung by some of the students. The Nyabinghi (Rastafarian) rhythm, which accompanied the song, was used to interpret two rhythmic patterns played by the high-pitched drum called the repeater or kete and the bass drums. The drum patterns also supported rhythmic reading done earlier in class. Some students were not very familiar with the Nyabinghi rhythms played on the traditional drums, but they seemed to enjoy playing or clapping the rhythms. Peter engaged the students in a discussion about the Rastafarian religion and its origin. Most students did not know Rastafarianism started in Jamaica and they guessed many other regions and countries before Peter told them the answer. This was by no means common knowledge for these students.

Students' reaction to his selected repertoire was not always as Peter expected. On one occasion, with their microphones muted, Peter asked students to sing along with the pop song, "Let it Go." Peter asked a student who had her camera on, why she refused to perform an enthusiastic dance. She responded, "If the song was played 6 years ago, I would have been jumping." In her estimation, it was an old pop song that she liked, but it no longer caused an enthusiastic response. Nevertheless, the students were genuinely curious about the older songs and instrumental pieces that were unfamiliar or unusual, and they asked questions about them.

Peter sometimes used his music selections to accompany theoretical activities. In

one class, he interspersed music at different points in a musical treasure hunt as the activity was accompanied by an instrumental pop oriented Jamaican dancehall piece. The "Read Music with Pizza" video had a contemporary pop instrumental piece playing in the background. For the "Note value chart" activity, an instrumental version of Toast, by the popular young Jamaican female artiste Koffee, was played in the background. Furthermore, Peter used the introduction of a pop instrumental song to demonstrate beats and their subdivision in 4/4 time, and another instrumental pop song to identify rhythmic patterns played by a bass drum and piano. Although these activities did not lend themselves to many visible overt reactions, students had positive responses to the stimuli used throughout.

Peter sometimes included a wide variety of music in his classes and students had an opportunity to interact with them in practical ways. In one of the sessions, Peter used the following music excerpts:

- A traditional Jamaican folk song to introduce the lesson
- An excerpt highlighting a combined vocal/instrumental section of a Justin Bieber pop song
- An excerpt of a dancehall song by the popular young female artiste, Koffee
- A classical piano version of Greensleeves
- A pop song by Idina Menzel, "Let it Go" from the movie *Frozen*

Later in the same class, Peter demonstrated ternary form using the nursery rhyme, "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," played in a Western European classical style on a keyboard instrument. This example was accompanied by a frequency wave graphic with

the A section in blue, the B section in yellow, and the repeated A section in blue. This graphic representation made it easy to see and follow the A-B-A structure while the students were listening. Subsequently, Peter used the following pieces and genres for listening and performing:

- Hol Him Joe, a traditional folk Jamaican song
- Evening Time, Jamaican traditional song written in a folk style
- Somewhere Over the Rainbow (black and white video), from the movie *The Wizard of Oz*
- Concrete Jungle, reggae song by Bob Marley
- Excerpt from Beethoven's 5th Symphony, first movement, exposition only.

Peter guided the students' listening when his selected repertoire was used in the class. For example, Peter asked his students about their familiarity with the song, Somewhere Over the Rainbow. None of the students knew it, but Peter told them about the song, its origin, and other related information. During the process of this interaction, the students successfully identified the form. When Peter played the Beethoven fifth Symphony excerpt, he highlighted themes 1 and 2 from the exposition. However, students had a difficulty identifying the sections from the excerpt. Peter repeated the excerpt and guided the students through the section changes while it was playing. The students responded positively to the explanation and subsequently seemed comfortable with identifying the sections. These and other examples observed supported Peter's stated approach of finding ways to engage students in the teaching and learning process even when the music selected was not familiar or not their preferred music.

Teaching Strategies. Peter employed different teaching strategies based on what he prepared and what was needed at the time. Peter started his classes with relatively familiar songs. From the beginning of each class, he engaged students by encouraging them to sing during the activity, used questions to review homework, responded to student questions, and generally, sought to use interactive activities using the shared virtual board. Peter frequently checked with students to see if they understood concepts presented or to ensure they were focused on the lesson. Additionally, Peter routinely questioned students to find out their level of understanding of the points discussed or explored in class. When students answered questions, Peter probed further by asking "why" whenever it was an appropriate question. This gave other students an opportunity to explain concepts. The probing questions also affirmed Peter's preferred approach of engaging students in critical thinking and analysis.

Peter used slides on his shared screen that were visually captivating in colour, easy to read, and interactive. As another way of checking student's level of understanding, Peter facilitated student discussions on the presented topics. When Peter explored note duration, he used a single note on his guitar to play the rhythms and kept a steady pulse by counting aloud. Peter asked students to listen to the rhythm while thinking of a Jamaican context as the rhythm was the Nyabinghi bass drum pattern explored at another point. To demonstrate the point, he used a drum to play the rhythm at a slow tempo. At that point, the students immediately recognised the rhythm. Peter used the students lack of knowledge about the Rastafarian origin to engage the students in a discussion about select religious practices of the group. To further engage students in

another rhythm activity including note values, Peter used a pre-recorded piece to play a rhythmic reading activity on a monotone. He added utterance patterns for each rhythm (walk, running, etc.), and the patterns helped his students to remember the notes, their subdivisions, and duration. Peter played a slow version of a recorded passage and asked the students if they recognised it. They did not. He then played it much faster at the actual tempo and the students recognised the pattern as the introduction to a popular pop song. This was another occasion where Peter related student learning to music they were familiar with.

Peter's approach to the listening exercises was to allow students to explore and discover the answers based on his guidelines and prompts. When Peter played a Koffee dancehall song the first time, some students did not recognise the different sections. At that point, Peter repeated the excerpt and gave the instruction to "listen to when the beat changes." The students were better able to identify the sections after that prompt. In an effort to get the students to relate music terminology with language in general, students were asked to state a few words that use the prefix, "bi." Students said the following: bilingual, bicycle, bipolar, biracial. He asked and was told the meaning of "bi" in those contexts, then he explained that the prefix operated the same way when using the term binary. This approach supported his holistic teaching philosophy when he demonstrated the connection of music terminologies with other real-life examples. Students generally responded positively to Peter's classes and in my final observation where the class was engaging throughout, a student posted in the chat, "Today was fun."

Summary

Peter had several ways of effectively communicating his musical ideas and concepts to his students. His classes were very organised, utilised music videos, graphic representations, and technology, and had an active student-teacher interaction throughout. He also had an engaging personality and demeanour. It was clear that classroom management had an important role in the successful execution of his classes. Carefully selected repertoire and activities, positively engaging exuberant students, and prodding answers from reluctant students, were all a part of his teaching strategy.

Throughout each session, Peter ensured most students were involved in the class even when they were hesitant. He was consistent with recognising the students who would use the raise hand feature and tried to call on students who did not. His music selection included a broad range of Jamaican traditional folk and popular songs, foreign popular songs from mainly North America, and Western classical art music. His approach to his selected listening and appraising exercises allowed students to discover answers through exploration and deliberate teacher-led triggers. To make up for the lack of in-person practical sessions during the pandemic, Peter's selected activities involved live clapping, vocalised utterance patterns, solo singing, simple composition, and online music making exercises.

Each music class used a double session and lasted a total of 70 minutes. After the preliminaries, including taking the register, Peter spent at least 60 minutes developing the topics. He used a variety of activities, visual aids, interactive features on the virtual board, and at times engaged the students through practical exercises. As the classes

unfolded, Peter systematically paced his lessons in a measured way as he had sufficient time to include breadth and depth with his selected topics. This was evidenced with each class building to a comprehensive culminating activity towards the end. Students could participate because they had electronic devices and the necessary resources even though some had issues with inconsistent internet. Peter had to deal with what he saw as an inconvenience created by the COVID-19 pandemic as it forced him to conduct classes in the online environment. However, he admitted that the online space better prepared him to engage students using a mixed modality whenever he returned to the in-person classroom space.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

The purpose of this multiple case study was to examine how music teachers in this study practiced culturally responsive teaching by functioning as cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning (Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2018). The study focused on three music teachers and their practices in three secondary schools in Jamaica, and I examined the emergent themes that were present in each of the three cases.

The three cases presented in chapters 4, 5, and 6, are individually important instances and were studied for their "situational uniqueness" (Stake, 2006). They gave insight into the role of music teachers when students engage in learning with their preferred music or with music related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture. Therefore, I found it necessary to examine the data across the three cases to gain a better understanding of the teachers' roles and responsibilities in the music classroom. The case reports from each school provided the basis for the cross-case analysis as the cases share common characteristics that make them "categorically bound together" (Stake, 2006, p. 6). The five emergent themes across the cases are:

1. Impact of personal philosophy on teaching and learning;
2. Importance of addressing multiple contexts for teaching and learning;
3. Influence of pedagogy incorporating students and teachers' music preferences;
4. Importance of learning about students preferred music;
5. Impact of engaging with students' preferred music and practical music making.

In what follows, I present an analysis of the emergent themes and relate them to existing literature. The analysis is not ordered according to importance.

