

Folktales, Dialect Poetry and Dub Poetry

Reasons for their Potential Use in Promoting Conflict Resolution Messages
in the Jamaican Global Diaspora

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INTRODUCTION

The challenges facing the Global African Diaspora are numerous and they form part of the daily realities of members of the group. Among the challenges encountered are homelessness, illiteracy, a lack of food security and rampant disease. Furthermore, the many manifestations of conflict have been rapidly emerging like festering sores in the body of the Global African Diaspora. Ethnic rivalries, gang wars, political upheavals, murders, domestic violence, police/community clashes, religious tensions and even social class differences have been tearing apart countries, communities and families in the Diaspora. The recent political upheaval in the world's first black republic, Haiti, is indicative of the effects of turmoil on the Global African Diaspora.

Various solutions have been conceptualized and implemented to address the challenges faced by the Global African Diaspora (Singhal and Rogers 1999 & 2003; Rogers 2004; Singhal et al. 2004). One particular problem-solving strategy, Entertainment-Education (E-E), has been very effective in instituting social change worldwide. "Entertainment-Education is the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message both to entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members' knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, and change overt behavior" (Singhal and Rogers 1999, 9). Using entertainment to show people how to improve their standard of living is not a new concept. For years, music, drama and print have been used to educate people about important issues (Singhal et al., 2004). New family planning methods and HIV/AIDS prevention practices and oral rehydration techniques have been effectively adopted by a number of societies and cultures through entertainment media traditions (Singhal and Rogers 1999 & 2003;

Rogers 2004). However, E-E's influence is not confined to health; it has the potential to address a variety of social issues and among them, is the burgeoning problem of conflict in the Global African Diaspora. Entertainment-education campaign involves the implementation of strategies which are captivating, entertaining and perceived as compatible with the culture and the values of the target audience are identified. Over the years, E-E programs have been propagated using television and radio soap operas, songs and creative posters and comic books. One particularly entertaining medium within the African Diaspora whose potential has yet to be fully tapped is traditional storytelling.

Successful storytelling forms, such as the memory box in Uganda which teaches HIV/AIDS prevention lessons, indicate that storytelling as a form of Entertainment-Education can be used for disseminating pro-social messages. These pro-social messages are defined as any communication message that depicts activities which are perceived as socially desirable or preferable at the cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels (Rushton 1982). In conflict-ridden societies, for instance, it can be inferred that one of the main desires of the populace is stability and peace which would eventually stimulate economic growth and subsequently, improve the standard of life. Therefore, the diffusion of pro-social messages which focus on peace, stability, brotherhood and reconciliation will be perceived as socially desirable and acceptable for addressing volatile situations found in conflicts. One group in Global Africa, the Global Jamaican Diaspora is struggling to manage the increasing dilemmas birthed by conflict. However, the Global Jamaican Diaspora has also developed a strong oral history tradition. Folktales, Dialect Poetry and Dub poetry and are the three main forms of oral narrative tradition within the Jamaican Global Diaspora, a group which comprises natives who currently reside in the island of

Jamaica and natives and their descendants who have migrated to other countries. Over the years, these forms of entertainment which serve as humorous lessons in morality have been gaining recognition and respect for their contribution to social change in the history of the Jamaican Diaspora (Tanna 1984; Habekost 1993; Carr 1998). Therefore, due to the cultural compatibility of these forms of oral tradition, it stands to reason that folktales, dialect poetry and dub poetry possess immense potential to effectively introduce innovative conflict resolution strategies in the Jamaican Global Diaspora through strategically developed E-E programs.

Purpose of Study

This paper will examine the development of Folktales, Dialect Poetry and Dub Poetry within the Global Jamaican Diaspora and highlight the main qualities of each form of storytelling which make it ideal for increasing awareness, generating a better attitude towards and encouraging greater adoption of peaceful conflict resolution strategies.

ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT IN THE GLOBAL JAMAICAN DIASPORA

The October 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion of former slaves resulted in the deaths of hundreds of ex-slaves and led to the establishment of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), the island's first native police force two years later. However, in its 1997 Corporate Strategy the JCF acknowledged that since its formation, a culture of suppression and a para-military approach to crime-solving has characterized the Force (<http://www.jamaicapolice.org.jm/>, retrieved January 13, 2004). This culture of suppression during conflict is evident in other areas of the Jamaican society and was

clearly manifested in 1980, in which some 800 persons were killed during the period leading up to elections that year. At the heart of the conflict was tense political rivalry.

