UNDERSTANDING THE TEACHER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF JAMAICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

by

Andrew B. Campbell

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
Ontario Institute for the Studies in Education
University of Toronto

Copyright by Andrew Bruce Campbell (2014)
ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING THE TEACHER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF JAMAICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

Doctor of Philosophy (2014)
Andrew B. Campbell
Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
University of Toronto

Teacher performance evaluation continues to be one of the most contentious processes within the formal education system. Through its dual purposes of development (formative evaluation) and accountability (summative evaluation), many teachers still express fear and anxiety of the process, while others are welcoming of a standard process of evaluation and the ability to receive feedback on their work. Before 2004 there was no official system of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica. Many principals had created their own system of evaluation and others had used bits and pieces of programs they got from textbooks printed either in the United Kingdom or North America. Many teachers and school administrators had no idea as a new teacher, what teacher evaluation was used for, who should do it and how it should be done. In 2004 the Ministry of Education introduced a standard teacher performance evaluation system to be used in all public schools. This study investigates teachers’ perceptions of and experience with the Jamaican Ministry of Education, teacher performance evaluation process established in 2004 to determine the effectiveness of the system. This qualitative research engaged fifteen (15) trained teachers from across the island of Jamaica teaching in various public schools. The data was gathered through face-to-face interviews. Analysis of the data revealed that teachers see the value in teacher performance evaluation. They understand that teacher performance evaluation can provide both opportunities for individual teacher growth and development, and at the same
time holding teachers accountable. The present teacher performance evaluation system is being performance with high levels of variation in schools. The cycle/steps are being adjusted, modified, simplified, ignored, and changed by individual school administrators based on their understanding of the process, dedication to the process, ability to conduct teacher performance, training received and time constraints. Teachers revealed the ways in which the present teacher performance evaluation system have obstructed or supported their work, the problems they have with the present system and the implications for teacher growth and development. The present Jamaican teacher performance evaluation system does have the potential to impact teacher development, support teachers’ work, holding teachers accountable, and influencing student achievement and school-wide effectiveness, if carried out properly by administrators who are equipped with the necessary skills, if teachers are educated on the purpose of teacher performance evaluation and how it can support their work and if done in an environment that trust, collegiality and collaboration.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Professor Jim Ryan of the OISE/UT for being one of the most supportive professors/teachers I have had. His continued guidance, support and very timely responses were above my expectations. I would also like to say a special thanks to my committee, Dr. Joseph Flessa and Dr. Blair Mascall, for the excellence they demonstrated during the process.

I wish to thanks all the teachers who participated in this research. I am indeed indebted to you for your time and patience during this process. Your enthusiasm and support was notable and your willingness to give more and more of your time and support was indeed an unselfish act.

I wish to also say a very special thanks to a number of persons who offered their help and insights in very significant and tangible ways during this process - Keisha Hunt, Kaschka Watson, Stephanie Tuters, Stacey Richards, Stafford Henry and Otis Burnett. I am forever grateful for all the help and assistance you all gave me. You have proven to me that there are indeed unselfish people in this world who want as much for others as they want for themselves.

To my inner circle of friends and my mother, your prayers, encouragement and support have been the undercurrent throughout this process. You all knew me way before this journey and I am constantly reminded that I am surrounded by good people and I have reaped far more than I have sowed in these relationships and friendships.

Finally, I wish to give thanks to God for taking me so far and allowing this little boy from Waterford to realize more than a terminal degree – but a dream! If it had not been for the Lord on my side, tell me where would I be?
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Appendices</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter One: Background</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction: My Personal Experience with Teacher Performance Evaluation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Teacher Performance Evaluation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situating the Scope of the Study</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Two: Historical Context</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The History of Jamaica</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jamaican Education System: From 1816 to Present</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The History of Teacher Performance Evaluation in Jamaica</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ministry of Education 2004 Teacher Performance Evaluation Programme: An Overview</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Lens – Bahamas, Jamaica, the Wider Caribbean and Canada</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Three: Review of Related Literature

Introduction ........................................................................................................43

Part One: Understanding of Teacher Performance Evaluation .........................43

   What is Teacher Performance Evaluation ....................................................47

   The Purpose of Teacher Performance Evaluation .......................................50

   Formative and Summative Evaluation .......................................................57

   The Relationship between Formative and Summative Evaluation ...............61

Part Two: The Teacher Performance Summative Evaluation Process ...............65

   Planning ........................................................................................................66

   Monitoring ...................................................................................................70

   Observation ..................................................................................................72

   Feedback .......................................................................................................70

Part Three: Problems and Issues - Policy, Practice and Perceptions ...............75

Part Four: Teacher Performance Evaluation – Supporting Teachers Work ........77

   Professional development ............................................................................78

   Student achievement ....................................................................................83

   Conclusion .................................................................................................85

Chapter Four: Methodology

   The Design ...............................................................................................90

   Recruitment ...............................................................................................93

   The Sample ...............................................................................................95

   Instrumentation .........................................................................................102

   Data Collection & Analysis .......................................................................103

   Ethical Issues ...........................................................................................106
Chapter Five: Findings: Teachers’ Understanding of Teacher Performance Evaluation

Experience with Teacher Performance Evaluation before 2004.................................109
Present Practice with Teacher Performance Evaluation .................................110
Purpose of Teacher Performance Evaluation .........................................................117
Emotions about Teacher Performance Evaluation .................................................122
Summary ............................................................................................................124

Chapter Six: Findings: Teachers’ Perception of the present Teacher Performance Evaluation Practices

The Evaluation Cycle: Planning .................................................................126
The Evaluation Cycle: Monitoring ...............................................................129
The Evaluation Cycle: Observation .................................................................134
The Evaluation Cycle: Feedback .................................................................136
The Evaluation Team: Selection, Practice, Expertise and Training ..................141
Summary ............................................................................................................148

Chapter Seven: Findings: Problems and Issues in Jamaican Teacher Performance Evaluation

Problems and Issues in Teacher Performance Evaluation .................................150
Summary ............................................................................................................166

Chapter Eight: Findings: Teacher Performance Evaluation Supporting Teachers’ Work

Teacher Performance Evaluation and Accountability .............................................168
Professional Development & Personal Growth .................................................173
Summary ............................................................................................................179

Chapter Nine: Discussion, Conclusions and Considerations

Introduction ........................................................................................................181
How do teachers understand teacher performance evaluation? ......................184
How is teacher performance evaluation carried out in Jamaican schools from a teacher’s perspective? .......................................................................................................................... 190

What problems or issues do Jamaican teachers see in the current teacher performance evaluation? ........................................................................................................ 201

How does the current teacher performance evaluation support their work? ........208

Suggested Areas for Change and Development...................................................... 213

Scope ...................................................................................................................... 216

Considerations for Future Research ................................................................. 217

Summary ............................................................................................................... 218

Conclusion.............................................................................................................. 219

References ........................................................................................................... 221
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Comparison of major historical and political concepts between Canada and Jamaica</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Education in Jamaica versus Education in Ontario</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Summary of School Profiles</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Divisions of the National Teacher Performance Evaluation Document</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Breakdown of the Performance Evaluation and Review (PER) Instrument</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Teacher Performance Evaluation Stages</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Summary of Purposes of Teacher Performance Evaluation by Researchers</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Participants’ Demographic Summary</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Comparative Summary of Teacher Performance Evaluation elements experienced by participants</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Summary of types of Monitoring received during the school year</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Map of Jamaica showing division of parishes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Comparison of the Formative and Summative Purposes of Evaluation</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A Traditional Teacher Evaluation Cycle</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Participant Demographic Summary</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Interview Schedule</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Informed Consent Letter</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Information Email, Facebook Note and LinkedIn Message</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter one: Background

Introduction: My Personal Experience with Teacher Performance Evaluation

The first school I taught at was in St. Catherine, Jamaica in 1992. I never received an official observation or evaluation. Evaluations were not written nor were they done officially. Of course it was “understood” if you were a good teacher or not. There were no standardized forms and set of criteria used, but they knew and you knew also. This may seem unprofessional and antiquated to many teachers, but to a large number of teachers, this was the reality back then. I had no idea, as a new teacher, what teacher evaluations were used for, who should do it and how it should be done. No one taught me. It was not a part of the curriculum in college in my days and no lecturer mentioned it in their topics. There were no workshops, presentations, or seminars held to educate the teachers on this concept. Today not much has changed. A large percentage of teachers have the same experience I had sixteen (16) years ago.

In 2000, when I started to teach in the Bahamas, I noticed that teacher evaluation was seen as a serious process and an area that sparked a lot of discussion, at times controversial, that led to the constant re-examining and designing of the teacher evaluation instrument and the processes. From my personal experience, I came to realize how important such a document was to my professional and personal development as a teacher and a person. I have seen the results of teacher evaluation, in many cases used to make decisions such as teacher placement, staff development, teacher promotion, transfer, retention, and dismissal. Teachers have used feedback to influence their choice of methodology, choice of instructional materials, physical class layout, infusion of innovative teaching strategies, and even creation of their own career path, registering
in courses or participation in remediation workshop to strengthen methodology and content delivery. All in all the process can lead to a better teacher.

Being away from Jamaica for the last thirteen (13) years, it seems that a lot has changed. Currently there is a more systematic and procedural system of teacher performance evaluation being used by many schools today. My talks with a number of trained teachers from varied parts of the islands and types of schools have indicated that many schools are using the Ministry of Education 2004 teacher performance evaluation process, and administrators are now doing the evaluation act. How much, what type, and in what format it is being done, will be the main focus of this study. As stated by Mrs. Marguerite Bowie, then Permanent Secretary (2005) “It further empowers principals and boards, in their management of teachers, to use evaluation results to make informed decisions about employment, promotion, retention, and separation and to prescribe remedies for the deficient performance that fails to add value to the system.” (Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2004).

The Problem

There have indeed been many controversial arguments being presented since the introduction of the Jamaica teacher performance evaluation policy, none of which are new to the global debate on teacher performance evaluation. “Teacher appraisal is receiving attention world-wide as governments become aware of the need to examine educational provision critically to ensure that it is relevant and appropriate to the needs of the youth.” (Monyati, Steyn and Kamper, 2006)
In one newspaper article one student was quoted as saying, “Some teachers are lackadaisical and have an I-don’t-care attitude . . . if they put things in place to evaluate teachers, they will do better.” (Francis, 2004). In the same article many teachers were upset with comments made by a ministry official, who adapted a “gotcha” mentality that so many have been trying to avoid. In that article, Dorrett Campbell, Director of Communications within the ministry of education noted:

If a senior teacher was found not to be performing, she would be demoted and would have to relinquish the position. In addition the principal would be required to report to the school board, a teacher who was not performing. The teacher would be given an initial warning, if there was no improvement; there would be a second warning, and a third warning again, if there was no improvement. After a third warning, the principal could dismiss the teacher. (http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20040607/lead/lead4.html)

The following quotes are taken from various articles from Jamaica’s two major newspapers- The Gleaner and Jamaica Observer, that covered the heated arguments of various stakeholders. These are just a few examples of the level of controversy and debate those teachers and other stakeholders are presently engaged in. I choose to share a few of these so that you may see the necessity of this research and the need for the teachers’ voice to be heard and their position known within this conversation.