Impact of Personal Philosophy on Teaching and Learning

In all three cases, the music teachers were influenced by their individual personal philosophies on teaching and learning. Kariel seemed grounded in her philosophy that music making must happen in every class and this was demonstrated, for the most part, in the classes observed. In Anthony's case, balancing theoretical concepts with practice and using Jamaican music as the first choice for general music classes was recurring in his conversations and evident in his classes. Peter's self-professed belief was that music education should speak to the development of the whole person leading to students believing in themselves, and students should be engaged starting with music they are familiar with. Their varied philosophies guided their pedagogical approaches which included their instructional strategies, curriculum choices, and musical decisions (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Although they had different philosophical emphases, they declared that music classes must be "engaging," "fun," and "educational." Their philosophies were generally aligned with their pedagogical approaches, and each teacher's pedagogy was often grounded within the cultural context of the students. The teachers frequently used students' expressed knowledge, especially their music preferences and popular culture, to influence teaching and learning within their classrooms. Gay (2018) expressed that for teachers to understand students' classroom culture and make the educational experience culturally relevant, teachers should use culturally centred ways of "knowing, thinking,

speaking, feeling, and behaving" (p. 52). Therefore, key aspects of the teachers' pedagogical approaches were guided by the teachers' understanding of students' diverse culture.

In all three cases, the teachers asserted that they had the responsibility to find ways of encouraging teaching and learning that actively engaged students in the music classroom. The teachers, demonstrating attributes associated with culturally responsive caring, were academically demanding of the students, but personally supportive and encouraging (Gay, 2018). They seemed to believe that teacher personality and demeanour in class made a difference in how they provided opportunities for students to engage with listening, composing, arranging, and performing in the general music classroom. That engagement translated to action using an "energetic" approach or demonstrating a "caring" or "bubbly" personality that encouraged students' positive participation in the classroom music experience.

An emphasis on students' problem-solving skills and critical thinking was common among the teachers as activities were structured to encourage students' analytical skills that included musical tasks and situations that could be applied to out of school settings. As evidenced in these three cases, the teachers sought to address the holistic development of their students, "nurturing both academic success and psychological well-being" as they "continually look for ways to connect with their students." (Lind & McKoy, 2016, p. 65). This included teachers forming in-class groups for students to orally create melodic and rhythmic arrangements for performance, developing collaborative skills through ensemble playing, or in one teachers' case, using

probing questions to guide students through music analysis activities.

The teachers in this study were not necessarily affectionate with the students, but their sense of caring was related to the "implications their work had on their students' lives" when engaged in teaching and learning (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 474). This was particularly evident in the classes where the teachers seemed to incorporate students' understanding and musical experiences into teaching and learning. Additionally, the teachers appeared to believe that there were societal benefits derived from music and music education including critical thinking, aesthetic understanding, and musical skills. They appeared to see themselves playing an important role in developing their students through their engagement in the music classroom. Hence, their overall approach exhibited culturally responsive caring as the teachers' attitude towards the students and their belief in the students' intellect was demonstrated in their classes when they interacted with the students.

The teachers thought their approaches to teaching and learning encouraged students to believe in themselves and gain confidence to explore music in various ways in the classroom. They treated music as a part of the students' holistic development as music addressed real-life situations when students engaged in practical music making. This was particularly applicable to performance related activities such as students' in-class drumming using Jamaican traditional folk rhythms and popular tunes played on the recorder, both of which students can play outside of the classroom. Although they had different pre-service experiences, all three teachers valued their music education training as it prepared them, to some extent, for situations they faced in the music classroom.

They all attributed their pedagogical approaches, in part, to the philosophical grounding gained from their teacher education programmes, practical performance experiences, and application of music to real-life contexts. As such, they saw music teaching as something bigger than the musical concepts taught in that teaching was a holistic experience and impacted the whole person. They contended that their role as music teachers included imparting broad-based musical content including diverse music genres, promoting musicality, and facilitating student learning that included important life lessons such as content related to Jamaican folk and Jamaican popular music.

The teachers in the three cases also mentioned that music making, especially practice-based music making, was an important activity that should be included in each general music class. In their classes, the teachers included theoretical information and concepts that led to practical music making, namely general music ensembles that consisted of melodic and percussive classroom instruments. Music making involved the use of percussion instruments such as congas, rhythm sticks, drum set, and in some cases, melodic instruments including the piano or keyboard, boomwhackers, recorders, and a range of other classroom instruments. The music explored in the ensembles was not only students' preferred music, but a range of pieces that represented other popular and non-popular genres. The teachers contended that music making in the classroom fostered group participation and classroom rapport. When students participated in the classes as performers, they were generally more involved and appeared to demonstrate genuine interest in the class. As Green (2016a) pointed out, students place a high value on "enjoyment" in music learning and practical music making, and "enjoyment of and

identity with the music being played" are critical elements for students when seeking to promote engagement and connection (p. 106). Music making in each case was not limited to performing, but also included writing songs, basic composition, and projects that provided students with opportunities for creative musical expressions. Therefore, the general music classroom incorporated students' individual experiences, unique interests, and means for self-expression through music making (Abril & Kelly-McHale, 2016).

The teachers' philosophies on music and music education influenced their music selection process. They all aimed to select pieces or songs that best suited the topics they were exploring and to provide opportunities conducive to music making. Kariel's music selection favoured local and foreign gospel music and US popular music genres. She used Jamaican music to a lesser extent, but sometimes included dancehall songs to satisfy some students preferred music choices. Anthony and Peter had personal leanings toward Jamaican music, but they also selected a wide variety of popular music songs for their classes. Some selections aligned with students' preferred music, as they often solicited suggestions from students, but the selections also included many songs that students were not familiar with. They stated that their music selections were primarily topic appropriate, but they tried to include students' music in the classes, even if they were not the primary pieces used. The teachers' music selection process involved balancing students' preferred music or the "musical realities" closest to the students' experiences with the "musical realities" that formed each teacher's philosophy (Froehlich & Smith, 2017, p. 107).

For the teachers, the use of popular music, including music students were familiar with, was an important element in the general music classroom. The three teachers, all

experienced popular music performers, stated that popular music was central to their pedagogical approaches. Entrenched in their philosophies was a commitment to use students' familiar music to engage them in classes. Additionally, the use of different approaches that aligned their philosophies with music making was important to them and their understanding of music education. Students' familiar music included foreign popular music from North America and beyond (Korean pop included), Jamaican dancehall, and to some extent, local and foreign gospel music. These genres formed the core of their performance-based activities in the music classroom. To varying degrees, they also included both familiar and unfamiliar Jamaican popular music in their music classes and activities. Each teacher thought they had a responsibility to educate students about Jamaican folk and popular music culture as, from their classroom experiences, students were mostly unaware of their traditional heritage. They showed links between the Jamaican folk music culture and their influence on the Jamaican popular music heritage. Hence, Jamaican popular music was important to the teachers' music education philosophy, and their belief led to performance opportunities that included Jamaican popular music in the general music classroom. Green (2016a) found that popular musicians "vigorously supported popular music as a practical classroom subject" (p. 173), and Green's findings aligned with the teachers' philosophies on the inclusion of popular music as practice in the curriculum as it was important to learners. Therefore, participating in practical classes that involved popular music performance was another important element in the general music classroom.

Hess (2019) supported the notion that culturally responsive teaching involving

popular music at times includes older music and popular genres outside the students' music cultures. This approach was used by the three teachers as they sometimes included older Jamaican popular music in the classes. They expressed that the unfamiliar or less preferred popular musical selections were important to broadening students' understanding of music. The teachers, operating in their roles as cultural brokers (Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2018), used their social contexts to support student learning and drew on the Jamaican culture as a part of the classroom experience. Practical music making that included performance pieces and aural arrangements were featured in the three general music classes. Green's (2016a) research supported the teaching strategies employed by the teachers as, for their practical classes, they emphasised performance and composition/arranging and created "links between different musical styles" explored in the general music classroom (p. 175). The teachers' inclusion of a broad-based curriculum focused on their "progressive philosophies," provided opportunities to "develop inclusive pedagogical practices" aimed at enhancing the learner-centred experiences provided by music education (Salazar & Randles, 2015, p. 286).

Although the teachers aimed to incorporate their students' preferred music genres, their individual philosophies on music and music teaching sometimes conflicted with their intent to be culturally responsive in the music classroom. Kariel's preference for gospel music selections was a situation she recognised as problematic because the students sometimes protested her choices. The casual protests most times led to an immediate change of the song selection, but not always. Anthony insisted on Jamaican

music as the first-choice repertoire in most situations although he acknowledged the importance of variety in music selection used in his general music classes. He did not see this as a conflict as, in his view, his Jamaican music philosophy was justified by his belief that students were unaware of their cultural heritage. Like Lind and McKoy (2016) suggested, the teachers, through music education, thought they had a responsibility to educate students about their Jamaican traditional culture and music lineage.

The teachers' philosophies also influenced how they used some dancehall songs in their classes. They all mentioned incorporating instrumental versions of some dancehall songs as they found the "not fit for airplay" lyrics conflicting with the institutional morals as expressed by the administration, their personal morals, and societal norms. Using instrumental versions of popular dancehall songs limited potential discussions surrounding the lyrical content, but in another way, the instrumental versions provided an opportunity for students to learn from their familiar music genres. Nevertheless, the teachers' philosophies shaped their approach to teaching and learning and influenced the mostly positive student experiences in the culturally responsive music classrooms. Their inclusion of Jamaican culture in music education acknowledged the "legitimacy" of the students' cultural heritage and positioned the Jamaican music and culture as "worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum" (Gay, 2018, p. 37).