Since that time, Jamaica's management of conflict at both the interpersonal and institutional levels has been difficult. There is still a polarization in the political atmosphere, charged by established garrison communities. Garrison communities are areas in which there is an overwhelming majority support for one political party. So strong is this support and so pervasive is the hatred for opposing parties, that residents in rival neighboring communities will resort to fatal violence, such as gun battles to prove superiority over opponents. In addition, the murder rate in the island of 2.6 million has been a cause of concern. The Constabulary Communication Network of the JCF reported that in 2002, 1045 persons were murdered with a slight decrease in 2003 of 971 murders. Among the main crimes were abuse and shootings.

However, conflict is not confined to the island of Jamaica. In 2003, British police authorities released a report, the "Strategic assessment of the impact of Caribbean gun crime on the UK - June 2002" which revealed that there had been an increase in the amount of gang violence and shootings in the United Kingdom, due to Caribbean migrants, particularly Jamaicans. According to a news story from 'The Independent' on November 3, 2003, the report stated that "Caribbean groups as a whole are more willing to resort to the use of firearms than any other established crime group in the UK" (<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/>, Retrieved from the Global Newsbank, March 9, 2004). With regards to the United States in recent years, the government of Jamaica has seen an increase in the number of Jamaicans being deported from the U.S. An article in the Daily Gleaner, 28 March 2003, reported that since 2000, the U.S. has deported some

1500 Jamaicans due mostly to convictions on dangerous crimes including murder (<http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20030528/business/business4.html>, retrieved, March 9, 2004). These figures raise concerns over the possible inability of members of the Global Jamaican Diaspora to resolve differences without resorting to inflicting harm on others. In light of these observations, it is becoming increasingly imperative that strategies be designed and implemented to encourage members of the Global Jamaican Diaspora to engage in peaceful conflict resolution strategies, so that the cycle of violence can end.

STORYTELLING AS AN ENTERTAINMENT-EDUCATION SOLUTION

Storytelling's History

“Storytelling has been called the oldest and the newest of the arts” (Greene 1996, 1). The etymology of the word, story, describes its roots as being Anglo-French (*estorie*) and related to Greek (*historia*); both these roots mean ‘learning by inquiry, history’ (Brotchie 2002, 100). According to Brotchie (2002, p. 100), “this etymology reveals a basic function of storytelling: to learn, and not by rote, but by engaging the audience so that questions are raised in the audience’s mind and subsequently answered by them through the telling of the story”. It is an opportunity for these members to learn and grow and expand their horizons (Brotchie 2002).

Storytelling has deep roots in all cultures and countries. In Africa, the first written record of storytelling was the Westcar Papyrus (recorded between 2000 and 1300 B.C.E.). Since the Westcar Papyrus, additional methods of recording stories and unique characters have been introduced to Global Africa. Most of the transferal of the stories can be

attributed to bards or storytellers. Greene (1996) explains that traveling storytellers in particular, “went from village to village with tales, anecdotes, and fables and became the collector of an oral, narrative tradition” (p. 4).

Maximizing Storytelling’s Qualities for E-E Conflict Resolution Strategies

Over the years, storytelling’s functions have both evolved and increased, improving its ability to address social challenges such as conflict. Storytelling can be a means of escape or diversion (Brotchie 2002) and thereby, aid in mitigating conflict. In the mass media, for instance, comedies and musicals have been very successful diversionary tools, because of their humorous quality. In U.S. history, during the depression and World War II, musicals emerged as the most popular form of entertainment, as they depicted a fantastic and sentimental world which always has happy endings (Brotchie 2002).

Additionally, stories provide a state of catharsis – a release of emotional tension (Brotchie 2002). Therefore, stories aid in channeling the release of intense emotions away from individuals and instead, through an imagined situation. The example of an elementary school in Missouri using stories to teach children how to manage their frustrations, while respecting others provides clarification of how channeling can be achieved. For instance, one parable was of Miss Mousie’s search “for a playmate who would cool down, listen and not shout if he or she did not like the way she played” (Curriculum Review 1999, 8). Miss Mousie found three turtles who agreed to talk out disagreements before losing their tempers (Curriculum Review 1999). After an emotional experience, Brotchie (2002) adds, storytelling stimulates personal growth, in which the

audience processes the information and moves on with life. Brotchie (2002) acknowledges critics who do not support the concept that a vicarious experience of an event will have the same impact as an actual event; nevertheless, she insists that “the potential is there for personal transformation through story” (Brotchie 2002, 101).