“There are enough problems (poverty, violence etc.) plaguing the system, to be courting problems of bureaucratic making. This nonsense needs to stop. Formal performance evaluation of teachers, principals, and vice-principals must begin without delay, and in all schools.” (Kitson-Walters, 2004)

“The government is currently introducing the teacher performance evaluation programme it has pushed for several years, and which has been criticised in the past by teachers who disagreed with the suggestion that performance be tagged to pay.” (Hart, 2005)

“Members of our profession across the island who are not performing up to standard and we must call them to account. By their negligence, they are carrying down all of us, giving our profession a ‘bad name’ and our students ‘short-change’.” (Teacher should be graded too, May 2004)
“The current schemes seems to do nothing but provide a system for checking how good particular teachers are at their jobs, setting out criteria for benchmarking the quality of education delivery using a rating system. (Douglas, 2005)

“Members of the association are generally wary of the new system and its implications for job promotion.” (Douglas, 2005)

“It should not have as its major focus ensures to punish the practitioners, because a system that is focused on punishment will never achieve the quality improvement that is required.” (JTA reiterates position on pay by performance, June 2003)

Communication with a few teachers and the discourse on the new policy indicates that the uses and importance of a teacher evaluation process is not fully understood, connected or transferred to the teachers’ everyday school life. It would be beneficial to scrutinize the present teacher evaluation process and practices from an “outsider” vantage point and assess the teachers’ reaction to their present evaluation process. I assumed the role of outsider since I have been away from the Jamaican classroom for years, but I have kept very intimate connections through my colleagues and friends, who are mostly Jamaican teachers. I also teach for the University of the West Indies Open Campus and most of my students are currently active Jamaican teachers. I follow the news and update as it relates to education in Jamaica. Years after the introduction of a formal system of teacher performance evaluations by the Ministry of Education in 2004, it would be beneficial to have a clear picture of the teacher’s present reactions and perceptions about what has been done since its implementation, whether they feel it has helped or hindered their development as professionals.

“The effects of the current system are high levels of teacher stress and frustration, negative relations between teachers and their principals, and other unintended consequences which are not conducive to either improving or maintaining good teaching practice.” (Excellence for all, 2006). Many re-occurring mistakes that occurred in some Jamaican schools years ago because there was no systematic and standardized way of specifying what should be done, who
should be doing it and how quality was to be established. In examining the present system, reading the many news reports, commentaries, talking with teachers and administrators and examining the issues from global perspectives I summarized a few of the general concerns of stakeholders about teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica at present as understood through my personal lens:

(a) There are a lack of creative and motivational ways to ensure teacher involvement in general school life.

(b) Many teachers are inadequately prepared for instruction, resulting in poor delivery.

(c) Administrators visit classes only when problems exist, thus allowing the past informal and the now present teacher performance evaluation system to be seen as a “rod of correction” and therefore enhancing the anxiety and fear factor.

(d) New teachers are not properly inducted in the program and most receive no feedback or formative evaluation to foster growth and mastery.

(e) Teachers are left to make major classroom instructional decisions without any school-wide initiated collaboration.

(f) Many teachers do not have a basic understanding and clarity in definition of what is quality teaching as established by the Ministry of Education.

(g) There is no consistent approach to teacher performance evaluations;

(h) The primary purpose of evaluation is not communicated to supporting teachers’ growth and development.

It can be said that teachers are robbed of the opportunity to grow in mastery when they are not engaged in the process of teacher performance evaluations, where feedback fosters professional and personal growth and development. Stronge and Tucker (2003) content that:
Unfortunately, teacher evaluation too frequently has been viewed not as a vehicle for growth and improvement, but rather as a formality – a superficial function that has lost its meaning. When school principals and other evaluators approach evaluation as a mechanical exercise and teachers view it as an event that must be endured, evaluation becomes little more than a time-consuming charade. (p. 6)

At the end of the school year teachers have so many questions, concerns and dissatisfied comments about their teacher performance evaluation. Many others have nothing to say, as they feel what they have to say will be powerless in any case and will not change their evaluation in any way. Some are critical of the procedures and the personnel who are charged with the task of “grading” or “judging” the quality of their work and inevitably their personal worth to the school organization. Others are not sure what to think so they don’t understand the aim of the process. For many teachers, this process is seen as another unnecessary piece of ministry required paperwork that will be filled out and filed and never be used in any instrumental way for development and change. Harris (1986) stated the following:

Teacher evaluation in current practice is full of problem and struggles for change. The importance of formal education to society and of teaching to schooling, gives urgency to improvements in teacher evaluation as demands for instructional accountability grow. Potentially teacher evaluation can be more than it is; more than a perfunctory checking to avoid crisis. Parents, administrators, students and school officials all have the right to know that teaching is effective and improving. Teachers more than any other needs to know about their own teaching...Because teacher evaluation is complex, threatening, and not well understood, much of current practices involves "games" rather than systematic professional development....Evaluation as a process for guiding the decisions for improving teaching requires concepts that focus on teaching, knowing, diagnosing, collaboration, and development of people. (p.12)

A number of researchers in this field agree that the teacher performance evaluation process can indeed become monotonous, useless and pretentious. Duckett (1983) shares in this way:
Too often, however, the full value of such information is not realized. With some notable expectations, an evaluation report is filed after a conference with a teacher, to be examined only when a new evaluation report is due or when a management decisions must be made. For more value can be derived by using the information for diagnostic and prescriptive purposes. (p.39)

Teacher performance evaluations on a whole can be a very delicate step for many school systems around the world. When someone feels like they are being judged or their work and worth as a professional and a member of a system is being placed in the balance, often times there is an immediate defence that is aroused. That is why good teacher performance evaluation systems must be structured, fair, high in communication and collaboration and defensible.

There are many working definitions of teacher performance evaluation. Nolan (2004) defines it as:

An organizational function designed to make comprehensive judgments concerning teacher performance and competency for the purpose of personnel decisions such as tenure and continuing employment. Improvement in the teachers’ performance may result from the process and may be a desired outcome, but the process as a whole is aimed primarily at making a summative judgment about the quality of the teacher’s performance in carrying out instructional duties and other responsibilities.” (Page 26)

How is the teacher evaluation done? What is the system or general understanding concerning observation, feedback and reporting? How has it influenced teacher performance? How has it impacted student achievement? Have schools made any links between teacher performance evaluation and student achievement? Has teacher evaluation contributed to school-wide development? How do teachers view the process? What are some of the important and determining features of these documents and the process employed by these schools? These are among the many questions that should be answered if one is going to see teacher evaluation within our educational systems as a process with substance, authenticity, reliability, and one which is applicable to our average teacher.
Teachers should be educated on the role, purpose and importance of evaluation as a part of their regular professional life. “A teacher evaluation system should give teachers useful feedback on classroom needs, the opportunity to learn new teaching techniques, and counsel from principals and other teachers on how to make changes in their classrooms.” (Boyd 1989). Teachers and other stakeholders have been calling for a better system, a system with results and a system that actually directs the teachers growth and development and one that will automatically then enrich the teaching-learning-process and in so doing contribute to school-wide effectiveness and student achievement. These sentiments and cry of change is not new in the educational arenas, Stiggins (1998) shares:

Recommendations for improvements in the overall evaluation system were far more extensive. Repeatedly, teachers suggested more frequent formal and informal observations, greater use of peer observation and self-evaluation, and more effective preparation and training of evaluators. In addition, they called for better observational strategies, more effective communication of results, with emphasis on specific suggestions for improvement, increased skills among evaluators, and general management of evaluation. Teachers also noted that they needed high-quality in-service training to improve their skills. (p.17)

The Ministry of Education in Jamaica took serious steps to implement a new teacher performance evaluation process in 2004 to ensure effective teacher instructional supervision, accountability and growth in the public education system.

The programme to evaluate the performance of teachers is to continue this week with a pilot project in a few schools throughout the island. The pilot project, which was landed in April, will be conducted in 32 schools before it ends in July…The purpose of evaluation is to devise accountability systems. The programme will formally evaluate teachers and the assessment will determine whether their performance meets the standards required by their posts. It is expected to be conducted annually. (Jamaican Gleaner, June 7, 2004)

The study will seek to determine how the teacher performance evaluation process is being conducted, the extent of completion of the process and the people who are responsible for
completing the process each term. This research seeks to give a voice to the regular classroom teacher and capture his/her own perception about a process that will impact and influence his/her growth and development as a teacher. There is also not much if any reading or literature on the topic from a Jamaican perspective to my knowledge, and I believe that this study will get an authentic Jamaican outlook and open up the practices in Jamaica to the wider educational community.

In June 2011 I attended the University of the West Indies Biennial Conference in Jamaica, where I shared my research interest in teacher evaluation. The presentation sparked a heated debate and contributions, reflections and insights were shared with me by some of the nation’s leading researchers and school agents. It was evident that many educators present were curious, highly critical, disenchanted, and some even oblivious to the current process of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica. There was clear mistrust of some of the process and others who saw the process as being contentious. Others also saw the process as having a clear tug–o-war between policy and practice. It was clear that the concerns of teacher evaluation/teacher appraisal/teacher performance evaluation were still fresh and needed research and investigation. The topic needed the kind of rigorous research that would someday inform policy and educational reform. I walked away from the conference confirming the need for research in the area and eager to forge ahead.

**Understanding Teacher Performance Evaluation**

It is important that teachers engage in self-evaluation and reflection on their practice; that they take the time to examine themselves and measure their development and contribution to the education system and to those in their care. Danielson and McGreal (2000) state:
Some newly developed evaluation systems require that teachers conduct a self-assessment, establish professional growth goals, and participate in a study group with colleagues to pursue a topic of common interest. (Such a requirement engages the teachers in self-assessment, reflection on practice, self-directed inquiry, collaboration and professional conversation.) Then, in addition to classroom observations, teachers are asked to submit evidence of their professional skill, in the form of planning documents, samples of student work (with a commentary), and other evidence of their professionalism (such as parent communication, contributions to the school and district, etc.) Assembling and selecting these documents require deep reflection on practice; describing them to an administrator engages a teacher in professional conversation. (pgs. 30-31)

It is also equally important that they have others, who are equally knowledgeable about teaching and their work, but not as close to the action, provide feedback, through observation and monitoring. On this point, Danielson and McGreal (2000) state:

> Teachers must have the benefit of evaluators who can make consistent judgments; a teacher’s performance appraisal should not depend on the identity of the evaluator. The goal, therefore, is to produce trained assessors who can make reliable judgments based on evidence. (p.74)

This allows teachers to grow and develop and to look at their practice through a different lens so that they become the beneficiary of this process, school-wide effectiveness and students’ achievement also becoming equal beneficiaries. Peterson and Peterson (2006) offer support for this notion:

> Principal feedback and evaluation affect student learning, school-wide programs of curriculum and instruction, and the well-being of teachers… the most effective role for the principal in teacher evaluation involves careful coordination with individual teacher initiative, the best objective data about teacher performance available, and focused participation of peer teachers. It is important for principals to understand the dynamics and problems of educational sociology in order to be effective in their roles in teacher evaluation (pgs. 66-67)

This external lens would be the teacher performance evaluation process. Teacher performance evaluation is therefore an important and necessary tool in the dynamic of formal school. Stake (1998) states:
Management of teaching cannot be effective without some assessment of teaching competence. The best and the worst we have is informal teacher evaluation, administrator-driven, sometimes capricious and sometimes more aimed at avoiding embarrassment than optimizing service to students. Administrative evaluation most often is unconscious review, that of a principal or department head intuitively valuing a teacher, but surfacing into formality when something goes wrong, when promotion or an increment of pay depends on it, or when “teacher of the year” is in the offing.

Teacher performance evaluation is one of the most common policies in formal education and one that is considered a controversial process. Effective teacher performance evaluation is one that depends on sound policy implementation followed up by an effective process which strengthens the nature of the practice as a whole. This is guided by an understanding of the two major categorical types of teacher performance evaluation - namely formative and summative and knowing the many purposes of teacher performance evaluation. Therefore the coming together of policy and process is needed to accomplish the desired outcomes of growth and change.