Importance of Addressing Multiple Contexts for Teaching and Learning

The three teachers in this study explored students' cultural and musical contexts in order to better address the multiple contexts students operated in. The teachers seemed to believe that teaching and learning were enhanced when they understood students'

cultural contexts. Acknowledging students' cultural contexts was reflected in the classes when the teachers incorporated students' musical cultures as a way of responding to their familiar music preferences. The teachers periodically included the students' preferred music so they could connect the musical concepts explored in class with the music they encountered in their daily lives. Additionally, the teachers also included students preferred Jamaican and North American popular music in their listening and appraising activities. The teachers included students' familiar music and, in the process, found ways to connect to the music their students preferred and practiced outside of the music classroom (Lind & McKoy, 2016). Ho and Law (2006) suggested that the "values and experiences" students gain from the music classes using their familiar music can lead to societal change and "help students make sense of the world" (p. 61). Although this was the case with these teachers, they all had to grapple with omitting students' familiar music that did not align with their lessons or students' familiar music with lyrical content that contradicted the teacher, school, and societal expectations.

All three teachers stated that the students showed a lack of enthusiasm towards the recorder as an instrument, especially after Grade 7. However, when they were learning to play the recorder, the students responded positively to the music making process when the teachers included popular music repertoire known to the students. They thought it was important to include students' preferred music to acknowledge students' background, cultural understanding, and context. In the classes observed, the students' positive response to familiar music and the use of their music cultures in the music classroom was in alignment with researchers like Lind and McKoy (2016). The three

teachers seemed to believe that when students are engaged with familiar popular music, the teachers acknowledge students lived experiences and diverse musical practices that can aid musical development students deemed important to themselves and their communities (Hess, 2019).

Students' enjoyment of familiar music was displayed during the sessions observed and their responses, when expressed, often showed approval for the teachers' music selection when it was aligned with their preferred music. Students did not collectively agree on what they individually considered preferred music, but students, for the most part, showed respect for their peers' music preferences. For many students, their preferred music was aligned with music that was popular at the time. Therefore, the teachers found ways to become aware of students' music and they were sometimes able to use students' preferred music in class or, in some cases, use music that aligned with students' preferred music genres. Hence, a focus on incorporating students' preferred music demonstrated cultural responsiveness that was akin to student-centred teaching and learning experiences (Abril & Kelly-McHale, 2016).

Importantly, all three teachers designed their lessons around broad-based musical examples that were not centred solely on students preferred music. This approach is supported by Gay (2018) where new curricular content is taught to "culturally diverse students" but is presented in "ways that make it easy for them to comprehend" the materials explored in the classroom (p. 143). The teachers included repertoire from children's songs, Jamaican folk songs, classical instrumental pieces, and popular songs that were not known but were stylistically similar to songs students did know, including

popular songs from movies. Using these songs provided opportunities for the teachers to demonstrate and explore specific elements in the songs geared towards student learning. In these instances, connecting student learning with new repertoire, contextualised by students' understanding of familiar music, was deemed successful by the teachers. Students were provided opportunities to experience and understand music from the perspective of other students' cultural background as the teachers facilitated discussion (and practice) of "one music worldview with another" (Abril & Kelly-McHale, 2016, p. 15). Thus, for the most part, students were actively engaged in activities involving comparative listening and performing that included their preferred music, mainly popular music, as a reference point leading to new music exploration.

The teachers also demonstrated that knowing students' popular music preferences helped with repertoire selection for classroom exploration. Though they did not often use students' preferred choices, these choices factored in the music selection process and added to the variety of music explored in the music classroom. This aligns with Salazar's and Randles's (2015) claim that the inclusion of popular music (students' preferred music choices) can "introduce diversity into the music curriculum … [and] expand students' formal and informal musical skills through a philosophy of inclusion" (p. 288). However, knowing students' popular music choices sometimes led to the teachers making choices between acceptable norms and practices in the Jamaican classroom versus societal norms for some students, especially as it related to lyrical content. Curating students preferred popular music choices took place as standard practice for all three teachers as they ensured they avoided lyrics that conflicted with their school administration, personal

morals, and accepted norms for traditional Jamaican secondary schools.

Music education can also promote comparative and relational teaching, allowing "different musical traditions to inform each other" and give students opportunities to "think broadly across categories" (Hess, 2015, p. 341). The full gamut of Jamaican music was not known to many of the students in this study, and the teachers, in most instances, tried to expose students to the varied music history of the country. Jamaican music was deliberately included in the curriculum, but the different genres, mainly mento, ska, reggae, and dancehall, were included at varying degrees. The teachers thought they had an obligation to teach Jamaican traditional and popular music heritages as they argued that they represented a traditional music lineage Jamaican students should be aware of. They also asserted that the inclusion of Jamaican traditional folk and popular music genres was important to develop students understanding of Jamaican music history and culture. Peter said the students were not familiar with the Jamaican music history, hence his inclusion of early popular music and traditional folk, particularly mento, for listening, composition, and performance activities. Anthony shared a similar perspective as he seemed to believe that the inclusion of Jamaican music was for knowledge building. In his classes, he explored Jamaican traditional folk and older Jamaican popular music, then made connections to current Jamaican popular music, a practice associated with culturally responsive pedagogical approach (Gay, 2018; Lind & McKoy, 2016). Both Peter and Anthony taught the connection between the highly syncopated rhythmic elements of the traditional folk forms and their use in contemporary Jamaican music, especially dancehall.

Although Kariel used instrumental versions of dancehall and included other Jamaican music genres in her class, she preferred Jamaican and foreign gospel music. She included Jamaican gospel in class but also used many non-Jamaican music genres in her lessons. In general, students did not appear excited about her regular inclusion of gospel music, but she found alternate genres when students responded negatively. Peter increased the Jamaican music content during the COVID-19 pandemic when the music classes were taught online. He stated that it was an opportunity to include more depth in the Jamaican music content as the students were very unaware of the traditional music culture. Hess (2015) asserted that honouring students' "cultural perspectives and affinities" gave students a "firm foundation from which to explore the perspectives (and musics) of their classmates – perspectives which may, in fact, be unfamiliar, but will help students develop a deeper understanding of one another" (p. 342). In the Jamaican context, the teachers expressed their belief that students being aware of their own musical culture provided opportunities for the students to learn more about themselves, their culture, and their history. The context in which the three music teachers operated demonstrated that the students did not only learn about the familiar music they already know but were presented opportunities to learn about unfamiliar music and contexts located in their own cultural heritage. The teachers individually concluded that the inclusion of Jamaican music in the curriculum was important to honour students' Jamaican cultural heritage, broaden students' educational experiences in contextual ways, and educate their students about Jamaican music traditions.

Although the music syllabi from the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) were

the official curriculum documents sanctioned by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI), none of the three teachers used them in meaningful ways. At Toledo High School, Peter did not use the NSC syllabi in any of the grades that studied music. Both Kariel and Anthony referred to aspects of the documents in a cursory way, but neither of them used the syllabi in their general music classes. Kariel thought the NSC topics were not structured to be delivered in her 40-minute lessons that occurred once per week for each class. She stated that more time was needed to effectively teach the topics contained in the NSC documents. She also recognised that the music curriculum is structured to begin in Grade 7, but music at Sterling High began at Grade 8.

Anthony was outspoken about the limitations of the NSC as he argued that there were topics that were not appropriate for the secondary level. He also expressed that the syllabi should include music technology related to composing and performing as some students were already creating beats and other computer-based music activities from as early as Grade 7. In this case, Anthony contended that the teacher's role was to help students develop their music skills and argued that the NSC must be expanded to accommodate these modern music opportunities. Although the curriculum was locally developed and aimed to be contextually relevant, they all agreed that the curriculum was generally lacking and was not yet suited to the contexts in which their schools operate.

In the context of Britain and the USA, Benedict and Schmidt (2012) advocated for a National Curriculum that adapted to the "needs, interest, and capacities" of the students local teachers faced in their classes (p. 111). They argued that the goal of a National Curriculum should be to locate music in the real world that students face, and it should be

manifested through music studies in the music classroom. The teachers in this study expressed that the NSC did not do that. The teachers stated that the students' real-world experiences included electronic music, computer generated sounds and activities, and as Abril et al. (2016) stated, current students often participated in projects involving web pages, blogs, and creative song writing. Although the NSC purports that music is an important part of the Jamaican culture and "schools should be responsible for how the art form is experienced," the content, as outlined, needed rethinking or updating according to the teachers (National Standards Curriculum, Grade 7, 2013, p. 14). They thought it was necessary to adjust the syllabus to fit their circumstances and included content they deemed necessary to advance music in their music programmes. Generally, the teachers thought that music teaching and learning should be rooted in a Jamaican cultural context and should involve students' music culture and cultural practices in the music classroom. The classes should include contemporary music approaches including music technology. But the syllabi, they argued, should be undergirded by Jamaican traditional music culture from the early years to present.

Influence of Pedagogy that Incorporated Students and Teachers' Music Preferences

The teachers' pedagogical approaches were fundamental to teaching and learning in the music classroom. Each teacher's personal philosophy drove their teaching approach. These philosophies on teaching were influenced, in part, by their music education training and their pedagogical approaches were formed during their college experiences. In Anthony's case, he started teaching before his music education training, and both the pre-trained experience and his music education training had meaningful

influences on his approach. But as they developed as teachers, a combination of their education and training, teaching and performing experiences, and philosophies, formed their approach to teaching and learning.