Strengthening traditional cultural values and providing listeners with different perspectives are additional roles of storytelling (Brotchie 2002). This strong sense of identity leads to the development of self and collective efficacy among audiences (Singhal and Rogers 2003). The repeated stories of Nanny of the Maroons, the legendary female leader of the Jamaican Maroons and Jamaica’s only national heroine, aided in building the confidence of the Maroons in Jamaica. The growth of their collective efficacy has resulted in the Maroons retaining their sovereignty and unity in Jamaica, despite years of changing political climates in the external Jamaican community (Tanna 1984); the Maroons are also known for their almost non-existent crime rate. Storytelling further provides audiences with varied perceptions of the world, its social systems and its peoples. According to Brotchie (2002), this ability may initiate social and personal reform. Singhal and Rogers (1999) acknowledge that E-E attempts to influence both social change at the individual and group levels. In addressing conflict, personal and societal reform, based on a better understanding of the perspectives of others, may bridge divides created by ethnic, religious and racial tensions within the Diaspora.

Storytelling is also perennial and universal. In emphasizing the universality of storytelling, Pillay (2003) states that tales, their morals and pro-social messages, can be translated into various dialects and languages. Greene (1996) underscores this point by noting that American children between the ages of 9 and 11 years love the West Indian

tales of Anancy. The children are able to relate to and accept this trickster, even though Anancy is a native of the African continent, brought over by enslaved Africans. This cross-cultural quality of storytelling augurs well for the potential sharing of successful and compatible conflict resolutions strategies within the Global Jamaican Diaspora.

There are additional advantageous characteristics of storytelling. Storytelling is a communal activity and over the years, researchers have endorsed the use of community-centered, culturally compatible activities in E-E strategies. E-E programs utilizing indigenous cultural activities to promote conflict resolution strategies will increase the rate of sustainability of the pro-social messages, as according to Pillay (2003), the messages will be perceived as neither alien nor intrusive. The diffusion of conflict resolution pro-social messages, will find an ally in storytelling which is communal by nature and provides “a way for individuals to cope with group and interpersonal tensions, feelings of anger and loss and questions of purpose and meaning in a culturally approved manner” (Pillay 2003, 109). Storytelling is also very cost-effective and easily portable (Pillay 2003). Within the Global Jamaican Diaspora which often faces limited financial resources, this characteristic increases storytelling’s functionality (Pillay 2003).

Storytelling is also a non-threatening E-E tool (Pillay 2003) and this must be a quality maximized in conflict resolution campaigns. Storytelling has assisted children to verbalize repressed emotions and experience some degree of emotional catharsis (Gardner 1971; Scorzelli and Gold 1999); “children tend to fantasize, and as they become engrossed in the story they momentarily suspend the conscious state, accessing the unconscious or repressed plane” (Pillay 2003, 111). Storytelling techniques possess no anxiety-provoking material and allows the child to become engaged in the procedure at a

comfortable pace (Rhue and Lynn 1993). Stories are also effective in engaging defensive and resistant individuals in group sessions (Pillay 2003).

THEORETIC BASES FOR THE USE OF STORYTELLING IN E-E

Jung's Theory of the Collective Unconscious

The use of storytelling as an entertainment-education tool for addressing conflict is grounded in a variety of theoretical concepts. First of all, in Jung's theory of the Collective Unconscious, the collective unconscious is regarded as a gathering place that "has contents and modes of behavior that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals" (Jung 1969, 4). The contents of the collective unconscious are called archetypes or myths or fairytales which eventually become manifested in the conscious (Jung 1969). Singhal and Rogers (1999) suggest that in an attempt to find the meaning of life, humans "construct tales that model and ritualize their experiences" (p. 64). Stories derived from myths in particular, were believed to have the potential to provide clarity about life because they affect both the conscious and the unconscious (Singhal and Rogers 1999) levels of the psyche. Therefore, it can be inferred that by encouraging individuals to author stories about experiences of conflict in their lives, they will be able to find greater meaning for their lives. Jung (1969) also maintained that mythical stories preserve history which is passed down from generation to generation, mostly orally. Hence, oral traditions will improve the compatibility of pro-social conflict resolution strategies with the target audience's past. These archetypes are also viewed as imperishable, constantly requiring new interpretations (Jung 1969). The diverse, perennial repertoire of Anancy stories is evidence of this.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Bandura's (1977) social learning theory posits that much learning takes place by observing the actions of others. Bandura (1995) also maintains though, that social learning is dependent on perceived self-efficacy or an audience's perception of its ability to control existing circumstances which affect their lives. Therefore, "modeling influences must...be designed to build self-efficacy as well as convey knowledge and rules of behavior" (Bandura 1995, 81). Bandura (1977) defines modeling as the manner in which an individual matches the actions of another. In South Africa, individuals modeled conflict resolution strategies by banging pots, showing disapproval of domestic violence after watching the action on a TV soap opera series (Singhal and Rogers 1999).