The purpose and the value of teacher performance evaluation are so much more than this, but sadly this is not a far off presentation of what has been happening in many schools. My past experiences of teacher performance evaluations in Jamaica were very negative. I taught in three separate schools and was never given a formal formative or summative evaluation. Many teachers do not know the importance of teacher evaluations and the personal and professional benefits one can achieve from being properly evaluated. I believe that so many teachers have been denied the opportunity to grow in mastery because of the lack of evaluation or the lack of efficient evaluation process that would enhance personal development and professional growth. Duke and Stiggins (1990) share:

Research on growth-oriented teacher evaluation, though very limited at present, suggests that competent, experienced teachers may benefit from evaluation that is not driven by a set of basic performance standards and the desire for accountability, but which instead
provides opportunities for individual awareness building, goal setting, and professional
development. Certain characteristics of teacher and growth facilitators as well as
evaluation systems and school systems have been found to be associated with high
quality teacher evaluations for the purpose of professional growth (p.131)

Teachers should be educated on the role, purpose and importance of evaluation as a part
of their regular professional life. My initial ideas as a young teacher are supported by years of
research by Stronge (1997) as he affirms:

A conceptually sound and properly implemented evaluation system for teachers is a vital
component of an effective school. Regardless of how well an educational program may
be designed, the program is only effective as the people who implement and support it.
Despite the fact that proper assessment and evaluation of teachers is fundamental to
successful schools and schooling, this part of the personnel process is too frequently
neglected. (p.1)

Teacher evaluation is an area in which I have a high interest. Many teachers don’t trust
their evaluation system. This is not just seen in the Jamaican context, but is noted in many other
research works. Often times many of the re-occurring mistakes that are being made in some
Jamaican schools is because there is no systematic and standardized way of saying what is done,
who is doing it and how well it is being done. They doubt the methods of evaluation, they doubt
the training and credibility of the evaluators and they doubt the extent to which it may offer them
help and foster growth. Teachers are robbed of the opportunity to grow as a professional if not
offered such an opportunity to engage in the process of teacher performance evaluation where
feedback can foster professional and personal growth and development. Many principals in some
schools cannot objectively or readily tell you the strengths and weaknesses of their individual
teachers, or how many teachers needs professional development in specific areas. Peterson and
Peterson (2006) agree:

Teachers do not believe that current principal-dominated evaluation works well. They
doubt that current methods of classroom observation and checklist reports accurately
characterize their work. Teachers are concerned about the principal’s lack of expertise
(e.g. secondary subject areas not in the principal’s background) (Kauchak et al., 1985).
They may resent the greater status the principal has in the school system (Lortie, 1975). Teachers view evaluation with other reservations (Scriven, 1981). Nobody wants to look bad at doing something they care very much about. (p.68)

The process of teacher performance evaluation over the years has seen many barriers and much resistance. Seldin (2006) states that, “no one likes being evaluated.” (p.182). Millman (1981) also agrees and shares, “Being evaluated can be frightening. We have the queasy feeling that we will be judged and found wanting. Even close scrutiny of oneself can be unpleasant.” (p.12). This may be so but teacher evaluation has been acknowledged by the broader field of educational administration as a necessary policy and process in schools to ensure accountability, individual teacher growth and development and school-wide effectiveness. Zakrajsek (2006) shares, “Teaching demands continual growth, and there are many sources of data to consider when importing teaching performance: self-evaluation, student ratings, peer evaluation, and classroom assessment techniques are just a few.” (p.166)

As a teacher for over eighteen years and being evaluated for more than ten of those years, I am always excited when it is end of year or term evaluation. I know that this is a time to reflect on my teaching style, be encouraged for my efforts, and also benefit from any observation and recommendations that will be made by my evaluators. I am aware of the far reaching professional and personal benefits of such a process. It is however sad that many teachers do not get to benefit; they do not know the process and if they do, they do not know its real usefulness. Nolan and Hoover (2004):

Districts that abandon teacher evaluation or fail to take it seriously shirk their moral commitment to ensure that no child is harmed by the instruction received. Consequently, teacher evaluation is a legalistic and bureaucratic process. It must be carefully articulated to ensure that the rights of the state and the children are protected and the teacher’s right to due process is not violated. (p.28)
Research Questions

1. How do teachers understand teacher performance evaluation?
2. How is teacher performance evaluation carried out in Jamaican schools from a teacher’s perspective?
3. What problems or issues do Jamaican teachers see in the current teacher performance evaluation?
4. How does the current teacher performance evaluation support their work?

Significance of the Study

The importance of teacher performance evaluation cannot be overemphasized. Monyatsi, Steyn and Kamper (2006) state:

The literature on teacher appraisal shows that it can be very complex, involving a number of factors than can either impede or support teacher effectiveness. . . Teacher appraisal is receiving attention worldwide as governments become more aware of the need to examine educational provision critically to ensure that it is relevant and appropriate to the needs of the youth. (p. 427)

This research will be able to fill a gap in the research literature that presently exists in the Caribbean and in particular, Jamaica, on teacher performance evaluation as a whole, but also in particular, provide much needed feedback on the 2004 induction of a standardized performance evaluation policy. It will also aim to inform future policy and it is my desire to make the findings available to major stakeholders within the education system, in particular the Ministry of Education (MOE), the School of Education of the University of the West Indies, The Jamaican Teaching Council (JTC), National Education Inspectorate (NEI), the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JTBE) and the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA).
The study is designed to have an impact on policy development and to assist in understanding the impact of policy on actual practice. It is hoped that it will also have a role in any form of review or reform that the present process will undergo. For the first time Jamaica has a standard, centralized structure for teacher performance evaluation. The study will therefore be able to shed much light on how the process is being carried out in various parts of the country. The study will also inform policy makers, and in particular, the Ministry of Education on the level of understanding and mastery held by the principals themselves as the main evaluators. This will allow a level of explicit comparison in the research project since policy as a practice has considerable variations. A study of this nature can also influence training and development in the area of leadership.

This study is different from any other study in this specific field. Firstly, I will be investigating a new process that is very specific to the Jamaican education context. From my knowledge, there are no other studies presently available that captures Jamaican teachers’ own lived experience in regards to the teacher performance evaluation. There are many research studies available on teacher performance evaluation. Many of these research studies focused on the introduction of policy to guide school effectiveness and quality or addressing reform of various aspects. There is not much drawing on the experiences of actual front-line participants - classroom teachers, and none that speaks directly to the Jamaican context.

The Jamaican context also provides for an interesting investigation into this topic. Presently there are a number of new initiatives being introduced within the education system. Two of these (the Jamaican Teaching Council and the National Education Inspectorate) focus directly on teacher quality, effectiveness and supervision. Hamilton (2012) writes:
The National Education Inspectorate (NEI), in its latest assessment of performance standards at the country’s public schools, has indicated that the state of affairs at many primary and secondary schools leaves much to be desired. While not publishing its own summary of the situation, the NEI last weekend posted on the education ministry’s website, the individual reports on more than 130 schools inspected last year. According to the NEI, each inspection focused on eight key indicators of school effectiveness; leadership and management, teaching and learning, students’ performance in regional and national examinations, students’ progress, personal and social development, human and material resources, safety and security and well-being. 


The two new bodies underlining purpose is in supporting and serving the teaching profession in achieving and maintaining excellence. With these bodies many issues and concerns are being uncovered which include inspection and grading of schools, licensing of teachers, master teacher designation, mandatory performance standards and pay by performance, all of which has an automatic impact of the teacher performance evaluation process.

Situating the Scope of the Study

Teacher performance evaluation is a major topic in many educational spheres at present. “While no evaluation system will ever be perfect, this should not keep us from moving forward to develop one that actually serves the teaching profession. As teachers, we know the importance of giving our students meaningful feedback on their work -- not as judgment, but as opportunity for improvement. This same attitude should be driving the development of teacher evaluation systems.” (Hunsberger, 2011). In this study and in particular the review of related literature I have used the experiences from the world debate as a means of gathering a deep understanding and appreciation for the topic. This was necessary as there is not much literature or research on
the topic in Jamaica. This was necessary in order to lay a foundation for understanding some of the most conflicting and common issues that are related to teacher performance evaluation.

There are indeed many arguments that could have been included in the discussion. Arguments relating to merit pay, promotion based on performance, evaluation being tied to results of standardized tests and assessments. Including all of these would have been too much for one study and the study would have lost the initial intended purposes in the attempt to include everything. The list is indeed exhaustive and the study had to be grounded in the Jamaican context.

The study however is focused on Jamaica and therefore the themes that I have chosen to discuss are based on the nature of the research and where I would like to direct the discussion. The themes I choose provide a good basic understanding of the situation in Jamaica in regards to teacher performance evaluation and allow for foundational knowledge to inform future research on the topic. Figure 1 identifies those particular themes that were selected and that will also be examined in the literature. Before the start of the data collection process the research questions were used to guide some of the main themes. As the researcher and investigator, these initial themes were based on the questions I hoped would have been answered in the data collection.

However being an exploratory study in nature I could not ignore emerging themes where respondents share common concerns that I had not originally intended on addressing in the original purpose. For example, student achievement and the factors affecting the use of student achievement scores become a major emerging theme from the interviews. Another theme that emerged had to do with the many factors that teachers classified as issues and concerns in teacher performance evaluation, based on their own education, experience and present
environment. I allowed the perspective of the respondents – Jamaican trained teachers to take such precedence and included any such theme in my discussion and analysis of data.

**Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1 represents the four (4) research questions. This provides a visual reference for understanding the teacher performance evaluation process as perceived by the teachers. The diagram also offers a visual of the undercurrent/guiding elements that drives each aspect of the research and engages the elements of the conceptual framework for the research.

“The traditional approach to teacher evaluation is no longer adequate.” (Danielson and McGreal, 2000, p.7) Having a clear understanding of the process enables appreciation, fosters effective practice and eliminates judgment or fear. “People go through motions, they follow the procedures, and there is a piece of paper to put in the human resources file at the end of the year. The ritual is essentially meaningless, with little good resulting from it. We believe educators can design better systems.” (Danielson and McGreal, 2000, p.7)

The first section focuses on teacher’s understanding of teacher performance evaluation. In this section, teacher performance evaluation is examined as an educational policy, a process to be carried out in all public K - 12 schools, and the actual practice as experience by teachers in their individual schools. Various definitions are introduced. A comparison of the nature of teacher performance evaluation before and after 2004 underlies the introduction of teacher performance evaluation as an official policy and present practice.

The second section looks at teacher performance evaluation through a cycle of four steps: planning, monitoring, observation and feedback. Each step in the cycle is intentional and
significant to the effective practice of teacher performance evaluation as directed by the Ministry of Education. This cycle is supported through effective communication between evaluator and evaluatee in a collaborative environment.

In the third section problems and issues are viewed through individual teachers’ lenses. Their perception of the teacher performance evaluation process is influenced by their experience, education and environment. These factors also impact what they view and understand as actual problems and issues. How they relate to factors that are considered as problems and issues again depends on their individual experience, education and present environment.

In the final section, teacher performance evaluation is examined for ways in which it either supports or obstructs teachers’ work. The two main areas of teacher growth and student achievement are the main focus. However, these areas closely linked with general ideas of school improvement, school-wide effectiveness and the explicit and implicit impact that teacher performance evaluation can have within schools. The discussion surrounds the ways in which teacher performance evaluation can help in individual teacher’s personal growth and professional development. It also examines the general use of student achievement to be included as a part of the teacher performance evaluation process.
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Understanding Teacher Performance Evaluation

Teachers’ perspective on the teacher Performance Evaluation Process

Problems and Issues in Teacher Performance Evaluation

Supporting Teachers’ work

What is Teacher Performance Evaluation?

The Nature of Teacher Performance Evaluation before 2004

The Present Practice of Teacher Performance Evaluation

Policy, Process and Practice

Planning

Monitoring

Observation

Feedback

Collaboration and Communication

Perception

Policy & Practice

Experience, Education, and Environment

Teacher Growth and Development & School Improvement

Student Achievement

Growth, Development and Change

What is Teacher Performance Evaluation?