The teachers individually concluded that there were pedagogical benefits derived from their contemporary music performance backgrounds and teacher education training. The main similarity among the teachers' approaches was the deliberate inclusion of students' preferred music as an integral aspect of the teaching and learning process. Although it was important to ensure that music selected for pedagogical purposes was relevant to the students they are intended for, broadening students' classroom musical experience was important to the teachers (Hess, 2015, 2019). The teachers had a unique position to use students' preferred music as a teaching tool from which they could "move, as a respectful community, to the unfamiliar" music styles or genres (Hess, 2015, p. 344). Therefore, the teachers used students preferred music as a pedagogical tool when they taught listening and critiquing, performing, and composing activities. The students were actively involved in performing in general music classroom ensembles and the teachers found that their students were better focused and engaged when music concepts were explored in performance-based activities. The teachers also gravitated to group activities that encouraged collaboration, especially in the ensemble settings, and supported learning that included non-notated ensemble arranging. This is a practice the teachers incorporated from their popular music background as popular music arrangements were many times not documented using a traditional score. The teachers were able to engage in "theoretical explorations" that guided students' practice and "practical expertise" that was used as a

"stepping stone to exploring the theoretical" (Froehlich & Smith, 2017, p. 139). Therefore, the teachers expressed their belief that their performance backgrounds combined music as theory with music as practice to enrich their pedagogical bases.

The three teachers spoke to practical music making, mainly instrumental performance, as an important element in the general music classroom. Theoretical concepts were frequently manifested in activities involving music performance, composing, and arranging. These practical activities used a combination of students' preferred music and teacher-selected music students were not familiar with. Many times, the musical concepts were explored with students' familiar music prior to the use of unfamiliar or less preferred music in the class. Both Anthony and Peter mentioned that students were mostly not concerned about their preferred music when engaged in practical music making in the face-to-face settings. They just wanted to engage in performing. Kariel's students were sometimes unwilling to interact with unfamiliar music used for practical activities. When students showed apprehension toward unfamiliar music, she intentionally used conversations and at times cajoled students into participating by pointing out the benefits of understanding other music genres and cultures. She stated that the discussions had moderate success with the students at her school and her expressed aim of broadening her students' understanding through music education was sometimes a challenging task.

Generally, the teachers all spoke to having discussions with students when music outside of their culture was explored in class. The aim was to provide musical and sociological contexts aiding the interpretation of music used in class (Gay, 2018; Lind &

McKoy, 2016). Froehlich and Smith (2017) advocated for teachers to be sociologically informed and recognise that “theory and practice are symbiotically and necessarily intertwined” (p. 140). When acknowledged, the combination of theory and practice will lead to teachers connecting “various discrete, sometimes overlapping, and always interacting identities” located in “diverse musical and social contexts” (p. 140). When exploring these newly interconnected music and contextual experiences, students had opportunities to discuss topics associated with these experiences, and exercise comparative and relational methods to analyse music traditions that can inform each other (Hess, 2015). Therefore, the teachers often used students’ music as a bridge to explore other music genres. Hence dancehall and North American popular music, among other genres, were critical to the classroom experience as their usage provided students’ initial conceptual learning. With this approach by the teachers, students’ cultural contexts and familiar music were explored and understood before they investigated unfamiliar music.

Anthony and Peter often had discussions with students when music, both familiar and unfamiliar, was used for listening activities. The discussions aimed to help students contextualise the music within a particular culture or setting and, in some cases, provided the necessary background for musical understanding. The teachers preferred music selections were often used to deliver musical concepts in the general music classes as they individually thought their knowledge of the repertoire was much more expansive than their students. As Hess (2015, 2019) suggested, the teachers music selections aimed to introduce students to repertoire that covered topics they explored in the music classroom and students’ music preferences, as important as they were, was not always

relevant to the topic being explored. The teachers action supported their belief that one purpose of music education was to expand students' musical exposure, and at the same time, introduce music repertoire relevant to the content explored in the classes. In support of this concept, Lind and McKoy (2016) contended that the aim of using music outside of the students' music culture was to broaden the students' understanding and appreciation of other music cultures.

Popular music was the core of the teachers' pedagogical strategies and students engaged with music notation based on traditional western music tradition, graphic notation symbols, alphabetic letter names, and oral/aural concepts in the general music classroom. Students also composed and arranged music using oral processes that involved experimentation or specific notated examples assigned by the teachers. The teachers' pedagogical practices tapped into students' oral and aural traditions that connected the classroom experiences to music traditions outside of school helping the teachers to better understand their students (Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Kariel's classes were heavily skewed towards popular music but also included other music genres. Anthony leaned towards Jamaican popular and folk music as tools for student music engagement. Peter had Jamaican popular music as the core of his philosophy, but he used a broad-based approach to practical music making that included Jamaican and non-Jamaican popular styles, jazz, Western art music, and other genres. Similar to Lind and McKoy (2016), the teachers individually concluded that when they used popular music genres, teacher flexibility and responsiveness to students' musical needs formed an important part of how they engaged students in teaching and learning.

Both Kariel and Anthony stated that when they used dancehall songs, students were sometimes overly enthusiastic about the music and lost focus on the intent of the lesson. The three teachers stated that they used mostly instrumental versions of the dancehall pieces that students preferred as there were melodic and rhythmic elements that supported students' learning. However, they said that dancehall lyrics were not always appropriate for their classes. The teachers indicated that the inappropriate nature of the lyrics was at times related to graphic sexual content, misogyny, violence, homophobia, and the use of expletive language. Despite some students' familiarity with the lyrics, the teachers thought there was value in some aspects of some songs. Therefore, the instrumental versions of the popular songs still provided familiar content for some students, piqued their interest, and accomplished the stated objectives of the lesson without requiring teachers to navigate issues related to lyrics.

For the three teachers, reflective practice was key to their pedagogical approach. They spoke about what they learned about themselves as music teachers, including their music preferences, after they engaged students in the classroom. This included their selection biases versus students' preferred music, and personal beliefs as to what should be taught in the classes. Regular reflective practice was particularly evident with Kariel as she questioned, among other things, her liking for gospel music and some students' preference for anything popular but gospel. To develop effective reflective practice, the teachers, recognising their biases, engaged in "self-reflection and self-assessment" to support student learning and stem their "cultural biases" in the music classroom (Lind & McKoy, 2016, p. 28). Anthony spoke about how reflection spurred him to adjust his

teaching to incorporate theory and practice, despite his preference for a heavy theory knowledge before engaging students in practice-based experiences. His actions were based on his belief that Jamaican students were not necessarily strong critical thinkers, and his aim was to use music to contribute to the change in how students think and act. However, for all three teachers, their reflection also focused on what they considered to be effective teaching, their use of music repertoire outside of their preferred music choices, and seeking new ways to facilitate student learning. This consistent reflection was done with the intention for pedagogical improvement and better student engagement and learning as these factors are constantly changing and are not static (Gay, 2018).

Importance of Learning About Students Preferred Music

The teachers found multiple ways of learning about students preferred music with the aim of including them in their classes and ensembles. They recognised that expanding their knowledge and familiarity with a range of popular genres enhanced their engagement with students' music culture (Hess, 2019). Therefore, the teachers listened to student conversations in hallways, facilitated discussions in class about students' preferred music, and at times students arbitrarily suggested songs familiar to them. Kariel instituted a "Request Day" in her classes in order to gain information about students preferred music. However, she did not necessarily use all of the suggestions as "clean" lyrical content was important to her. Peter said social media played an important role in helping him to listen and select music his students were familiar with. Likewise, Anthony also listened to a wide variety of music on YouTube in order to familiarise himself with students' preferred music genres. All three teachers selected students preferred dancehall

music but used instrumental versions of the songs so that they did not have a "moral" issue with parents, guardians, and their schools' administration. Ultimately, the teachers made careful personal and ethical considerations regarding repertoire selection and used the instrumental versions as the compromise for engagement of students in the music classroom (Kallio, 2017). Nevertheless, students' music was carefully selected and strategically incorporated into the teaching and learning process.

Lind and McKoy (2016) stated that culturally responsive teachers develop cultural competence as they spend the time to "know more about the culture" of their students, "learn about their worldview, and work to better understand their expectations for schooling" (p. 29). This also meant learning more about the students' music culture preferences and using that knowledge to support student learning in a variety of ways. The three teachers demonstrated cultural competence as they affirmed students' distinctive cultural experiences, knowledge, and beliefs exhibited in the music classroom, and used them as teaching devices to support student learning (Lind & McKoy, 2016). The teachers in this study sought information from their students to learn more about their music preferences. The processes did not always lead to what the teachers deemed successful music selection as the students' music choices were varied. Hence, they did not always "get it right." Additionally, the process of information gathering can be time consuming and did not frequently occur in class. Nevertheless, through the information gathering process, the teachers expressed that they were able to expand on their own knowledge of music and better facilitate students' music engagement in the classroom (Hess, 2019).

Impact of Engaging with Students' Preferred Music and Practical Music Making

Students responded to in-class musical selections in different ways. Kariel noted that selected music that was unfamiliar to students was sometimes deemed "boring" by the students. Contextual explanations did not always change their opinions, but she tried discussions to influence more varied responses. With their preferred music, students actively participated in class activities and were at times overly passionate with their response without focussing on the content. Kariel said she used that energy to involve students in music making during the class. In her estimation, this approach was mostly successful especially when the students were partaking in practical music making that involved playing instruments, not singing.