Observational learning takes place through four cognitive stages: attention, retention, production and motivation. *Attention* – the audience attends to and perceives accurately the model and behavior; *Retention* – the audience retains knowledge of modeled activities and this is done more easily if the behavior is recalled repeatedly and if the model's behavior is coded in verbal symbols (Bandura 1977), such as those in oral traditions; *Production* – "a viewer converts retained symbols into behavioral action by initiation, monitoring, and refinement on the basis of feedback received from actual performance of the modeled behavior" (Singhal and Rogers 1999, 66); *Motivation* – the audience vicariously experiences the rewards and punishments for the behaviors adopted.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Rogers (2004) defined diffusion as "the process by which (1) an innovation (2) is communicated through certain channels (3) over time (4) among the members of a social

system”(p. 11). Diffusion is also defined as a type of social change when new ideas are adopted or rejected resulting in the emergence of certain circumstances (Rogers 2004). One of the main principles of the diffusion theory is the perceived attributes of innovations (the new ideas being communicated). Rogers (2004), contends that the rate of adoption of an idea depends on the innovation’s *relative advantage* (the degree to which it is perceived as better than the previous idea), the innovation’s *compatibility* (the degree to which the innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, past experiences and needs of potential adopters), its *complexity* (the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand or use), its *trialability* (the degree to which an idea may be experimented with on a limited basis) and its *observability* (the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others). Diffusion of innovations also maintains that the most persuasive communication channel is interpersonal communication, especially if persons are of similar socioeconomic status. To place this into context, implementers using folktales, dub poetry and dialect poetry to diffuse conflict resolution messages must examine the relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, observability and trialability of the forms of storytelling and their messages. Credible sources will also increase the impact of the message and the rate of adoption.

Social Marketing Theory

Social marketing defined by Kotler (1975) is “the design, implementation, and control of programs seeking to increase the acceptability of a social idea or practice in a target group(s)” (as cited in Solomon 1989, 87). E-E programs focusing on conflict resolution messages should maximize the main elements of social marketing - audience

segmentation, formative research, the positioning or packaging of the product, the price of the product and the control of the communication channels, especially in the implementation of projects.

STORY-TELLING IN THE GLOBAL JAMAICAN DIASPORA

Folktales as an Entertainment-Education tool for Conflict Resolution Messages

Folktales, due mostly to their historical element are effective Entertainment-Education tools. The very definition of a folktale, a story passed down orally through generations usually of anonymous authorship which contains legendary elements (Agnes 1999), incorporates theoretical support for the use of this form of storytelling in E-E strategies which diffuse conflict resolution messages. As Jung (1969) asserts, folktales are expressions of archetypes, contents of the collective unconscious which change into the conscious according to tradition. Following Jung's (1969) reasoning therefore, the more popular forms of folktales within the Global Jamaican Diaspora, the Anancy stories, are universal due to their emergence from the collective unconscious; therefore, the stories will possess an innate link and in this case, reach members of the Global Jamaican Diaspora resulting in an increase in the cultural compatibility of the folktale and its messages of conflict resolution.

The potential use of the Anancy (the trickster) stories for spreading messages of conflict resolution within the Jamaican Diaspora is a strategy which can be explored. According to Tanna (1984) Jamaican performers reinforce the idea of the use of Anancy stories for entertainment and educational purposes to illustrate unacceptable behavior. Tanna (1984) quotes late actor Ranny Williams, who describes the Jamaican perspective

of Anancy as regarding him “either as stupid, as a funny person, or they regard him as a bad type. So...the few people you may meet who tell you this nonsense about Anancy sets a bad example for people, they’re talking nonsense” (p. 80).