The Nature of Teacher Performance Evaluation before 2004

The Present Practice of Teacher Performance Evaluation

Policy, Process and Practice

Planning

Monitoring

Observation

Feedback

Collaboration and Communication

Perception

Policy & Practice

Experience, Education, and Environment

Teacher Growth and Development & School Improvement

Student Achievement

Growth, Development and Change
Summary

In this chapter I started with my own experience of teacher performance evaluation back in Jamaica from 1992 to 2000. In contrast to my later experiences elsewhere, I was not evaluated. It examines the problem of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica. This chapter also gives examples of the level of controversy and debate from both teachers and other stakeholders who are presently engaged in the act of teacher performance in Jamaica. It examines the impact of an ineffective teacher performance evaluation system on teacher everyday activity and formal schooling. The chapter examines the impact on teacher personal growth and professional development. The chapter also looked at the levels of experiences and exposure that teachers have had and how that can be effective in teacher growth and development or the lack of it can impact on teacher growth and development. I also shared some of my reflections while talking to Jamaican teachers while attending The University of the West Indies Bi-annual Conference in June 2011 and how many of the educators and other stakeholders within the university system were highly critical of the present teacher evaluation system and described a lot of it as contentious and tug of war.

This chapter also looked at a review of related literature in terms of understanding teacher performance evaluation and discusses ideas such as the need for teacher evaluation, the effectiveness of principal’s feedback, the benefits of an evaluation system and the purpose and value of having a growth oriented and an accountable teacher performance evaluation system. In this chapter also four research questions were proposed. The significance of the study was also highlighted and the aim to inform future policy in Jamaica in particular with government leading Ministry of Education departments and executive agencies and universities and teacher
preparation programmes. It is hoped that a study of this nature would inform policy and stakeholders.

The chapter situated the study in the specific Jamaican context and being that there is not much research out there on teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica the purpose of this study will also be encourage to provide more literature on the topic of teacher performance evaluation in of course an expletory way. The chapter closed with a conceptual framework of examining teacher performance evaluation, gaining an understanding of the teacher’s perception of the process, examined the problems and issues faced by teachers, and looking at how teacher performance evaluation either obstructs or support teachers work within the context of formal schooling.
Chapter two: Historical Context

This chapter will offer historical and background information about Jamaica, the Jamaican educational system, the history of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica and a look at the structure of the present teacher evaluation system. It will provide a general history of Jamaica, especially highlighting the roots of the native people, early settlers from the Spanish and British Empires, the impact of slavery, our independence in 1962 and our continued association with the British system as a Commonwealth country. Jamaican education is heavily influenced by the British educational system. It also has similarities to a few Canadian schools. The chapter will also examine the history of teacher performance evaluation and provides a description of the present structure of teacher performance evaluation. The chapter concludes by situating the value added to this research having the opportunity to view it through a comparative lens since my degree will be from Canada, the research was conducted in Jamaica and the origin of my interest in this topic came from my experiences as a teacher in the Bahamas.

The history of Jamaica

Jamaica is the third largest island in the Caribbean Sea. It is 146 miles long and 51 miles wide. It is located 898 km south-east of Miami, 145 km south of Cuba and 161 km south-west of Haiti. The island has an area of 11,420 square km. “Although the small, mountainous, tropical island is set in the Caribbean Sea, most of its link is with Britain, the United States, and Canada rather than with the other colonial or formerly dependent territories of Middle America.” (Clarke, 1975)

Jamaica is divided into 14 parishes (see figure 2). Around half of Jamaica’s population lives in rural areas and 1 million people live in the capital and major commercial centre,
Kingston, situated on the southeast coast. The rest of the urban population is located in the other major population centres, Montego Bay and Mandeville, and in other towns around the island. The population now stands at 2.7 million people. Over 90% of the population is of African descent and the rest are of East Indian, Chinese, European and other origins. Most of the population is Christian, although other beliefs are represented in Jamaica. The official language is English, although most people speak an English based on ‘creole patois’. (Transitional Report – Case Study: Jamaica, 2003)

Before the arrival of Columbus in 1492, Jamaica was inhabited by indigenous people called Arawaks. These people lived in simple communities based on fishing and hunting and small scale cultivation. When the Spanish came these communities were decimated through plunder, new diseases and migration.

In 1655, the British captured the island from the Spanish Crown. Jamaica became one of the “Jewels in the English Crown” because of its many sugar plantations that brought prosperity to their English owners. Large numbers of Africans were brought to Jamaica as slaves through the Triangular Trade to work on these sugar plantations. Sugar was king and England ruled. The plantations dominated every aspect of life. Some slaves ran away from these plantations and lived in the mountain as maroons. Maroons are descendants from Africans who fought against slavery and escaped to the mountains and formed their own free communities. Jamaica had one of the highest instances of slave uprising than any other Caribbean island, until slavery was abolish in 1834. It should be noted that many maroons were deported from Jamaica to Nova Scotia in the late 1700s.

In 1962 Jamaica became independent from England, following their rejection by referendum of membership in the Federation of the West Indies. Today, Jamaica’s government
is organized on the Westminster model with a Governor General as a representative of the British Crown. General Elections are usually held every five years. The parliament is comprised of a House of Representatives with 63 members and Senate of 21 members. The government is headed by the Prime Minister who is assisted by Cabinet Ministers. Although elections have been marred by violence, the results have always been accepted, and the two main political institutions (Peoples’ National Party and Jamaica Labour Party) have maintained their legitimacy.

Today the remnants of our Spanish, British and Slave history can be seen in food, clothes, sports, music, and dances. Many important places, towns and rivers still hold names given by the Spanish, British and early slave ancestors. Our education system in particular is heavily shaped by the British system.

*Figure 2: Map of Jamaica showing division of parishes*

![Map of Jamaica](http://www.ephotopix.com/jamaica_parish_map.html)
Table 1 offers a comparison of some of the major historical, educational and school policy concepts between Ontario and Jamaica. This is necessary so that the research can be situated in context and provides Canadian readers with points of references in which to view the Jamaican context. Ontario and Jamaica had early indigenous people. Ontario and Jamaica both experienced periods of colonialism under the British. Ontario saw many run-away slaves coming from the United States while Jamaica saw slaves being brought from African directly to the island during the Triangular Slave Trade. Both countries gained their independence from Great Britain and today both are members of the Commonwealth of Nations, where the queen is head of state. Canada's population is more than 10 times that of Jamaica. Both Canada and Jamaica have very similar history, political climate, and governance. Because of this it is not hard for readers in Canada to capture the educational climate that may exist in Jamaica and understand policy issues that may guide the process of teacher performance evaluation.
### Table 1

*Comparison of major historical and political concepts between Canada and Jamaica.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPTS</th>
<th>CANADA</th>
<th>JAMAICA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Indigenous people</td>
<td>First Nations</td>
<td>Arawak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early settlers</td>
<td>Europeans (Spanish, British, Germans, French, Americans)</td>
<td>Europeans (Spanish, British)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Run-away slaves, Loyalist</td>
<td>African Slaves, indentured labourers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>1867 from Great Britain</td>
<td>1962 from Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government System</td>
<td>Democratic government with elected Members of Parliament and the Queen as the Head of State</td>
<td>Democratic government with elected Members of Parliament and the Queen as the Head of State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official language (s)</td>
<td>English and French</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical division of the country</td>
<td>10 Provinces and 3 Territories</td>
<td>14 Parishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 2012</td>
<td>Estimated 34.4 million</td>
<td>Estimated 2.7 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The History of the Jamaican Education System: 1816 to Present**

The Jamaican education system has its historical past rooted in colonialism and slavery. “The development of education is rooted in slavery and in its early years, was intended to maintain and re-enforce a social structure characterised by small white elite and large black labour class. As the political landscape shifted, so too did the education system” (The Development of Education, National Report of Jamaica, 2004). The following excerpt gives an additional understanding of the historical context:
Before the Act of Emancipation went into effect in 1834 there appears to have been little in the way of a formal education system for whites and no system for educating indigenous people and slaves. White colonists who could afford it sent their sons back the “mother country” for schooling, while others hired private tutors... The curriculum in the free schools was based on that offered by similar schools in Great Britain and was intended to “offer a classical education to young gentlemen so that they would be properly fitted to take their place in society”. A few slave children received some schooling at –plantation schools established by foreign missionaries, but their education dealt mostly with religion and virtues of submission. (Jamaica - History and Background, p.1)

The education system has been shaped by historical events such as Christian missionaries’ arrival in the late 1800s, the abolition of slavery in 1834, the advent of suffrage in 1944, the establishment of the Ministry of Education in 1953 and the gaining of independence in 1962.

Once slavery was abolished in 1834, the British saw education as an important way to integrate ex-slaves in to the colonial economy and to ensure a peaceful lower class. In the years following emancipation, missionary societies developed a system of elementary education for the newly freed slaves. This system was taken over by the colonial government beginning 1860s. . . . Schooling emphasized skills that would prepare children for eventual employment as estate workers. The elementary curriculum focused on reading, writing and arithmetic with some religious training and occasional Geography and History instruction. In addition, boys were given training in agriculture and other manual arts, and girls receive lesson in the sewing and domestic science. (Jamaica – History and Background, p.1)

Jamaica’s education system is based on the British model, although there is an increasing amount of US influence on the education sector. The education system is highly centralized, mainly due to policies that seek to improve equalities in access and opportunity. The Ministry of Education, the centralized governing body, provides all levels of resources, leadership, curriculum and access. The 2004 National Educational Report states:

Education in Jamaica is administered by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture through its administrative head office and six regional offices. Prior to 1991, everything for schools were done through one central office resulting in a number of problems, chief among which was the long time spent in travelling to the office and the ability of the office to deal with issues on a timely basis. Presently, the regional offices have responsibility for such function as schools’ personnel, schools’ supervisions and
maintenance of schools. Each regional office is staffed with education officers whose main responsibility is the supervision of schools from the pre-primary to the secondary levels. (The Development of Education, National Report of Jamaica, 2004, p1).

Tables 2 and 3 again are used to offer international readers a better understanding of the Jamaican context. Of such, the educational system of Ontario is used to provide a simple comparative frame of reference. Table 2 shows a comparison of education in Jamaica versus Education in Ontario. Like in any other countries, the Jamaican education system has been through political investments, reforms and revitalization and changes in purpose, policy and practice. The system is currently served by 1016 publicly funded educational institutions, including primary, secondary, community colleges, vocational colleges, teachers colleges and universities. The system is also served by 473 privately run educational institutions. All public schools are governed by the Ministry of Education. All schools report directly to the Ministry, unlike in Ontario where there are a number of school boards.

Education through the six years of primary school is compulsory and is free in government-sponsored schools. The age of entry into primary school is six years, and children generally complete primary school at age twelve. The academic year runs from September to July (with some local variation), and the Education Regulations prescribe a minimum of 195 days of instruction in the school year. The language of instruction is English. (Jamaica – Education System Overview, p.1)

Mention must also be made of the average salary for Jamaican teachers compared to those in Ontario, where a teacher in Ontario with the same qualification, earns more than three times what their counterpart in Jamaica earns.