Anthony stated that students liked when their preferred music was incorporated into class activities. But when unfamiliar music or music outside of their cultural norms were used in practical activities, the students were often hesitant to participate. At other points they willingly participated, but they asked numerous questions about the music and sometimes questioned their use in the class. Critical discussion on unfamiliar or less preferred music helped to contextualise the music for the students and Anthony found this to be a good way to soften the students' negative stance against unfamiliar music and at the same time, broaden the students' understanding of other music cultures. This approach was also taken with Jamaican music the students were not familiar with or Jamaican music outside of their preferred music choices. According to Anthony, students responded positively to practical music making in the face-to-face setting. In the online setting, students responded better to unfamiliar Jamaican musical selections when they

were included in listening activities.

Students' preferred music was not always a positive experience for Peter. Although the students liked when their preferred music was included in lessons, Peter was very conscious that students often lost focus of the topic and instead were fixated on other discussion points outside of the scope of the class. He sometimes had to address the students' concerns, but there were times he had to respectfully ask the students to discontinue the conversations as he felt they were outside the scope of the class. Like Kariel's and Anthony's students, Peter recognised that students called many Jamaican music selections "old" if they are not current dancehall songs. He also had to address students associating negative connotations to unfamiliar Jamaican music. Facilitating discussions and explaining contexts exuded positive responses from the students. Therefore, Peter did not see the use of unfamiliar music as an issue as students responded positively when there was contextual understanding of the selected music. Like Kariel and Anthony, students were exuberant when Peter facilitated in-class practical music making sessions. They liked to play and participate in impromptu ensembles involving instrumental playing, but not necessarily singing. Students were better engaged during in-class performance sessions and the teachers provided opportunities for potentially influential music learning experiences through practical music-making. Although the teachers thought they did well to incorporate practical music making in their classes, in two of the cases, they were sometimes negatively impacted by the lack of musical instruments in the classes.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented a cross-case analysis of the emergent themes of data from the three teachers participating in this research. I also presented conclusions that emanated from the cross-case analysis. In Chapter 8, I address the research questions, discuss the implications for music education, and propose ideas for future research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

This study examined how music teachers practiced culturally responsive teaching by functioning as cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning in three Jamaican secondary school contexts. Data were gathered from three secondary schools located in the city of Kingston: Sterling High School for Boys, Bluecam High School, and Toledo High School for Girls. The findings from the data were outlined in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, and five major themes emerged across the three case findings. The three cases provided insight as to how teachers functioned when relating to students in the music classroom. In Chapter 7, the five emergent cross-case themes were discussed and related to existing literature. The themes, listed in no particular order of importance, were:

- Impact of personal philosophy on teaching and learning;
- Importance of addressing multiple contexts for teaching and learning;
- Influence of pedagogy that incorporated students and teachers' music preferences;
- Importance of learning about students preferred music;
- Impact of engaging with students' preferred music and practical music making.

The teachers in this study found unique ways to incorporate students preferred music choices into their general music classes. This offered students opportunities to deepen their classroom musical experiences with their preferred music, explore other music cultures, and deepen their understanding of their own musical culture. The teachers

seemed to believe that the role of music education was to broaden students' musical experiences, and along with students' preferred music, incorporated music related to cultural systems beyond the students' preferred music cultures. The purpose of this chapter is to address the research questions outlined at the beginning of the study, discuss the limitations of the study and implications for music education, and offer suggestions regarding directions for future research.

Addressing the Research Questions

Culturally responsive teaching (Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2018) served as the theoretical framework grounding this investigation, which was located in Jamaica's postcolonial educational context. The analysis emanating from the findings with the three teachers, Kariel Sky, Anthony Vaughn, and Peter Targeth, were used to address the research questions in this multiple case study. The research questions were: (1) In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning is related to their preferred music? (2) In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as *cultural organizers, cultural mediators,* and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* when student learning is related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture? In what follows, I address the research questions by examining the teachers' roles and responsibilities as posited by Gay (2018) and Diamond and Moore (1995).

Research Question 1

In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning when student learning is related to their preferred music? The teachers in this study expressed their belief in a broad-based approach to music repertoire used in the classroom. They also thought it was important to make students' preferred music an integral part of their music curriculum and the students' classroom music experience. As a part of their pedagogical approach, the teachers in this study functioned in various roles and responsibilities when learning was related to students' preferred music.

Cultural Organizers. As cultural organizers, the teachers aimed to provide students with environments that encouraged expressions relevant to their cultural experiences while they facilitated teaching and learning in the classroom (Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2018). It appeared that the teachers sought to promote individual expressions that integrated students experiences into the classroom (Gay, 2018), but this was not always possible. The teachers used pedagogical approaches that validated and recognised the value of students' preferred music in the music classroom by including them in listening and critiquing activities in the general music classroom. Of note is that the teachers also supported the use of students' preferred music by contextualising the practice-based experience with theoretical underpinning that was aligned with the lesson topics. Additionally, the findings suggest that selecting songs that were relevant to students was important to the teachers' pedagogical strategies. Therefore, the teachers found ways to learn about the students' music in order to carefully select the specific

songs that would be used in the general music classes for activities related to listening and appraising, composing, and performing.

To learn about students' preferred music, the teachers reported listening to students' conversations outside of the music classes, facilitating in-class conversations during the music class or other sessions, and in the case of Kariel, designating a "request day" for song suggestions. The teachers' approaches demonstrated that they were open to student suggestions and, with and without prompting from the teachers, the students "offered" popular music suggestions for use in class. The teachers also benefitted from this process as they had opportunities to learn more about students' preferred music choices and, consistent with the literature, the teachers expanded their repertoire and knowledge of music while they facilitated student engagement with students' preferred music (Hess, 2019). Scholars have suggested that students respond positively when their preferred music were validated in the music classroom (Lind & McKoy, 2016). Importantly, the teachers used the knowledge of their students, knowledge of the students' contexts, and personal practical knowledge to navigate the classroom (Shaw, 2015). Although they had similar instructional goals and objectives, the pedagogical approaches of the three teachers were individually different, not prescriptive, and they adapted to the various situations they encountered in their classes.

The data suggest that within the Jamaican context, the teachers in this study were generally aware of students' culture in the classroom as they at times incorporated students' diverse music preferences and related them to the lesson topics explored. This is important as students' preferred music connected the students' out-of-school experience

to the in-class music experience and supported cultural relevance in the curriculum. The findings also suggest that teachers used their knowledge of students' preferred music to engage students in discussion and practice-based music experiences in the general music classroom as the teachers found this approach to be effective in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, it is critical that teachers value students' music and spend the time to learn about them as students have diverse music cultures within the classroom.

Cultural Mediators. The teachers in this study sometimes functioned as cultural mediators as they created classroom learning experiences that engaged students from different sociocultural backgrounds, helped students to understand their own culture and appreciate other cultures while affirming each other in class (Diamond & Moore, 1995; Gay, 2018). The affirmation was accomplished without suppressing the musical culture of the other students in the music classroom. The findings suggest that students have diverse music cultures and did not necessarily agree on what they considered preferred music. The teachers found ways to navigate this reality by learning about students' music and then validated students preferred music by using various musical suggestions in a variety of ways including listening and critiquing, composing and arranging, and performing (see Chapters 4, 5, and 6). Throughout the teaching and learning experiences, the teachers realised that popular music was important to making connections with students, hence its inclusion in the curriculum. The teachers sometimes selected music that spoke to the students' cultural realities, and the students often found the classroom engagements to be meaningful experiences as the genres resonated with them (Hess, 2019). In all three cases, the teachers saw the value of incorporating students preferred

music such as dancehall, North American popular music, and other genres, as they made teaching and learning relevant to the students' contexts. Although students' preferred music was used, the teachers indicated that they carefully selected the songs they used as some were not appropriate for the school culture in which they operate. When the teachers spoke about popular music, dancehall and rap in particular, they were fixated on inappropriate lyrics being the main issue that led them to use instrumental versions of some of the popular songs. In some cases, the teachers eliminated the students' preferred songs from the pool of choices. This could be problematic for some students as their understanding of "appropriate" lyrics might not be the same as the teacher. In this case, the teacher was the only music curator and was the one ultimately responsible for the final song selections. Nevertheless, the teachers used students' preferred music to increase student "motivation and interest" in the music classroom while "maintaining relevance" in the music curriculum (Lind & McKoy, 2016, p. 55).

Orchestrators of Social Contexts for Learning. The teachers in this study operated as orchestrators of social contexts for learning as they recognised the important influence that culture had on student learning in the general music classroom. Their actions evidenced an understanding of the direct relationship between students' contemporary culture and their approach to learning in the music classroom. Hence, they adapted teaching strategies that spoke to the students' "sociocultural contexts and frames of reference" in order to facilitate teaching and learning (Gay, 2018, p. 52). The teachers realised that incorporating Jamaican music, most notably dancehall, and North American popular music genres, were important to the learning experience as some of the students

related well to these genres. The teachers also spoke to the syncopated rhythmic content that often appealed to students and teachers alike as this was the hallmark of many of the African-derived Jamaican music.