Anancy stories, utilize humor (a diversionary tool) by focusing on the trickster’s efforts to outwit others and get out of difficult situations (possible areas for the insertion of messages for resolving conflict). As Greene (1996) notes, the trickster’s function is “to keep Order from taking itself too seriously” (p. 52). Folktale performers can be heard saying, “Im have a lot of tactics in him” and “Bredda Anansi is a man dat im is very smart, an im neva get in no trouble, because him use him brains” (Tanna 79). These references indicate the compatibility of the Anancy stories for encouraging people to come up with creative strategies for resolving differences. Dance (2002) highlights the fact that the African folk characters were presented as being victorious over stronger elements; in effect, by juxtaposing conflict as an enemy to harmony, with the enemies of Anancy, social change communicators can illustrate that in the same manner the little spider defeated the bigger threat and received prizes, so too disputes can resolved and rewards received. Conversely, illustrating Anancy’s often lack of respect for other characters and the negative consequences of his behavior, can allow E-E implementers to present the consequences of conflict – broken relationships and strife. The stories of ‘Nan, Hana and Reece’ and ‘Whitebelly Meks Brer Nansi Kill im Mada’ (Tanna 1984) depict Anancy’s greed and disrespect and the hurt created by his actions. At the same time, the portrayal of positive characters, such as the protective Sista Goat, provides an example for modeling. Additionally, storytelling is relatively easy and there is already a propensity for persons within the Diaspora to tell stories, not just Anancy stories; therefore, the

folktale's use as a pro-social tool will be generally accepted, due to its low degree of complexity. To demonstrate the relative advantage of adopting the pro-social behaviors, conflict resolution strategies can utilize the endings of folktales which generally illustrate the story's main lessons and provide a greater understanding of the meaning of life.

Apart from their compatibility with the past of the targeted audience, folktales can easily capture the attention of their audience. "They begin simply, come to the point and end swiftly and conclusively. They are full of action, and the action is carried forward by characters. There are no unnecessary words, but only the right ones, to convey the beauty, the mood, the atmosphere of the tale" (Greene 1996, 54). This quality increases the possibility of social learning and the modeling of conflict resolution strategies. Studies have shown that "in countries where a rich history of oral tradition still persists, folktales with moral messages are an integral part of people's informal education" (Singhal and Brown 1999, 264). Folktales are attention-grabbing. With the simple words, "Once upon a time" and especially "Crick-crack, Crick-crack", the storyteller immediately secures the attention of the audience in the Jamaican Diaspora. This attention is retained throughout the presentation with colorful descriptions of characters and their exploits, humor, dancing and singing, elements of a creative folktale session. Tanna (1984) in her documentation of Jamaican folktales noted that in the most effective storytelling sessions, the teller used gestures, such as the weaving of spider's web for Anancy stories and the changing of voices for different characters. As soon as attention is secured, through repeated phrases, words, and interaction with the audience, verbal symbols of appropriate behavior during situations of conflict are retained. The repetitious use of verbal symbols increases the observability of the manifestation of messages in the actions of individuals

and characters. Therefore, the audience is able to identify behaviors which should be modeled as they result in reward, not punishment.

However, implementers must find ways to motivate modeling of the behaviors apart from through a vicarious experience; opportunities must be presented to encourage adoption. The communal quality of storytelling and its ability to stimulate interpersonal communication promotes the observability of the modeling of the lessons on conflict resolution. Also, as Tanna (1984) points out, one storytelling session generally leads to another, as individuals are encouraged to share their own stories. Based on this aspect, folktales will succeed in generating interpersonal communication, the most persuasive channel of communication. Barton and Booth (1990) maintain that the “the schemes of tricksters, the lore of nations past, can all serve as settings for children’s own development – family situations, societal difficulties, supernatural beliefs, natural phenomena” (Barton and Booth 1990, 70).