The Jamaican curriculum is similar to that of the developed countries, like Canada and Britain. It is described as a global curriculum with subjects identical to those of the global community.
Table 3 also shows the division of K-12 public schools in the 14 parishes. A parish in Jamaica is comparable to a province in Canada. The table will also show the total number of public K-12 schools in Jamaica, reflected by the data provided by the Ministry of Education 2010-2011 school directory. This seeks to give the readers an understanding of the size of the population that is served by trained teachers and how many people are affected by the process of teacher performance evaluation in the public school system.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jamaica</th>
<th>Ontario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Childhood Education</strong></td>
<td><strong>Early Childhood Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Day Care (Private)</td>
<td>• Day Care (Public and Private)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Basic Schools (Private)</td>
<td>• Kindergarten (Public and Private)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Kindergarten (Private)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Infant School (Public)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary and Preparatory Schools (Grades 1-6)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elementary Schools (Grades 1-8)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary Schools (public/private)</strong></td>
<td><strong>High Schools (public/private Grades 9-12)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Traditional High Schools (Grades 7–11/13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Upgraded High Schools (Grades 7–11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technical High Schools (Grades 7–11/13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agricultural/Vocational High Schools (Grades 7–11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Training</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher Training</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Teacher Training Colleges</strong></td>
<td>• Schools of Education attached to a university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>School of Education attached to a university</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Secondary Education</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post-Secondary Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Universities</td>
<td>• Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vocational/Technical/Trade Colleges</td>
<td>• Community Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community Colleges</td>
<td>• Private Career Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Business Institutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average monthly starting salary for teacher holding a first degree and teacher certification :</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average starting salary for teacher holding a first degree and teacher certification :</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• JA$ 130,000 or CA$ 1300 ( @ exchange rate JA$100.00 – CA$1)</td>
<td>• CA$3,740 or JA$374,000 ( @ exchange rate of JA$100.00 – CA$1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

*Summary of Public K-12 School Profiles*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parishes</th>
<th>Number of Schools from K – 12</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36,156</td>
<td>1,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrew</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>83,173</td>
<td>4,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Thomas</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17,555</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>15,960</td>
<td>920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>22,311</td>
<td>1,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ann</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>33,206</td>
<td>1,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trelawny</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>17,376</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38,889</td>
<td>1,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16,846</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westmoreland</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>29,853</td>
<td>1,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Elizabeth</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>32,008</td>
<td>1,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>33,569</td>
<td>1,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarendon</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>52,239</td>
<td>2,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Catherine</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>84,547</td>
<td>4,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>989</strong></td>
<td><strong>513,888</strong></td>
<td><strong>25,151</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Taken from the ministry of education 2010 – 2011 school profiles)*
The History of Teacher Performance Evaluation in Jamaica

Before 2004 there was no official system wide standardized policy or process for teacher evaluation in Jamaica. Teacher evaluation was carried out by education officers and principals. In many case principals designed their own instruments or would adopt and adjust instruments from other sources. There was a wide range of instruments measuring various aspects of teaching and learning (as well as neglecting to measure a wide range of teaching and learning process) most of which were determined by the evaluator of the day, regardless of their qualification or training in regards to teacher evaluation. This early phenomenon is described by Miller (n.d.):

While there has been quite a bit of discussion about teacher accountability and evaluation in the Caribbean not much has actually been introduced which departs from the traditional patterns related to ad hoc assessments done by education officers and project assessment teams. A probable explanation lies in the fact that external examinations play a significant role in most education systems in the region. Schools are indeed rated by parents and the general public on performance in these examinations. In this regard schools have to account to the communities they serve, and that support them, on their performance. Some countries, however, have implemented teacher evaluation programmes. These include The Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica and St Lucia. (p.24)

Through personal communications with ministry officials, I was also able to get a description of the past system. The following description of the past system comes from Ms. Coleen Clarke, who is presently head of the teacher performance programme at the Ministry of Education in the Professional Development Unit (PDU). She has been working in the system at the national level both before the 2004 teacher performance evaluation system and after its implementation. I was happy to gain access to her as a credible source. Her credibility is based on the fact that she not only works within the Ministry’s policy development but also played a
major role in the 2004 teacher performance evaluation process. The following is her summary of the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation system both historical and present day context:

There was no formal systemized performance appraisal for teachers, guidance counsellors or principals prior to 2004. Each school had the responsibility to design their own instrument and perform their own evaluation. Some were good and some were not – it was disorganised. The Ministry of Education thought it was important to put in place something formal and standardised. This was at the time when the government was looking at public sector reform. There was implementation of the performance management appraisal systems in many government ministries. The teacher performance evaluation systems itself is now lacking and is actually up for review. (C. Clarke, personal communication, June 20, 2011)

One of the first attempts to bring about a level of standardization in teacher evaluation came about in 1994 when the Ministry of Education Professional Development Unit introduced its School Based Principal and Teacher Appraisal Programme. The main purpose of this initiative was teacher evaluation focusing on developing the teacher (formative evaluation). Miller (n.d.) lists the following among the elements of the programme in 1994:

- The PDU selects between 120 – 150 schools for teacher appraisal in the particular school year, Jamaica has just under 1000 public schools.

- The Principal and a senior staff member of each school are given orientation and training through one-day workshops in the appraisal process and the use of the appraisal instrument. Manuals setting out the appraisal process and the appraisal instruments are distributed at the workshops.

- The Principal and senior staff member returns to the school and provide relay training to the staff of the school using the Appraisal Process Manual and the appraisal instruments.

- Teams of at least three teachers are formed to carry out the appraisal of the teachers. In the case of the principal, in some schools, the Chairman or a member of the School Board is included as a member of the Team.

- Team members independently conduct their appraisal over a three-month period by recourse to records, interviews and observations.

- At the end of the three-month period the team meets and by way of collaboration and
consensus agrees on a Summary Document of the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers and principal appraised.

- The Summary Document is then given to the teacher or principal appraised. A meeting then follows at which the appraisal is discussed. The principal or teacher appraised is requested to sign the Summary Document acknowledging that they have seen it and that it has been discussed with them.

- The principal or teacher appraised is then asked to develop an action plan with at least three objectives addressing either correcting weaknesses or further enhancing strengths or a combination of both.

- A Copy of the Summary Document and the action plan becomes part of the school’s record. Another copy is sent to the PDU. (p.25)

The Ministry of Education in an effort to standardise the process and ensure growth and development of individual teachers, provided school administrators with purposeful evaluative tools with its implementation of the first official teacher performance evaluation programme. The new policy was introduced in 2004.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture in its continued aim for quality assurance has developed the Teacher Performance Evaluation Programme in order to standardize the process of evaluation across schools at all levels. The Programme will provide a system and a mechanism for effective coaching and monitoring of teachers to strengthen schools and improve the performance of students. (Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2004, p.1)

Much consultation was done and feedback was given to the ministry by numerous stakeholders who would help in defining the purposes and intentions of the teacher performance evaluation policy. The purpose and aim of the process was clearly stated in the policy document in 2004.

The Ministry of Education Youth and Culture is committed to performance management to develop all members of the teaching staff in order to improve the teaching – learning process and to raise standard and achievement for all students. To do this, a performance management system will be implemented to be used at all levels of the school system. This system will set the framework for all teachers to agree and review priorities and set individual goals within the context of the school’s improvement plan and their
Teacher performance in both its formative and summative state has been used for many purposes and the rationales are as many as the purposes. In the Jamaican context, teacher performance evaluation is intended by the Ministry of Education to be one of both development and accountability.

This programme will assess each teacher’s performance in an effort to identify training needs and to assist with career development. The emphasis of the programme is development, aimed at assisting and motivating individuals to attain the maximum potential and ultimately increase efficacy of the education system. Each team leader/reviewer as a vital role to play in ensuring that the evaluation process is conducted accurately and objectively and to assist in realization of the objectives of the programme. (Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2004, p.2)

It seeks to impact the quality of the education system by providing for the development of all classroom teachers, while also holding them accountable to their roles and responsibilities. The Jamaican teacher performance evaluation policy and practices, however, has its shortcomings. Miller (n.d) shares:

While these are positive signs there are several notes of caution that are emerging from recent experiences. There can be no question that many of the goals set by policies, programmes and projects in teacher development in the 1990s are both idealist and ambitious. There are early warning signals that the time, effort and integrated approaches that are required to bring about these ambitious and fundamental shifts have been grossly underestimated. Lessons learned thus far seem to indicate that short-term measures are unlikely to bring about the desired and intended shifts in pedagogy, even where teachers enthusiastically accept the direction and goals of the reform. (p.29)
The Ministry of Education 2004 Teacher Performance Evaluation Programme: An Overview

The National Teacher Performance Evaluation Programme document was presented in 2005. The Steering Committee that was responsible for the initiation, planning, and preparation of the document comprised nine persons. The document is divided into four main sections (see table 4). The Introductory Section deals with an overview of the program and its main characteristics; this is prefaced by messages from the Hon. Maxine Henry Wilson, Minister of Education, Youth and Culture, Mrs. Marguerite Bowie, Permanent Secretary and Adelle Brown, Acting Chief Education Officer. Section I details the evaluation policy and procedures and describes the actual cycle/model. Section II describes the performance standards that the teachers will be judged by and section IV is an Appendix of the evaluation instrument and other supporting forms used in feedback, further action and reporting of incidents.

Table 4

Divisions of the National Teacher Performance Evaluation Document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Programme overview and model description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section I</td>
<td>Policy and Procedures Handbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section II</td>
<td>Performance Standards Descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument and other Forms</td>
<td>Evaluation instrument, Action plan, Incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review and Feedback Forms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The evaluation instrument itself is divided into two major parts – the main body and the supplemental comments section. The main body is divided into three parts; the observation of teaching skills, the teacher professionalism and leadership and management. Regular teachers will only be reviewed on parts one and two, while the third part will be for middle managers within the school. Table 5 shows the breakdown of each part. Performance is measured and recorded using a four-point rating scale as follows:

1 – Unsatisfactory
2 – Area of Concern
3 – Meets Expectation
4 – Exceeds Expectation

Table 5

Breakdown of the Performance Evaluation and Review (PER) Instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part One: Observation of Teaching Skills</th>
<th>Planning for Student Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching for Student Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating Classroom Environment for Student Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Two: Teacher Professionalism</td>
<td>Professional Characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inter personal Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Three: Leadership and Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The programme seeks to identify objectively teachers’ strengths and weaknesses. The process also looks to identify training needs, as the programme links evaluation with professional
development. “Teachers who are identified as needing professional training should be referred to the Professional Development Unit of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture so that suitable training activities and intervention strategies can be developed to address these needs.”

(NTPEP 2005)

The National Teacher Evaluation Performance Programme document prepared by the Ministry of Education (2005) is compact and workable at this stage of the research process. The main purpose of evaluation as listed by the document:-

- Encourage continual professional growth.
- Identify both strengths and challenges among teachers.
- Provide remedies for deficient performance that fails to contribute to productive professional and educational environment.
- Identify among teachers, those areas where good quality needs to be maintained or where improvement is desirable.
- Ensure strict system of accountability.

This was confirmed at the very beginning in the message from the Hon. Maxine Henry-Wilson, then Ministry of Education and Youth. She declared, “The programme does not aim to judge or label teachers but to help them to decide what they must do in order to improve the quality of the services they provide.” The document sets out from the very start to establish the main goal of performance evaluation that is to improve the individual. The document stresses accountability and development. As stated by Mrs. Marguerite Bowie, then Permanent Secretary (2005) “It further empowers principals and boards, in their management of teachers, to use evaluation results to make informed decisions about employment, promotion, retention, and separation and to prescribe remedies for the deficient performance that fails to add value to the system.”
The programme is characterized by transparency, democracy, confidentiality and a non-threatening environment. Transparency implies openness, communication, and accountability. Years ago this was used to hold public officials accountable and to fight corruption. One UNESCO writer says it this way, “corruption is a major drain on the effective use of resources for education and should be drastically curbed.” (UNESCO 2000, p17).

The evaluation model is a three stage process. It is described as a cycle and “after the first year, future planning should flow naturally from the previous year’s review and so the cycle begins again” (MOEY &C 2004, p 2). The teacher professional evaluation file follows the teacher to another school if they should be transferred or choose to change school. There is a planning stage at the beginning where goals are set and an action plan is determined. The next stage is the monitoring stage and this is where teachers are observed during the school year and sampling of educational resources held. It was noted that teachers were encouraged to keep “running records.” The final stage is the review and this was where the evaluation team meets with the teacher.