The teachers saw students' preferred music as a gateway or bridge to new learning experiences in the classroom (Hess, 2019; Ho, 2014; Ho and Law, 2006; Lind & McKoy, 2016; Shaw, 2015), and this was expressed in different ways, especially through practical music making. All three teachers recognised that the students were more engaged when they encouraged practical music making that used students' preferred music especially in the face-to-face setting. The findings from this study indicate that teacher engagement with students' preferred music culture was one way of increasing the level of student participation in class and this facilitated effective teaching and learning in all three music classrooms. Of note is that the teachers orchestrated the music classroom setting to provide opportunities for students to experiment with composition and performance in the music classroom. These in-class activities led students to write lyrics when creating songs, experiment with song form and structure similar to those explored in class, create performance pieces based on music explored in class, among other music-based activities. Hence, the teachers encouraged students to explore music in formal and informal ways when they were performing and arranging music using their voices and classroom instruments.

Challenges and Concerns. Teachers' roles and responsibilities were sometimes affected by situations that required them to adjust how they operated. Although the teachers valued students' music, they were not always willing to use them in the general

music classes due to topic compatibility, lack of variety in student suggestions, and other musical reasons. Though students offered suggestions, ultimately, music selection was solely the teachers' choice. The teachers carefully selected the students' preferred music used in class and in those cases, operated as "curators" of popular music with the intention of keeping what they deemed "morally accepted" norms for traditional Jamaican secondary schools (Kallio, 2017). This limited the teachers' selection of students' preferred music especially when related to dancehall and North American rap, both genres that frequently have lyrics that were deemed by the wider Jamaican culture, school administration, and parents/guardians, as "inappropriate" for the Jamaican music classroom. The curation of students' preferred music for use or non-use in the classroom by music teachers had implications for which students' preferred music was incorporated in the classes. Students engaging with their preferred music in the music classroom was considered an important occurrence, but not all students would benefit based on the selection criteria set by the teachers and to a great extent, by the Jamaican cultural norms for administrators in public and Christian schools.

In listening and critique classes, students were often overly enthusiastic with their response to their preferred music, and they sometimes missed the teacher's intended reason for the lessons as they primarily focused on their songs as preferred listening. The teachers stated that this was sometimes difficult to manage. Therefore, this finding suggests that students' preferred music sometimes elicited student reactions that were contrary to the active listening and critiquing sessions desired by the teacher. The students overtly demonstrated their love for their preferred music, but the teachers

interpreted the exaggerated student reactions as one that could stifle the deeper experience students should have in the music classroom, one that promoted active listening and not passive listening in the music classroom.

Research Question 2

In what ways, if any, do secondary school music teachers function as cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning when student learning is related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture? The teachers in this study sought to broaden students' exposure to music by incorporating music beyond those which students were familiar with in their classes. The teachers assumed various roles and responsibilities when learning was related to cultural systems beyond their preferred musical culture, mainly popular music culture from Jamaica and North America.

Cultural Organizers. Operating as cultural organizers meant that the teachers aimed to facilitate discussions on music students were not familiar with. Included in the list of unfamiliar music was Jamaican traditional folk music and "old" Jamaican popular music (see Chapter 7). Incorporating the full range of Jamaican music culture and heritage appeared to be embedded in the teachers' philosophies of music education as they claimed that Jamaican students should be cognisant of and conversant with Jamaican traditional folk music and the history of Jamaican popular music. The teachers repeatedly commented that students were often engaged in lesson topics that explored the origins of Jamaican folk forms including discussions on music with African retentions, work songs related to slavery, and conversations on common folk genres including mento,

Rastafarian songs and drumming rhythms, Revivalism, and other folk genres. The extent to which the Jamaican culture was integrated into the curriculum differed for each teacher as they were guided by their personal philosophies. The teachers agreed that there were significant benefits to students' cultural knowledge base when Jamaican music culture was incorporated into the curriculum as it was unlikely that the students would interface with music-based information on Jamaican music culture outside of the music curriculum. The fact that the teachers repeatedly indicated that students preferred music did not include historical Jamaican music, and at least two teachers found that to be an unfortunate void that music education in the secondary schools should fill, shows the depth of concern the teachers had about students' cultural knowledge. Ultimately, the findings from the data suggest that the teachers thought it was important to the overall Jamaican culture that music teachers help students connect their cultural roots to their colonial past, while they, the teachers, explored these genres in the postcolonial context in which they exist or existed. Therefore, the music curriculum benefitted from the teachers' use of unfamiliar Jamaican music genres that broadened students' understanding and exposure to music from their own culture.

Cultural Mediators. The three teachers operated as cultural mediators as they engaged students in important conversations about mainstream culture and other music genres outside of the students' cultural systems (Gay, 2018). These conversations, although not frequently featured in Kariel's and Peter's classes, were often addressed in Anthony's classes at Bluecam High School. The teachers saw it necessary to engage students in listening activities and discussed unfamiliar non-Jamaican music and non-

popular genres in the classes. Based on the findings from this study, the teachers had varying levels of success with discussions in which students analysed and contextualised unfamiliar music. Two of the teachers found the discussions were fruitful when unfamiliar music was compared with familiar music previously explored in class and they suggested that students were accepting of the opportunity to learn new music. This finding is important as it suggests an approach that can foster success for music teachers and promote musical growth in the general music classroom.

The unfamiliar music genres and styles were mostly selected by the teachers as they were responsible for the topics explored with the students in the music classroom. Western European art music, jazz, songs from musicals, and other pieces and songs from sources such as YouTube, were used in the classes to teach musical concepts and facilitate in class music making and performances. From a cultural standpoint, the teachers deemed it necessary to use broad-based repertoire as they utilised music genres that were outside of the students' cultural experiences and exposed students to unfamiliar genres and styles of music. In the Jamaican context, cultural mediation is not necessarily related to students who are from minority populations or suffer from daily racial inequities but related to students who are from different sociocultural contexts and sometimes experience a different lived popular culture experience from their peers, and often from that of their teachers. Therefore, exposing students to a curriculum with diverse music supports the perspective that music education broadens students' musical knowledge while drawing on students lived and culturally defined music experiences.

Orchestrators of Social Contexts for Learning. The teachers functioned as orchestrators of social contexts for learning as they often integrated Jamaican culture as an important part of students' teaching and learning experience in the music classroom. This included the teachers exhibiting cultural competence as they had to learn about their students' backgrounds, musical tastes, and understand what they bring to the classroom experience (Gay, 2018; Lind & McKoy, 2016). Knowledge of the students' culture informed how the teachers operated as they created classroom environments that facilitated practical music making through composition and arranging, and performance, used to explore and discover musical meaning through unfamiliar music. To a greater extent, this worked well for Anthony and Peter as their students often participated in practical activities without questioning the teachers' choice of unfamiliar music. Kariel had students that gently protested the use of unfamiliar music, and some used the term "boring." Although it was not her only music selection, it is possible that Kariel's leaning to gospel music did not necessarily seem inclusive or inviting to the boys, but she felt she was able to move beyond those selections and effectively used unfamiliar popular music to facilitate teaching and learning.

Each teachers' context required them to respond in different ways to facilitate students' interaction with unfamiliar music in the music classroom. Once again, the approach was not prescriptive but one in which teachers responded to the contexts in which they operated. What was consistent with each case is that students were generally willing to explore unfamiliar music in practical classes as the teachers deliberately used familiar music as a conduit to facilitate comparative listening and appraising prior to

engaging in performance or composing. This was a common approach with all three teachers and is a pedagogical strategy advocated by music researchers (Hess, 2015; Lind & McKoy, 2016; Salazar & Randles, 2015). Furthermore, the findings from the study indicate that teachers included unfamiliar non-popular genres in their broad-based approach to teaching and learning, and they also included a wide range of popular music genres to support their listening, critiquing, discussions, composing, and performing music activities. The teachers' positive student response to exploring unfamiliar music in performance-based music making in the general music classrooms suggest that the approach can be beneficial to other music programmes in the secondary school system and as such, should be explored.

Challenges and Concerns. In Jamaican secondary schools, Caribbean history, including the legacy of slavery and colonialism, is studied in all three secondary schools. However, the history of Jamaican music including popular, non-popular, and folk music traditions, were not routinely studied in music classes at these three schools. Students were often not connected to Jamaican music that is not current and, in some cases, they were not connected to Jamaican music at all. This creates a challenge for the preservation of Jamaica's music culture and legacy as students, irrespective of the generational divide, should know about their cultural heritage and experience it in practical ways. This suggests that there should be a general attempt to incorporate Jamaican music history in the general music curriculum and include Jamaican music as performance-based and practical music making activities as they would support the preservation of the culture and interest students through performance. Including Jamaican music culture should not

be the initiative of the music teachers only, but a widespread offering to secondary school music students. The inclusion of Jamaican music studies was deliberately done by two teachers only.

Discourse on the importance of the Jamaican diaspora and the Caribbean as a unified region continues to be a conversation among intellectuals and regional leaders (Hall, 2013). However, the music programmes discussed did not include a broad study of music from the Caribbean region, popular and folk music traditions from other English-speaking territories, and music from non-English speaking Caribbean countries. A question as to how broad-based the music curriculum should be is one that should be explored in the Jamaican secondary music classroom. I therefore suggest that there could be value in knowing music from other regions that are in close proximity to the island state or within the same regional organisations such as Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Although it took place in a general sense, demonstrating cultural competence was challenging for the teachers as it was difficult to know all of their students' background in a meaningful way. In two of the schools, this was made difficult by large class sizes and the limited time for classes. When classes were online, all schools had limited interaction with students beyond teaching the lesson for the day. This suggests that the length of each lesson period should be re-evaluated as the single period sessions did not promote depth and breadth with content and quality student interaction, both necessary to develop cultural competence and quality student engagement in the music classroom.