Dialect Poetry as an Entertainment-Education tool for Conflict Resolution Messages

The Webster’s New World College Dictionary (Agnes 1999, 397) defines dialect as “a form or variety of a spoken language, including the standard form, peculiar to a region, community, social group, occupational group, etc.” and although it includes the standard form of language spoken by the region, community etc., it differs from it “in matters of pronunciation syntax, etc.” The Jamaican dialect has been a form of expression which has still not been widely accepted or respected within the Global Diaspora. The Jamaican who has been largely responsible for the growth in pride and use of Jamaica’s dialect is the Honorable Louise Bennett-Coverley, also referred to as ‘Miss Lou’ by

Jamaicans. In the early 1900s, Bennett's use of the dialect in Jamaican advertisements on the radio and in the Jamaican Pantomime was received with some amount of reservation from various quarters of the Jamaican society. Some critics believed that the use of the dialect in these media created a stereotype of the people and the language (Herdeck 1979). However, in 1965, Bennett's performance at the Commonwealth Festival of the Arts was positively reviewed as having the uncanny ability to grasp a Jamaican experience, which, while being typically Jamaican, can be understood across cultures (Herdeck 1979). The controversy is still present, but the work of dialect performers and the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) is increasing the popularity of this form of literature.

Dialect poetry is another profound tool for the dissemination of prosocial messages. According to Chamberlin (1993), there is an increase in the call for the greater use of dialect in both spoken and written expressions. This support for dialect, along with the pervasiveness of the African oral tradition (Habekost 1993) within the Global Jamaican Diaspora, presents the genre as an excellent social learning tool for addressing conflict. Chamberlin (1993) notes that Jamaican writers, such as Philip Sherlock and Claude McKay, have been incorporating dialect into their work for years. Through the work of Louise Bennett the use of dialect in poetry became a growing fashion. As a result, dialect poetry is familiar with members of the Global Jamaican Diaspora; it stems from their past and therefore, increases the effectiveness of the incorporation of messages of resolution. The dialect is also a repository of archetypes which are identifiable throughout the Diaspora. Although folklore characters, such as Anancy are mentioned, there is much use of proverbs, such as "rain a fall, river dah flood, but wata scarce an dutty tuff" (everything in the environment is fine, but there are financial difficulties).

Dialect poetry as a social learning tool is also based on its attention-grabbing ability. According to Mordecai and Mordecai (2001) “Jamaicans pour body and spirit into their language, utilizing facial expression, gesture, tone and pitch, and nonverbal ‘noises’ that convey both mood and meaning” (p. 72). The Jamaican dialect poetry also supports retention, as the repetition of verbal symbols is an innate characteristic of the literary form. In Bennett’s poem “Dutty Tuff”, the first verse is repeated at the end for emphasis; also, within the poem, she repeats five times, the phrase “gahn up” (gone up, increased), indicating the increase in prices for basic commodities (Burnett 1986, 33). Dialect poetry possesses the potential to increase the efficacy of the audience through the use of characters and event specific poems. By providing characters and situations, the audience is engaged in the production and motivation processes. Bennett constantly uses the names of various individuals throughout her poetry - “Susie, grab yu frying pan”, “What a greatness eeh, Mas Joe!”, “Jane say de dole is not too bad” (Burnett 1986).

However, Bennett’s most recognizable character is her wise Auntie Roachie. The use of Auntie Roachie can be seen as the implementation of the diffusion theory’s principle on the use of opinion leader in social change campaigns. Auntie Roachie is a character which can be maximized in addressing conflict resolution, as over the years Bennett has placed authority on this character in her poetry and stories by introducing her as “My Auntie Roachie say...”. Event specific dialect poems also possess the potential for increasing self and collective efficacy, Bennett’s poem “Independence” which was written at the historical milestone of Jamaica’s independence from Britain in 1962 provides a good example. The poem engendered a sense of national identity among Jamaicans – “independence is we nature, born and bred in all we do” (Burnett 1986, 36).

One particular type of dialect poetry which is very suited for disseminating conflict resolution messages in dialect poetry is the ‘cuss poem’. Habekost (1993) notes that the Caribbean, North America and Britain have a tradition of conversational features which are highly competitive in nature as individuals try to demonstrate their language skills. “This verbal dueling, called “playing the dozens,” “sounding” or “woofing” in the United States, or “rhyming”, “cussin” and “taunting” in the English-speaking Caribbean, involves a rapid exchange of insults....which is sometimes patterned in rhymes” (Habekost 1993, 139). Within the ‘cuss poem’, social change communicators have the opportunity to grab the attention, encourage retention of messages and promote observation, trial, and the modeling of acceptable behaviors which resolve differences. Due to the presence of this nature of ‘cussing’ within the Jamaican Diaspora, the use of the poem is already compatible with the audience’s past. Louise Bennett has employed this verbal technique in her work, as is evident in one of her most popular poems “Cuss-Cuss”, where two characters (women) are quarrelling or ‘tracing’.