Table 6

*The Teacher Performance Evaluation Stages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning ( beginning of the school year)</td>
<td>Monitoring ( Throughout the school year)</td>
<td>Review ( End of the school year)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The performance evaluation is conducted by a team. This team is comprised of the principal, the head of department, and another professional chosen by the teacher. The final stage of the process includes a formal review meeting at which time, a single individual, the principal or the department head conducts the session. At this time the review is signed, a copy of the evaluation sent to the teacher, a copy to the Board Chairman for review, and a final copy to the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education.

It was duly noted that teacher professional development was paired with the evaluation process and the Professional Development Unit would work where the need for training was identified. It was noted that during the year teachers would be provided with “coaching, counselling, correction, and training as necessary.” (MOEY&C 2005). Training for persons who conduct the evaluation is also provided.

Comparative Lens – Bahamas, Jamaica, the Wider Caribbean and Canada

This study is situated within international comparative levels. It is influenced by my lived experience as an educator in Jamaica, an educator and graduate student in the Bahamas and now an educator and doctoral candidate in Ontario. I had my first experience of teacher performance evaluation and this is where my interest in teacher performance evaluation originated which led me to conduct a research paper for my master’s studies - *Teacher Evaluation in the Bahamas - The Reactions and Perception of Teachers in four Anglican Private Schools (2004)*. I moved to Ontario, Canada where I now experience teacher performance evaluation within the Toronto District School Board and at Everest College. Having these two experiences and observing teachers reactions to their own process heightened my interest in the topic. I have been teaching online for the University of the West Indies since 2006 in the area of
educational administration. I have had the opportunity to discuss explicit and peripheral issues concerning teacher performance evaluation with students from over fourteen (14) different countries within the English speaking Caribbean. These conversations have also added to the amount of perspectives I was able to gain but in a deeper sense, impacted my reflection not just as a practitioner but as a researcher.

There is much value that has been added to this study based on the fact that I am able to perform some degrees of comparative experience which influenced my work in a deeper sense. I am able to engage Jamaican teachers, my target participants to speak about their present experiences, but I am also able to have teachers from Bahamas and Ontario share with me, through daily interaction and informal conversations, their own lived experiences and perceptions about teacher performance evaluation. This allowed me to realize that though culture, resources, and educational development impact our view and issues within our space, perceptions held by Jamaican teachers are not limited to their own country, but can be situated on the global fronts.

Summary

In order to allow an international audience to understand the research it was situated in its particular Jamaican context. This included a comparison table between Jamaica and Ontario Canada. The chapter also provided a general overview of the Jamaican education system from 1816 to the present and a brief history of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica. Finally, the chapter gives a descriptive summary of the Ministry of Education 2004 Teacher Performance Evaluation Programme.
Chapter three: Review of Related Literature

Introduction

The literature review will be divided in four major sections. Part one will identify and examine teacher performance evaluation. This will include the definitions and concepts of teacher performance evaluation and views of teacher performance evaluation. It will also differentiate between the two major branches of teacher performance evaluation, namely, formative and summative evaluation and examine the many purposes of teacher performance evaluation. This will involve a number of the many traditional, current, and innovative purposes of teacher performance evaluation.

Part two will focus on the teacher performance evaluation process, examining the parts of the cycle/model. This will also include the concept of collaboration, which will be proposed as the current that runs through the complete cycle. The main elements of the cycle - planning, monitoring, observation and feedback, will be critiqued from different angles proposed by the various researchers in the field.

Part three will focus on the problems and issues in teacher performance evaluation. This will be examined through policy, practice and perceptions.

Finally, part four will focus on the concepts of professional development and student achievement. It will seek to critique ways in which evaluation in light of these concepts have aided or obstructed the work of teachers.

Part One: Understanding of Teacher Performance Evaluation

Teacher evaluation is one of the most controversial topics in education. A number of educational institutions either perform evaluations to satisfy official school record keeping practices and necessary paper work, or view the process as going through the motions. A number of teachers
and school administrators have confessed to either not seeing the benefit or purpose of evaluation or just not having the necessary knowledge and skills to perform the task of evaluation. “The appraisal of teaching performance is as old as the education profession” (Rebore, 1991). Harris (1986) aptly describes the present situation:

Because teacher evaluation is complex, threatening, and not well understood, much of current practice involves “games” rather than systematic professional evaluation. The games are nonproductive, at best, and counter-productive in some forms. To a large extent these games and other problems inherent in current practices reflect an array of concepts of evaluation that conflict with promising practices. Evaluation as judging, punishing or rewarding, and controlling are simply inconsistent with the needs of all who are involved or concerned. Evaluation is a process for guiding decisions for improving teaching requires concepts that focus on teaching, knowing, diagnosing, collaborating, and developing people. (p.30)

Sawa (1995) shares that a few issues in education have the potential to generate as much heat for educators as the evaluation of teachers:

Ineffective teacher evaluation system is more costly than effective one. Shoddy teacher evaluation programmes, because they neither improve teachers’ instructional skills nor permit the dismissal of incompetent teachers, rob children of the achievements, when well taught; they have the potential to obtain. Conventional teacher evaluation, …. often resembles a meaningless ritual. It becomes a recurring occasion to heighten anxiety and distance between the teacher and the administrator, and competition between teacher and teacher. (p.1)

Few issues in management stir up more controversy than performance appraisal.

Performance appraisal is one of the main instruments used by organizations for making administrative decisions, for example, salary administration in terms of pay raises, promotions, retentions, termination, layoffs, incentive rewards, recognition of individual performance, and identification of poor performance. Stronge (1997) writes:

Classroom observation, measurement, assessment, and evaluation are not new; they have seemingly always been integral parts of life in American schools. These processes have long been of interest to (a) educational policy makers concerned with questions about the means and ends of education; (b) researchers seeking to identify elements of effective teaching and learning; (c) programmatic efforts designed to improve schools and make them more effective; (d) teacher educators, supervisors, and others concerned with
teacher mentoring and development; (e) school boards and school administrators charged with the responsibilities of teacher (employee) evaluation and educational accountability; (p.107)

Teacher performance evaluation is also about judgments and it is for this reason why so many teachers are intimidated by such a process. Millman (1981) declares:

We make judgments all the time, judgments about ourselves and what we do and about others and what they do. And we, in turn, are being judged by others. We cannot escape evaluation. Every choice, every decision – to speak or not, to use this example or that – involves an evaluation, automatic or deliberate. In the context of teaching, the question is not whether to evaluate, but who should evaluate? For what purpose? Using what means? (p.12)

Performance appraisal (teacher performance evaluation) systems began as simple methods of income justification. That is, appraisal was used to decide whether or not the salary or wage of an individual employee was justified. The history of performance appraisal is quite brief. Its roots are said to be found in the early 20th century and can be traced to Taylor’s pioneering Time and Motion studies. As a distinct and formal management procedure used in the evaluation of work performance, appraisal really dates from the time of the Second World War – not more than 60 years ago. However, Danielson and McGreal (2000) share:

Many evaluation systems in use today were developed in the early to mid-1970s and reflect what educators believed about teaching at that time. Current systems rely heavily on the documentation of a small number of “observable behaviors,” such as “writing the learning objectives on the board,” “smiling at students as you greet them,” and the like. (p.3)

Appraisal seems both inevitable and universal. In the absence of a carefully structured system of appraisal, people tend to judge the work performance of others, including subordinates, naturally, informally and arbitrarily. The system has come a far way in trying to accurately measure teachers’ work. Stronge (1997) shares:

During the 1940s and into the 1950s, teacher effectiveness became a concern of those looking into classrooms and evaluating teachers. Good and Mulryan (1990) cite the emergence of the Ohio Teaching Record in 1941 as making a major contribution to
focusing classroom-based assessments on the study of teaching effectiveness. . . . The availability of instruments for looking into classrooms using a variety of methodologies . . . also rapidly proliferated, resulting in a variety of compilations of instruments and methodologies for conducting classroom observations for the purposes of analyzing teaching, promoting teacher development, and conducting teacher effectiveness research. (Pgs.109-110)

Evaluation is a continuous process. Many proponents offer that it lead to further learning and better performance on the job, whether teaching or support duties. They claim that evaluation is designed to improve performance in the present job. Its design is helpful in the consideration of staff for promotion, since it uncovers the particular talents of individuals, and helps in discovering areas of weaknesses that might need further improvement. Thus evaluation ensures that every individual is clearly aware of what his or her standards and expectation of the educational institution.

Teachers are evaluated for many reasons, the most important of which is to improve their effectiveness in promoting learning. Identifying the effective teacher is not a simple task. Evaluations of teachers assist in providing a review of what has been accomplished and what has to be done in the future. Peterson and Peterson (2006) recognize through their work, the importance of teachers being evaluated so that they can see professional development. Thus they share:

Educational audiences also have high expectations for the principal as teacher evaluator. School boards rely on the principal to be the key judge of teacher performance. Superintendents depend on the principal for quality control and personnel management. Teachers look to the principal for discipline within the teacher ranks and the solution to the rare problem of the bad colleague. Parents want the principal to ensure a good teacher for their children. School reformers expect their initiatives to show up in teacher accountability as determined by the principal. Teacher educators recognize that much of a teacher’s development comes in the first years of practice under the eye of a discriminating principal. Many educators and audiences see the principal as the sole teacher evaluator. (p.1)
If can be argued then that if teachers do not have the skills, attitudes and knowledge essential for the accomplishment of goals, the schools will not be successful. Teachers’ evaluations are indispensable to the planning and operation of a good school. Iwanicki (1990) shares:

When school improvement is a purpose of teacher evaluation, a focus must be set for the school-improvement process so that teachers can address improvement needs in a coordinated manner. This focus may be set by involving staff in a system-wide educational planning process. This process should result in building-level school-improvement goals, which are addressed over the next three-to-five years. For each goal, an action plan consisting of objectives and activities is developed by building staff, and procedures are specified for monitoring/evaluating progress toward these objectives. (p.161)

What is Teacher Performance Evaluation?

Teacher evaluation is a complex process. It is considered by many as a series of activities and actions that are interconnected and relate to a specific purpose. Since teachers deal with complex problems, they are evaluated as professionals, meaning that their peers develop the standards and their evaluation focuses on the degree to which they solve professional problems competently. In the school environment these problems are associated with the entire teaching and learning situation. Harris (1986) shares this definition:

Evaluation is viewed as a process for studying an operation to more clearly understand it, in order to guide changes, while retaining and supporting these components of the operation which are judged to be desirable. This definition clearly places the focus on evaluation on a specific operation such as teaching…Unlike research, however, evaluation is concerned with understandings that can guide decisions towards change or maintenance of practices. (p.20)

The process helps educators to think through assumptions, procedures, expectation, and relationships they use to evaluate teachers. It addresses issues such as, “what is quality teaching?” and “who can best recognize this quality teaching?” Peterson (1995) shares from the
start that a good teacher evaluation program should reassure audiences and provide a source of acknowledgement and reward for teachers. It should highlight exemplary practice for emulation and require the participation and control of teachers. This allows us to examine another meaning of evaluation put forth by Harris (1986):

Evaluation is viewed as a process for studying an operation to more clearly understanding, in order to guide changes, while retaining and supporting those components of the operation which are judges to be desirable. This definition clearly places the focus on evaluation on a specific operation such as teaching. The emphasis is on understanding and knowing about teaching rather than judging the teacher. Unlike research, however, evaluation is concerned with understandings that guide decisions toward change or maintenance of practices. (p.20)

Harris also views teacher performance evaluation as a process of growth and development: a process of change and achievement. Most of his work on teacher evaluation centers on formative evaluation, which is used to determine the degree of mastery of a given task. It is the level at which teachers are encouraged to grow and are given the opportunity and support needed to become better teachers. Teacher evaluation may be defined as a structured formal interaction between a subordinate and supervisor, that usually takes the form of a periodic interview (annual or semi-annual), in which the work performance of the subordinate is examined and discussed with a view to identify weaknesses and strengths, as well as opportunities for improvement and skills development. Danielson and McGreal (2000) concluded in their research, Teacher Evaluation to Enhance Professional Practice, that teacher evaluation is not only important but a necessity. Evaluation systems designed to support teacher growth and development through an emphasis on formative evaluation techniques produced higher levels of satisfaction and more thoughtful and reflective practice while still being able to satisfy accountability demands. The most common types of evaluation methods are listed below of which classroom observation is the most is commonly used:
Teacher interview
• Competency testing
• Classroom observation
• Student ratings (student evaluations)
• Peer review
• Student achievement
• Self-evaluation
• Portfolio and other reflective methods

Stiggins and Duke (1988) note the importance of teacher performance evaluation and share a common view of the nature of teacher performance evaluation in many countries, through their own definition:

Teacher evaluation, as the case studies and literature review indicate, is viewed as a potentially important school-based method of improving teacher skills. . . . Despite increasing emphasis on improving the quality of teacher evaluation programs, most “improvements” seem directed at formalizing procedures. As a result, regulations abound as in the states where these studies were conducted. Most teacher evaluation systems now require regular annual or biennial evaluations. Specify the general performance criteria to be used, define procedures in the evaluation cycle, call for a written documentation of results, and require that those results be reviewed formally with teachers. (p.23)

Teacher evaluation is one of the most important educational administration policies.