Summary. In general, I posit that the teachers' roles and responsibilities were essential to their pedagogical approaches and their actions demonstrated vital attributes of culturally responsive teaching in the music classroom. It is particularly important that teachers also understand students' culture as experiences that are lived, interpreted, and defined (Hall, 2016) by the students, and acknowledge that students' music culture is a constant creation, recreation (Benhabib, 2002), fluid, and ever changing. Hence teachers have a responsibility to meet students where they are in their educational journey in order to effectively engage in culturally responsive teaching.

Although the teachers sometimes operated as cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts for learning, they were not constantly performing these roles and responsibilities at every moment in the music classroom. There were times when they had to assume roles that were contrary to being cultural brokers in the classroom and those roles might not have been appropriate at that moment. Sometimes they were teaching towards assessment, providing grades for student reports, and performing other tasks that were not necessarily concerned with student learning, but were important tasks, nonetheless. Similarly, using students' preferred music, as important as it was, seemed not to be the most critical aim of the teachers' lessons. Communicating and impacting students' lives through music seemed more important to them. This meant that music making, critical listening, and music creation, were all paramount to the three teachers' classroom music environment. Familiar and unfamiliar music were the conduit through which classroom engagement with students was facilitated.

The teachers expressed their belief that music education should influence change in their students because music education, in their estimation, facilitates holistic development and addresses the whole person. Hence, in their estimation, teachers had a responsibility to society. Anthony, in particular, thought that music should address social ills and give students hope through music making incorporating music technology and facilitate activities such as creating beats, music tracks, and other modern practical music tasks.

Furthermore, popular music education involving familiar and unfamiliar music, both local and foreign genres, formed an important part of the teachers' pedagogical approach and classroom engagement with the students. However, there is room to include more practical music making in the classroom and music genres from the wider Caribbean. Including practical outlets such as composing and arranging using formal and informal approaches, and engaging with performance related activities in class, were important to the students' music classroom engagement.

With their approaches, the teachers aimed to deepen students' understanding of familiar music while broadening their exposure to music beyond their preferred musical culture. They also demonstrated flexibility with their teaching and tried to make the teaching and learning experience enjoyable, engaging, and educational. Critical to student engagement was the teachers use of a variety of pedagogical approaches that influenced their curriculum decisions while they engaged students in the postcolonial contexts they operated in on a daily basis (Gay, 2018).

Implications for Music Education

As a consequence of the learners' music teachers face in the secondary music classroom in Jamaica, extensive education and training in popular music pedagogy may benefit pre-service music teachers in teacher training institutions. In this study, the use of students' popular music preferences and teachers' popular music selection was heavily featured in the music activities focused on performance, listening and critiquing music, and composition/arranging including informal approaches. Teachers would benefit from having the skills and knowledge necessary to engage the students within these genres. Popular music pedagogy in music education programmes could be addressed through courses that include popular band performance ensembles that incorporate approaches to music selection and pop band arranging. Critically, popular music pedagogy can also be addressed in general music methods courses that currently exist in some music education programmes. Including popular music pedagogy as an aspect of teacher education programmes would better prepare teachers for the flexible engagement in the classroom where they face learners steeped in popular music culture (Hess, 2015; Salazar & Randles, 2015).

The teachers in this study realized that students were not conversant with or knowledgeable of Jamaican traditional folk music culture and the history of Jamaican popular music. They were mostly au fait with current popular music, but not necessarily Jamaican music. In order to ground students in Jamaican music culture, a culture that aligns with Jamaica's colonial history, music educators also have a responsibility to disseminate important cultural knowledge to the diverse learners faced in the music

classroom (Gay, 2018). The preservation of cultural knowledge and building new knowledge are both important to the expansion of music education curriculum and classroom experience (Hess, 2015, 2019; Lind & McKoy, 2016; Salazar & Randles, 2015), and this is particularly important in the Jamaican context. Therefore, music teachers in the Jamaican context, whether as preservice teachers or through professional development, must be educated in Jamaican music history and Jamaican cultural heritage as both areas are integral to the education of students in the Jamaican secondary music classroom. Combining the knowledge of Jamaican music history and heritage with knowledge of students' preferred music could strengthen the music curriculum in the secondary school system and increase students' active engagement in the music classroom.

The teachers could also benefit from professional development courses that explore music repertoire and performance practice outside of popular music and Jamaican music genres. This could broaden the teachers' perspectives on music and expand their repertoire choices, music analysis skills, and modes of musical expression. Additionally, seminars or workshops that address creative use of music technology in the general music classroom could also benefit current music educators. Music education in the schools could further support the active community music making that exists in many parts of Jamaica (Tillmutt, 2013). The intersection of music education and society is deemed important as students may benefit from life-long skills developed through effective music education programmes in schools and in turn support community music making.

Although one of the teachers spoke of the importance of music being practical and relevant to students' life, one that connects them to out of school experiences, the study did not consider students in the music classroom with disabilities, matters associated with justice in music education, and what democratic education looks like in postcolonial Jamaican music classrooms. Jamaican music education could also benefit from understanding the implications of the print and electronic resources used to support music education and the implications for conversations and actions surrounding music education in a postcolonial setting.

It was my view that in this study, the teachers, through their responses, defined culture in a limited way as they were inevitably talking about Jamaican, Caribbean, and in the case of Anthony, West African retentions observed in Jamaican music. It is possible that my questions could have restricted the teachers' concepts and responses, which could have skewed the conversation towards local and popular music genres. However, for the teachers in this study, redefining culture as a broad-based, fluid, and always changing phenomenon, could be important to the development of pedagogies supporting their music education experiences with their students.

Recommendations for Further Research

For this study, the combination of a male single sex school, a female single sex school, and a coeducational school could have influenced how the students in each school responded to music in the classes and their music preferences. Especially as it relates to dancehall and some North American genres, additional studies are needed to understand students' music preferences when engaged in the music education experience in the

music classroom. The findings from this study also revealed that more research is needed to evaluate how trained music teachers function as cultural brokers in the wider Jamaican education system as at the time of this study, very little literature was available.

This study was conducted in three public high schools in Kingston, the capital of Jamaica. Music education in Jamaica would benefit from similar inquiries in rural parishes or in another urban centres like Montego Bay. Furthermore, the student population in all three schools are known to have academically high achievers entering from the primary level. Therefore, other studies could be conducted with music teachers in other schools with students of different levels of academic achievement to find out if culturally responsive teaching is taking place and if it is, its effectiveness in those classrooms when face-to-face or in online settings.

A critical part of the engagement with students focused on Jamaican culture and traditional cultural practices and their intersection with the curriculum in the music classroom. More needs to be known about how teachers engage students with Jamaican traditional and popular music culture in the secondary music classroom and if rural students experience music in the same way as their urban counterparts. Although it was not a major part of this study, students' music preferences and their response to music used in the classroom when influenced by gender, socioeconomic status, and other sociocultural factors, would be worth investigating.

More needs to be understood about pre-service teachers' exposure to popular music pedagogy in music education programmes and the benefits, if any, for the secondary school music curriculum. Finally, the National Standards Curriculum (NSC)

was not actively used by the teachers in this study. Therefore, further research is needed to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and music teachers views of the NSC as it relates to currency and relevance in the Jamaican contemporary music education landscape. That could involve their thoughts on the inclusion of music technology in the music classroom, making popular band or other ensembles an alternate option to general music classes, and facilities supporting music teachers engaged with popular music pedagogy in the classroom.

Concluding Thoughts

I posit that culturally responsive teaching does not only support ethnically diverse student populations but can function effectively with music teachers supporting students in the postcolonial environment in which Jamaica operates. Hall's (2016) definition of culture as "experience lived, experience interpreted, experience defined" (p. 32–33) aptly describes and contextualises the generational difference between the teachers and students' Jamaican cultural experiences. The teachers recognised that their understanding of Jamaican culture did not necessarily align with students lived popular culture but learning about students' preferred music and employing contextual teaching and learning was beneficial to the students. The teachers demonstrated that CRT is not only an approach, but a "disposition" or "mindset" that is "multifaceted" (Lind & McKoy, 2016, p. 83). Therefore, understanding students' cultural background, including their popular culture experiences, and including historical aspects of their culture to broaden their understanding of their own heritage, are critical to how teachers operate in the Jamaican music classroom.

Gay (2018) and Lind and McKoy (2016) stated that teachers were not always aware that they were demonstrating characteristics associated with culturally responsive teaching, a situation that is true in these three cases. Nevertheless, the teachers in this study were aware of their need to align students' classroom experiences with their lived out-of-school experiences. Their teaching strategy included students' preferred music and the teachers' selected music, both used to develop a broad-based music curriculum aimed at engaging and expanding the students' knowledge beyond what they already know. Like Lind and McKoy (2016), Shaw (2015), Froehlich and Smith (2017), I believe broadening students' musical knowledge is a primary aim of music education and culturally responsive teaching supports this aim while empowering students in the music classroom. In the Jamaican secondary music classroom, the three teachers understood the importance of Jamaican culture and students' culture, connected with students' preferred music, and ventured into other musics beyond the students' routine cultural preferences.

Appendix A

Letter of Invitation to Participate (Email)

Dear [Participant's Name],

You are being invited to participate in a research study that will be conducted as part of my doctoral studies in Music Education at Boston University. The purpose of my research study is to understand how music teachers use culture in education to inform their approach to teaching in the Jamaican secondary classroom setting. This is a phenomenon known as culturally responsive teaching. We are asking you to take part in this study because you are an experienced music teacher who teaches in the public secondary school system.