Character #1:	“Gwan gal yuh fava teggereg, Ah wey yuh gwine goh do Yuh an yuh boogooyagga fren Dem tink me fraid o’ yuh?”	[teggereg – rabble, look horrible] [what are you going to do?] [low-grade friends]
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Character#2:	Goh wey, yuh fava heng-pon nail, Is me yuh want fe trace? Me is jus de one fi teck me han An leggo pon yuh face.”	[heng-pon nail – bedraggled] [trace – criticize] [...take my hand] [leggo- let go]
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(Bennett 1966, as quoted in Habekost 1993, 140)

The ‘cuss poem’ is a potential area for highlighting the emotions generated during tension, the potential of emotional catharsis and the demonstration of rewards for resolving conflicts. Further, the poem encourages interpersonal communication,

encouraging parties to voice their points of disagreement. This verbal approach of presenting interests and concerns can subtly eliminate the option of physical conflict.

Dub Poetry as an Entertainment-Education tool for Conflict Resolution Messages

In 1979, Jamaican poet, Oku Onuora defined the dub poem as being characterized by an inherent reggae rhythm to the extent in which if the poem is said without musical accompaniment, the audience should still easily detect the reggae beat (Habekost 1993). Carr (1998) provides additional characteristics of dub poetry by noting that the genre “is heir to a range of African and Jamaican communal forms of storytelling and history-making, preaching and political oratory, body performance, verbal dexterity, ‘signifying’ (ritual insult games) and ‘testifying’ or public witness” (p. 10). Dub is an interfusion of musical instruments, human sounds and African and European rhythms and melodies (Maysles 2002). The work of dub poets such as Jamaica’s Mutabaruka, Michael Smith and Oku Onuora and England’s Linton Kwesi Johnson, Benjamin Zephaniah and Jean Binta Breeze and Canada’s, Lillian Allen, Clifton Joseph, Ishaka and Ahdri Zhina Mandiela is a reflection of the resonating impact on the African Global Diaspora.

Dub poetry is an artistic expression of Jamaica’s dialect and emerged out of the reggae music subculture of the 1970s. The literary form was a type of social commentary, which addressed in particular, the actions of the government. Dub poetry became a radically artistic vehicle for the underprivileged extending from Jamaica into the international arena. In fact, Habekost (1993) observed that in the 1970s many white persons from the western hemisphere embraced dub poetry with its political messages and general appeal, as dub was perceived as easier to accept than the Rastafarian reggae.

Dub poetry is ideal for use as an entertainment-education tool for disseminating messages on reconciliation, because of its characteristics as well as theoretical support. Based on the Jung's theory (1969), dub poetry, due to its emergence out of a deep African history (Carr 1998) has elements of a traditional art form which has been changed and reinterpreted over the years, thus increasing its universality as a tool which will be compatible across the Global Jamaican Diaspora. Since strategies for conflict resolution can be cross-cultural, the fact that dub poets incorporate elements of myths, fairytales, nursery rhymes, riddles, songs, proverbs, folktales, games and even biblical language into their social commentary (Habekost 1993), allows audiences to relate to the messages and performances. In Michael Smith's poem, 'Mi cyan believe it', Smith refers to the little blue boy and his horn, Jamaican ring games such as 'bapsikaisico pinda shell', 'room for rent apply within, when I run out, you run in' and the Jamaican proverb 'waan good, nose haffi run' (Habekost 1993). In light of this fact, the dub poem can be used as a social change tool, because its degree of compatibility is high, in that it is consistent with the values and traditions of members of the Global Jamaican Diaspora.

The dub poem encourages social learning. Dub poets in the 1970s were regarded as emerging role models as their lyrics were having the same powerful impact as previous reggae artistes and their rhythms were fresh (Habekost 1993). Based on the past and present perceptions of dub poets, it can be inferred that these individuals could be perceived as opinion leaders or credible sources in the diffusion of pro-social messages. To enhance the positioning of the dub poem and its messages within the Diaspora, implementers must be aware of the poem's musical versatility which makes the expression unrestricted and decreases the complexity of the messages (Habekost 1993).