Roelofs and Sanders (2007) opine,

Internationally, there is a growing interest in assessing teacher competence prompted by demand for quality assurance for greater recognition of the teaching profession. The United States has a long tradition in teacher assessment, reflected in both the volume of research articles and books published, and the instruments developed. In the United States the principle of accountability to taxpayers was a major incentive for directing attention to their assessment. Various instruments have been developed to assess teachers at various stages in their professional careers in the context of selection, certification, and professional development.

Sclan (1994) explains that the process of teacher performance evaluation should be more than just a checklist. It is more than what traditionally many schools and colleges have allowed it to be viewed as a simple checklist of possible performance indicators on which to decide the quality of teaching and determine levels of accountability. Sclan (1994) states:
The old factory-like structure of many of today’s schools, which include hierarchical modes of teacher evaluation, perpetuates a narrow application of behavioristic technical evaluation criteria, often excluding opportunities for creative, flexible, adaptive thinking. . . .When teaching is reduced to a checklist or a summary of disparate quantifiable behaviours, there is no room for any dialogue and there is nothing left for the teacher to do but to imitate these behaviours unquestionably. . . .For teachers to achieve optimal conditions for their students’ learning, they must have access to the entire knowledge has of teaching to suit their particular situations. Teachers are more likely to grow in the greatest number of ways when evaluation systems are responsive to what teachers say they need. (pgs. 11-12)

The Purpose of Teacher Performance Evaluation

It is important at the start to reach a clear and public understanding of the purposes of the faculty evaluation program. The program’s purpose will determine the types of information gathered as well as the evaluation procedures (Fite, 2006, p.196). The findings from a review of related literature indicated that for teacher performance evaluation systems to be effective and seen as useful and relevant, the purpose must be clear to all stakeholders involved. Bird (1990) shares:

One may argue that teacher evaluation’s critical function is to provide processes by which school teaching can be cultivated in the collective fashion of an art, craft, science or profession. Those processes require both a refined language for discussion of practice and norms of professional exchange that sustain a closer and more fruitful examination of schoolteacher’s work (p.245)

At the outset teachers should be clear of the policy and procedure surrounding their evaluation. Colby, Bradshaw, and Joyner (2002) states:

Purpose, as a foundation for teacher evaluation system, should be started clearly, agreed on by all stakeholders and used to govern the design of the system.in addition, an understanding of these purposes was essential. Not only did purpose for evaluation need to be made explicit, but also teachers needed to perceive the evaluation as a process to help them improve their performance and principals needed to perceive the process as a means to provide instructional leadership.(p.3)
Many researchers have shared what they believe the purpose of teacher performance evaluation should be. From the literature, the many purposes of teacher performance evaluation can be placed within two major umbrellas, accountability and professional growth. Stronge (2006) states, “There is room in teacher evaluation systems for both accountability and performance improvement purposes. In fact, evaluation systems that include both accountability and personal growth dimensions are both desirable and necessary for evaluation to productively serve the needs of individual teachers and the school and community at large.” (p.4). Stronge (1995) also shares more of this unity between accountability and professional development as the two key purposes of teacher performance evaluation,

Performance improvement and accountability purposes are not competing, but supportive interest – dual interests that are essential for improvement of educational service delivery. These two roles are inextricable intertwined in the total evaluation process. Moreover, a conceptual framework for (teacher) evaluation should emphasize the dynamic relationship between individual and institution where the needs and interests of one fuse with and support the other. (p.13)

The following table below summarizes the many purposes of teacher performance evaluation as described by the most notable researchers in the field. You will note from the suggested list or purposes, some date as far back as 1973, that not much has changed between the present two decades (1990 – 2010) and those in the previous two decades (1970 - 1990). The most coming use of teacher performance evaluation throughout the decades have consistently been the improvement of instruction, reward and recognition, teacher section and school improvement. Teachers often fear the summative uses such as salary decisions and termination, however the review of related literature have shown that though these are some of the main reason for fear and anxiety, these are not the most commonly used purposes of the teacher performance evaluation process.
Table 7  

*Summary of Purposes of Teacher Performance Evaluation by Researchers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve instruction</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify strength &amp; weaknesses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank or compare teachers</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward &amp; recognition</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modify assignment</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect teachers</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect schools</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff hire</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Selection</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher promotion/tenure</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional growth</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff development</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School status decision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reassure stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification &amp; licensing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The purposes of teacher performance evaluation can be viewed on a very wide continuum. Let us examine a few of those other purposes that would relate at a more critical level to the evaluation process. How are children protected when in the care of teachers? Evaluating such duties and roles assigned to teachers in fact an effective method. Stronge (1997) expounds:

Teachers play an essential role in the success of schools and schooling. Research supports the premise that teachers are among the most powerful determinants of student learning... Moreover, budget allocations for teacher salaries, the size of the teaching force, and dependence on teachers as the primary workforce of schools point to teachers as central figures in school success. For this reason alone, the evaluation of teaching deserves high priority. Teacher evaluation is a critical factor in any effort to validate teaching and learning and the success of schools. (p.129)

So many times when the reason why children struggle to learn is examined, there are a myriad of factors to look at, such as external factors, the home and individual children biological make-up. How often is the teacher’s methodology examined? Not often. It is mostly the teachers who are blamed. How often is a teacher classified as failed? Does a teacher who teaches the wrong concept to children viewed as actually endangering their lives? The following paragraphs will examine some other common popular purposes which are essential to teacher performance evaluation and the school community at large.

Teacher performance evaluation offers reassurance of the audience. Since teaching is not just done for the students, the evaluation gives the wider community of parents, interest groups and the profession itself a sense of worth. There are many stakeholders who are looking for excellence and performance and achievement within the formal school system. It tells them that someone is checking on what is being done. “Comprehensive teacher evaluation has the purpose of letting interested groups know how well, and in what ways, teachers contribute to their students and to sociality.” (Peterson, 2000, p.37). In New York, this level of reassurance and
transparency in regard to teacher performance has recently been given much thought at the policy making level. Fleisher and Gershman (2012) write:

Despite withholding teachers’ names from broad disclosure, the legislation keeps available to the public an unprecedented amount of data about teachers’ performance, fundamentally reshaping the way parents are able to judge schools. It requires the state Education Department to make that data available online.

Teacher performance evaluation offers reassurance to practitioners. Numerous professions have a way to know immediately if their work is good. A carpenter can look at his work, a doctor performs a successful surgery, and a dentist can examine his bridge work. In teaching, because students are passed from one teacher to the next, many researchers believe it is harder to do the same thing in the teaching profession. Peterson (2000) supports:

Because perhaps 60% of the variance in pupil gains accounted for by their prior achievements, it is difficult for teachers to be clear about just what effects their effort have. . . . Good teacher evaluations has the potential to let the teacher know, in ways that he trusts, that he is doing a valuable, worthwhile, and needed job.(p.36)

Teacher performance evaluation helps in making decisions about staffing. This is considered the most visible purpose of teacher professional evaluation. These decisions involve hiring, maintaining, remediating, or terminating. I worked in the Bahamas for years and has seen the teacher evaluation of two established school systems – the Anglican Central Educational Authority and the Catholic Board of Education - use teacher performance evaluation to make serious staffing decisions. I have seen teachers terminated after a formative evaluation, transferred after a summative evaluation and even promoted after such a process.

Teacher performance evaluation contributes to the improvement of practice. Of all the reasons and purposes, this is considered the most controversial idea of teacher evaluation. Does it really improve practice? One should guess that this is highly dependent on its uses. If after an evaluation the teacher receives remediation or professional development in an area of weakness,
then it can improve practice. If teachers change after evaluation to do better, then it can improve practices. Peterson (2000) writes, “The supposition is that feedback, with specific praise and criticisms help professionals to self-regulate” (p.37). If one teacher is corrected, advised, or assisted to do better after an evaluation process, it would have been worth the time. He argues that there are many arguments supporting this premise but not many research studies confirm a link between teacher performance evaluation and teacher improvement. Nolan and Hoover (2011) argue that remediation is a useful route in teacher improvement and that should be part of the main focus:

The identification of a teacher as unsatisfactory or needing improvement and the consequent placement of the teacher in intensive assistance mode of supervision and evaluation mark a significant event. It informs the teacher that they are serious issues surrounding his or her competence and that improvement is required…. The goal is to remediate the deficiencies, have the teacher return to satisfactory level of performance, and eventually enable the teacher to grow toward excellence through the supervision components of the supervision and evaluation system. (p.107)

Teacher performance evaluation helps in improving the profession. Teacher training programs can and should benefit from teacher performance evaluation reports of successful teachers. A collection of best practices can help the profession. It is also a promising resource for general professional practices. Peterson and Peterson (2006) list the following reasons why it is important that teacher performance evaluation be given support and participation. Teachers who engage in regular teacher performance evaluation stand to gain much for the following reasons:

- Personal/professional reassurance of doing needed and good work
- Increased security and autonomy from dossiers that document credible, respected career-long record of work and accomplishments
- Aggregate data of the excellent performance of teachers in this country (Berliner & Biddle, 1995)
- A basis in data for increased public relations to build support for public education
- Identification of exemplary practices for emulation
- A focus on actual teacher accomplishments for staff development and on teacher educators, school reformers and researcher
- A hedge against bad teacher evaluation practices. (pgs. 87-88)
After employee selection, teacher performance evaluation is arguably the most important management tool in a school. “The ability to identify, develop and keep talented teachers is arguably the most important priority of any school leader. Therefore, instructional managers should be held accountable not just for evaluating teachers accurately, but for acting on the results and helping teachers improve over time.” (Teacher Evaluation 2.0, 2010). It can help to fine tune and reward the performance of teachers. It can also set measure and evaluate organizational goals, ensure student achievement and aide the teacher in his or her professional development. It is a vehicle to validate and refine school decisions such as selection and training. It will assist in long term planning for the school, worker development and establish an institute of discipline or discharge procedures. People within any organization need to know where they are going and how fast they are getting there.

Teacher performance evaluation can also serve as the main tool/measure for identifying competent teachers. Many people with little or no experience with the process and its uses consider it to be a “weeding out” tool, or a systematic way to identify an incompetent teacher. “But the distinction is quite clear; appraisal assumes that the teacher is competent. The aim of the appraisal process is to recognize and report that competence and to identify and provide support to help and further develop teachers’ skills.”(Evans and Tomlinson, 1989.) Peterson (1995) says:

Why should teachers want good evaluation? The conventional answer is for improvement; few people think beyond this truism. Yet research that demonstrates improved practice as a result of evaluation is nonexistent. Instead, better reasons for increased teacher evaluation are (in order of importance) practitioner reassurance, teacher security, audience reassurance, development and dissemination of ideas for improved practice for the profession, information for teacher education, and stimulus for research. Feedback for improved practice is a side effect for a minority of teachers.