Please see the attached letter for further details. If permission is granted by your principal and you are still in agreement to participate, I am asking that you tick the appropriate boxes then sign the attached letter. You may return by email or I can pick it up at your convenience. Additionally, if it is more convenient for you that I drop off the form for your signature, that can also be arranged.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research study.

Best regards,

Roger N. Williams
Doctoral Candidate
Boston University

Appendix B

Letter to Principal

Roger N. Williams

Jamaica

February 2, 2021

Principal

Dear

I am seeking your permission to conduct a research study at your institution with your music teacher, . This research study will be conducted as part of my doctoral studies in Music Education at Boston University. I have already spoken with and she has indicated interest in participating. This research study requires me to observe your music teacher teaching a music class on three different occasions within your school. This can be done in-person or if the covid-19 protocol prevents this situation, it can be done via the video platform used at your institution.

The purpose of my research study is to understand how music teachers use culture in education to inform their approach to teaching. This is a phenomenon known as culturally responsive teaching. In the study, I will not use the "real" name of the school or teacher. I will use pseudonyms (fake names) only. The research will take place over a 3–4 week period. Kindly note that the teachers' participation in this study is voluntary and the school and teacher may rescind permission at any time. There is no compensation offered for participation in this study.

If you agree to allow this study to take place at your school with [redacted] [redacted], I am asking you to sign your name at the designated section at the bottom. If you have any questions or concerns, kindly contact me at [redacted] or [redacted] (including whatsapp).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

……………………………..
Roger N. Williams
Doctoral candidate, Boston University

Principal's Name: …………………………………..

Principal's Signature: ……………………………….

Appendix C

Letter to Teacher: Invitation to Participate and Informed Consent Form

Protocol Title: Culturally Responsive Music Teaching in Jamaican Secondary Schools
Principal Investigator: Roger N. Williams
Description of Study Population: Secondary School Music Teachers
Version Date: February 2, 2021

To: [redacted]
Re: Informed Consent Form for Research Study

Invitation to Participate

You are being invited to participate in a research study that will be conducted as part of my doctoral studies in Music Education at Boston University. The purpose of my research study is to understand how music teachers use culture in education to inform their approach to teaching in the Jamaican secondary classroom setting. This is a phenomenon known as culturally responsive teaching. We are asking you to take part in this study because you are an experienced music teacher who teaches in the public secondary school system.

Participants who take part in this research study will be in this research study for a maximum of 3-4 weeks. During this time, I will make three study visits to your school. Participants taking part in this study will allow me to observe three classes at the school (in person or via a video platform), conduct three interviews lasting approximately 45-60 minutes, and share lesson plans, videos, or any other artifact that can aid the research study.

There are no risks involved when taking part in this research study.

Introduction

Please read this form carefully. The purpose of this form is to provide you with important information about taking part in a research study. If you have any questions about the research or any portion of this form, please ask us. Taking part in this research study is up to you. If you decide to take part in this research study and accept the conditions outlined, we will ask you to check the relevant boxes and sign page 3 of this form. We will give you a copy of the signed form.

What should I know about a research study?

Participation in research is voluntary, which means that it is something for which you volunteer. It is your choice to participate in the study, or not to participate. If you choose to participate now, you may change your mind and stop participating later. If you decide not to participate, that decision will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

How long will I take part in this research study?

I expect that you will be in this research study for approximately three-four weeks. During this time, I will visit one of your classes on three occasions. I will observe and audio and/or video

record you and participating students working during the class project. If you do not wish to be video-recorded during class, camera angles will be adjusted to ensure you are not in the frame. If done via a video platform, I am seeking your permission to record the session. The video recordings are solely for the purpose of this study and will not be made public. I will also conduct three interviews, each lasting approximately 45-60 minutes, and can be done at times and locations convenient to you. Due to the Jamaican covid-19 protocols, the interviews can also be done via a video platform like zoom, skype, or whatsapp. During the interviews, we will discuss your background and philosophy on teaching, aspects of the observation sessions, and your thoughts on how the students engage in your classes. All interviews will be audio recorded or video recorded if done via a video platform. If you do not wish to be audio or video recorded, notes will be taken by hand.

Loss of Confidentiality

I will protect your privacy by using pseudonyms (fake names) and your information will not be shared with a third party. Your information will be stored in a password-protected computer.

Will I get paid for taking part in this research study?

You will not be paid for taking part in this study.

What will it cost me to take part in this research study?

There are no costs to you for taking part in this research study.

Sincerely,

Kelly Bylica
kbylica@bu.edu.

Roger N. Williams
(Phone/WhatsApp)

CONSENT FORM

I consent to the use of unidentified quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

I agree to let the researcher make copies of my lesson planning materials for this study.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

I agree to participate in the following (check all that apply):

☐ **INTERVIEWS** ☐ **OBSERVATIONS** ☐**NEITHER**

I agree to be (check all that apply):

☐ **Video-Recorded** ☐ **Audio-Recorded** ☐ **Neither audio nor video-recorded**

Statement of Consent

I have read the information in this consent form and have had the nature of the study explained to me. I have been given the chance to ask questions, my questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in the study.

SIGNATURE

____
Name of Study Participant

______________________________ ________________
Signature of Study Participant Date

I have explained the research to the research participant and answered all their questions. I will give a copy of the signed consent form to the participant.

____
Name of Person Obtaining Consent

______________________________ ________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix D

Semi-Structured Interview 1

Name of interviewee: Music Teacher 1
Interview #: One (1) Location: virtual or face-to-face
Date of interview: 2021 January ##
Length of Interview: 60 – 90 minutes (state actual time)

Teacher Interview #1 Questions

RNW: *Thank you for the opportunity to conduct this interview with you. I am also seeking your permission to record this interview. [START RECORDING after permission is granted]. Today, our interview conversation will focus on your music background and teaching. Before we begin, please state your name and today's date… [WAIT]…Thank you.*

Teacher Background

1. Could you share with me how you came into music teaching?

   Possible Follow up:

   a) What is your background/training as a musician and music teacher?
   b) How long have you been teaching?
   c) Were you a trained teacher from the beginning of your teaching career?
   d) How long have you been in this school?
   e) How long have you been in this current position?

Teaching Approach & Influences

2. Tell me how would you describe your approach to teaching or your teaching style?

   Possible Follow up:

   a) Explain to me how you developed your teaching style/approach?
   b) What do you believe influenced your ideas on teaching?

3. In what ways, if any, have your teaching approach/pedagogy evolved over the years?

4. In what ways did your music education training influence your approach to teaching?

5. How did your musical experience outside of your college training influence your teaching?

Teacher as Cultural Organizer

6. Explain the importance/influence of your music selection process on how you develop your lessons and teach your classes?

Possible Follow up:

a) Generally, do the students mostly like what you use in class?
b) Are the selected pieces always as effective as you expect them to be?
c) Do you know what the students prefer to listen to?
d) How did you find out what they listen to?

7. How does the student's prior knowledge (what they already know) influence your approach to your general music lessons?

Possible Follow up:

a) What genres of Jamaican music do you use in your classes? How do you use them?
b) What genres of non-Jamaican music do you use in your classes? How do you use them?
c) In what ways do the student's music culture influence what you do in the music classes?

Teacher as Cultural Mediator

8. In your classroom experience, in what ways do students respond to music from their culture when explored in the classroom?

Possible Follow up:

a) What kinds of questions do they ask about the music?
b) How do they prefer to experience the music during the classes?
c) Do you facilitate discussions about the specific music cultures?

9. In what ways do students respond to music they are not accustomed to hearing? [outside of their cultural experience]?

Possible Follow up:

a) What questions do they ask about the music?
b) How do they learn more about the unfamiliar music genres?
c) Do you facilitate discussions about the specific music cultures? How?

Teacher as Orchestrator of Social Context for Learning

10. Tell me how do you provide opportunities for students to explore music making in the classroom?

Possible Follow up:

a) What are some of the activities?
b) How do students explore these opportunities?
c) What factors influence the effectiveness of these opportunities/activities?

***Thank you for having this conversation with me. I fully appreciate it.*

Contact email address: ________________________________

Appendix E

IRB Waiver of Review Protocol

Charles River Campus Institutional Review Board
25 Buick Street, Room 157
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
T 617-358-6115 / www.bu.edu/irb

Notification of IRB Determination: Not Research

September 30, 2020

Roger Neil Williams
College of Fine Arts
School of Music
855 Commonwealth Ave
Boston, MA 02215

Protocol Title:	**Culturally Responsive Teaching in Jamaican Secondary Music Classrooms**
Protocol #:	**5765X**
Funding Agency:	**Unfunded**

Dear Mr. Williams:

On September 30, 2020, the IRB determined that the above-referenced protocol is not human subjects research as defined by 45 CFR 46.101. Per the protocol, the purpose of this study is to examine how music teachers (3) practice culturally responsive teaching in the Jamaican secondary classroom setting.

IRB review of this protocol is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, please submit the **Clarification Form** located at http://www.bu.edu/researchsupport/compliance/human-subjects/. No changes can be implemented until they have been reviewed by the IRB.

If you have any questions, please contact Shayne Deal at 617-358-6116.

Sincerely,

Shayne C. Deal, CIP
Senior IRB Analyst
Charles River Campus IRB

cc: Kelly Bylica

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