“You can dub een a South African riddim, you can dub een a kumina riddim, you can dub een a nyabinghi riddim, you can dub een a jazz riddim, you can dub een a funk riddim...” (Onuora 1986, as quoted in Habekost 1993). Dub poetry has a history of critiquing, even the situation of conflict within Jamaica. This critiquing is modeled in Smith’s poem, in which he addresses the impact of political violence, especially on children in the ghetto:

“One little bwouy come blow im horn (*bwouy – boy*)
an me look pon im wid scorn
an me realize how me five bwouy-picni (*Picni – children*)
was a victim of de trick
dem call partisan politricks” (Habekost 1993, 125)

Habekost (1993) reasons that the poet’s use of the little boy blowing his horn signifies a man standing with a gun. Smith laments on the situation and then refers random violence:

“When yu tek a stock
dem a lick wi dung flat
teet start fly
an big man start cry” (Habekost 1993, 125)

This tradition of critiquing also implies a sense of social responsibility. As a communal activity, dub poetry involves, as well as reaches out to the community (Carr 1998). Lillian Allen, Jamaican-Canadian dub poet maintains that “we take our poetry and our conviction into the community” (Allen as quoted in Carr 1998, 7). By performing before large audiences, poets can challenge individuals, stimulate interpersonal communication and collective efficacy.

Dub poetry is attention grabbing. Certain verses, words and conversational exchanges are highlighted through exaggerated vocal expressions. Again, in Smith’s poem, he wails and sobs like a woman while reciting, “an me ban me belly an me bawl”. One of the key elements of social learning is the conversion of these symbols into behavior. In promoting messages of conflict resolution, the conversion or social change

signifies success. Dub poetry, like general storytelling, stimulates an emotional catharsis among the audience, reminds them of their own experiences and for those unfamiliar with the situation, provides them with an opportunity to view another world in the Jamaican Diaspora and to comment and to possibly change that world. Dub poetry also strengthens retention, as words emphasizing the main theme are repeated. Smith's poem frequently repeats the main clause – 'mi cyan believe it, me seh mi cyan believe it'; in so doing, the poet encourages the retention of the message and reflection on the main dilemmas.

Dub poetry not only highlights existing challenges, but also possible solutions, and therefore provides a means through which collective and individual efficacy can be developed especially in tense situations. Dub poets generally appeal for change whether subtly or directly at the end of their discourse. As Smith did at the end of his poem, he asked the audience "an you blind yuh eye to it?" (Habekost 1993, 127). Epilogues at the end of the poems are a potential motivational area for providing audiences with the tools needed to resolve conflicts and increase self and collective efficacy. Additionally, E-E strategies which use main characters within the poems, as Mutabaruka's poem 'Johnny, Drughead' did, audience members can experience vicariously the rewards of resolution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforementioned research, the following recommendations for maximizing Folktales, Dialect Poetry and Dub poetry for the diffusion of pro-social conflict resolution messages within the Global Jamaican Diaspora will be presented. The suggested projects must be grounded in the social marketing theory, where the audience

is segmented, formative research is conducted, the messages are attractively positioned and packaged, and the communication channels, the forms of storytelling are monitored:

- ✓ Local, regional and international storytelling competitions which feature the three different genres promoting pro-social conflict resolution strategies. Rewards will be given to outstanding writers and performers.
- ✓ Story hours on local radio and television stations
- ✓ Comic strips in local newspapers (reinforces the verbal medium)
- ✓ Comic books for school children (reinforces the verbal medium)
- ✓ Workshops for teachers on teaching folktales, dialect poetry and dub poetry
- ✓ Workshops for students on writing styles for each form of storytelling
- ✓ Establishment of Peace Days throughout the Diaspora

All these activities ensure that the E-E campaigns focusing on conflict resolution are multi-channeled and able to stimulate powerful media effects.

CONCLUSION

Conflict is a burgeoning challenge within the Global Jamaican Diaspora which appears to be spiraling out of control. The Diaspora has a rich oral history tradition in three main forms of storytelling – Folktales, Dialect Poetry and Dub Poetry. These forms of storytelling, stimulate social change, are based in the cultural past of the members of the Diaspora and through their previous functions will increase the diffusion of pro-social conflict resolution strategies. It must be acknowledged that additional exploration of these forms of storytelling is needed, especially so that the unintended effects of their use can be avoided.

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