Another purpose of teacher evaluation is to enhance communication, which, in turn, will forge an effective and desirable relationship between school leadership and teachers. The
importance and long term benefits of this level of communication are an invaluable asset to any institution. Teacher evaluation communication is very important, and can boast in its ability to promote candid two-way communication between the supervisors and the person being appraised and to help the latter take more responsibility for improving performance.

**Formative and Summative Evaluation**

There are two major umbrella classifications of teacher evaluation types; summative and formative. The very meaning of formative and summative evaluation is a point of contention in many schools. Gordon (2006) examines them in this way, “formative evaluation as the basis for professional development and summative evaluation as the basis for personnel decision” (p.269). Barber (1990) describes the basic dynamics of each:

Teacher-evaluation systems are not inherently formative or summative. How the data are used determines if an evaluation system is summative or formative. If the data generated by the system are given back to teachers for their use in improvement of their teaching techniques or styles, and never used to make judgments about them by one who can alter placement, salary, status, tenure or working conditions, than the system is formative. If the data generated by the system are used in any way to make judgments about placement, status, salary or conditions, then the system is summative. Some believe that if people who can determine status, salary, conditions, even have access to the data, then the teacher-evaluation system should be considered summative. (p 217)

Formative evaluation serves a development function. Its purpose is to help an individual employee improve his or her effectiveness on the job by providing feedback and coaching. Formative evaluation is used to sample the process of learning or improvement, and to help in the decision making concerning how the outcome might be improved. At this stage many systems engage the teacher in goal setting and planning. Additionally, administrators may seek help for teachers who may need such assistance in the formative part of the school year. Summative evaluation represents measurement of what has occurred. This appeals to those who collect
information – information upon which to base decisions. The purposes of summative procedures in teaching are analogous to the summative procedures used in teacher performance evaluation – the need to grade, place or promote. These are what Manning (1988) refers to as status decisions.

Formative evaluation helps the teacher to improve their own teaching. It directs the learning process on the part of the teacher. Formative evaluation can help ineffective teachers become better teachers and effective teachers become excellent teachers. It is described by many proponents as a helpful, caring process that provides data to teachers for making decisions about how they can best improve their own teaching techniques, styles, or strategies. Barber (1990) elaborates:

Formative teacher evaluation is a set of procedures designed to assist teachers in improving their own teaching. Formative teacher evaluation can help an ineffective teacher become a better teacher or an effective teacher become an excellent teacher. Formative evaluation is a helping, caring process that provides data to teachers for making decisions about how they can best improve their own teaching techniques, styles or strategies. Formative evaluation assumes a professional attitude toward individual teachers, allowing each the choice to improve his or her behavior. Formative evaluation is predicated on an underlying, three-part, philosophical belief that (a) professional teachers constantly strive for continued individual excellence; (b) given sufficient information, professional teachers can and will evaluate themselves and modify their performance as well as or better than others; and (c) the evaluation procedures provide feedback designed to assist teachers in making judgments about how they can best improve their teaching. (pgs. 216 -217)

Formative evaluation is used to sample the process of learning or improvement, and to help in the decision making concerning how the outcome might be improved. Many times formative evaluation is done in the early part of the school year. “In the teaching analogy, all activities leading to the final test were formative.” (Manning 1988)

The formative phase continues and is primarily concerned with teaching observation and the collection of data. It is during this formative assessment phase that supervisors supply information and feedback, which can be written or oral. They also assist in integrating these new aspects into
teachers’ routines of planning, respond to questions, provide guidance as teachers assimilate these new ideas into their repertoire, and focus on changes that will enhance the teachers instructional effectiveness. This will serve as an ongoing process to paint a picture of the teacher’s capabilities and effectiveness in dealing and performing in the school’s culture and his/her handling of the total teaching and learning process.

The Coach or Counsellor role of the instructional supervisor during the formative phase of assessment is ongoing. The purpose of the formative phase is to help teachers improve or upgrade their teaching skills and/or add to their teaching repertoire. Supervisors need to collect information that is bias-free and valid and then present it in meaningful ways that cause teachers to reflect on the teaching–learning process. (p. 250-251) (Beach and Reinhartz, 2000)

The next level is that of the summative evaluation. This is mainly carried out at the end of the school year and this is the one that many or most schools and teachers are used to. This evaluation is the one that most decisions of promotion, retention, and dismissal are made. Many teachers dread this process. Valentine (1992) shares:

The summative conference is different from the formative conference in intent and process. Its purpose is to discuss the summative judgments made for each criterion… The teacher’s attitude, which can usually be predicted from previous interactions, will obviously affect the degree to which the conference is collaborative or authoritative. In contrast to the formative conference, where the emphasis is on joint discussion and analysis of performance,… Feelings of animosity, dislike, and distrust toward particular individuals are part of human nature. The principal must guard against his or her reaction to such feelings by the teacher and not let those feelings bias professional judgments made in the summative phase… Understanding, sensitivity, and compassion are better administrative behaviours at this time than are the emotional, defensive behaviours of aggressiveness and authoritativeness. (pg. 138-139)

Principals for years have expressed how time consuming this can be and therefore the process has suffered great inefficiencies over the years. Manning states, “When there is not adequate time, the process has a tendency to become perfunctory. It is probable that teachers who have previously demonstrated competence may not need yearly summative evaluations…one school system uses both summative and formative processes, evaluates most teachers summative on a
triennial basis. This plan is designed so that one-third of the teacher is evaluated each year.” (Mannings 1998 pg. 5).

Campbell (2004) looked the teacher performance evaluation system of the Anglican private school system in the Bahamas. The following is a description of the summative process:

Head of Department and Grade Coordinators are required to do two minor formative and summative evaluations at the end of the first and last term. This is used to identify the teachers’ effectiveness as it relates to the actual teaching and learning process, strategies and methodologies, classroom climate, and the use of instructional technology and materials…This will also be used along with other administrators’ own evaluation, to complete the annual summative evaluation in June at the end of the school year. The evaluation system is characterized by top-down communication, in which the only evidence of teacher performance is that collected by an administrator during classroom observation to other means of formal or informal communication. The teacher’s role is essentially passive, and depending on the relationship between the school, and his/her evaluator, the climate can be negative, with a perception on the part of the teacher that the real purpose of the exercise is on of “gotcha”. (p. 46)

The principal is often the key person in the summative process. It should also be noted that the team or personnel that administers the summative evaluation can be totally different form the formative stage. In the previous stage the focus is growth and improvement. At this stage there is a “judgment” of what was learnt, carried out, and improved. This is where evaluators identify the competent teacher, the outstanding teacher, and the weak teacher. Toward the end of this process a conference is conducted. Manning (1988) elaborates on the design and purpose of summative evaluation:

Summative evaluation is designed for ensuring that the minimum acceptable standards, are met. Those who evaluate summatively must make decisions which determine status, and these decisions are based upon the requirements to meet minimum standards. Most often, the principal is the person who conducts summative evaluation. The principal is the first-line administrator who must recommend tenure, retention, promotion, and who must make other status decisions. For these reasons, he or she should be the primary evaluator. It is proposed that, in most cases, the principal be clearly identified as the summative evaluator. (p.153)
Summative evaluation refers to assessment carried out for the accountability purposes. This type of evaluation is usually conducted annually or semiannually, and the results are used to make decisions about individuals, such as whether to grant tenure, to seek termination or transfer, to place an individual on a career ladder or to make salary adjustment. Most summative evaluation process involves completing a checklist and giving teachers a score/grade. Danielson and McGreal (2000) explain:

Most evaluation systems depend on a single dichotomous scale, such as “satisfactory,” “needs improvement,” and the like. Some systems on the other hand have attempted to incorporate “rating scales,” that is scales from “1” to “4” or levels . . . . . Though offering a promise of greater objectivity and specificity than a simple checklist of whether certain behaviors were observed or not, it does fall short of its potential, as there is little agreement as to what constitutes an “outstanding” or “standard”. What is one person’s “outstanding” is another person’s “standard” In other words, we don’t have, “the equivalent of the anchor papers or benchmarks used in evaluating student work against rubrics. (p.4)

At the end of the school year, the summative phase is then conducted and this provides the opportunity to examine all the data previously collected during the formative observations and feedback sessions held. The data is then interpreted and a judgment is made about the teachers’ overall performance. Many times teachers are given a final grade, point or place on a predetermined scale. Beach and Reinhartz (2000) say that:

In this phase the supervisor collects all pertinent information, reviews teacher progress, reflects on changes, discusses findings with the teacher, and make a decision concerning the teacher’s performance. The summative phase also serves as a means of identifying areas of concern the teacher is experiencing, and generates recommendation for improvement and corrections. (P. 251)

The Relationship between Formative and Summative Evaluation

Summative and formative evaluations serve different purposes but are indirectly tied to each other. In the true sense, formative and summative evaluations cannot be separated, because they each contain aspects of the other. In most teacher performance programs, formative evaluations lead up to
the summative phase. “Formative evaluation provides a mirror to those being evaluated so they can see how to become better teachers. Formative evaluation obtains information and data and provide nonjudgmental feedback to teachers being evaluated.” (Barber, 1990). This period of support happens mostly before the summative process.

The summative evaluation done at the end of the year depends on a scale rating which includes “outstanding”, “above standard”, “standard”, and needs improvement. Though offering a promise of greater objectivity and specificity than a simple checklist of whether certain behaviors were observed or not, it does fall short of its potential, as there is little agreement as to what constitutes “outstanding” or “standard”. What is on person’s “outstanding” is another person’s “standard”? In other words, evaluators do not have, “the equivalent of the anchor papers or benchmarks used in evaluating student work against rubrics.” (Danielson and McCreal, 2000)

Peterson (1985) hastens to differentiate between the two levels of evaluation. He notes that “the distinction between formative and summative evaluation is important because very often different techniques, and even personnel, must be used according to the intended purpose…for example, the stated goal of evaluation to improve practice (formative) is seriously weakened by the overriding goal of summative judgments to control teachers.” (p.53) Whether or not the goal of summative evaluation is to control teachers, it is necessary to make it clear that most evaluation processes and systems, including the systems used in Jamaican, depend on the results of summative evaluation to make decisions. “A second use for evaluation is to make decisions or judgments, for example, to retain teachers. This use is summative.” (Peterson, 2000, pg.63). Other proponents describe the summative evaluation as carrying weight based on its use to make personnel determination about individual teacher. “The final summative evaluation of a staff member carries considerable weight and importance.” (Danielson and McGreal, 2000, pg.97)
There has been an ongoing debate concerning the two main umbrellas of teacher performance evaluation – formative and summative. Some researchers feel that they should be separated and that the respective purposes and uses are not complimentary. Fite (2006) declares:

Formative faculty evaluation to improve teaching and performance should be separated from summative faculty evaluation used to make personnel decisions. Faculty members who participate in good faith in faculty evaluation to improve their teaching, research, and service must not find that criticism made for formative purposes are subsequently used against them when applying for retention, tenure, and promotion. Both formative and summative faculty evaluation are very important but should be kept separate. An institution should not introduce a faculty evaluation system whose purpose if formative and then gradually transform it into a summative uses for personnel decisions. (pgs. 196-197)

Others believe that both can work together in unison to provide both accountability in the areas of personnel decision making and that of professional development. One such researcher who advises that a teacher performance evaluation system should focus on both is Sally J. Zepeda. Zepeda (2006) states:

There are several inherent tensions between the fields of instructional supervision and teacher evaluation. The primary tension includes the belief that the same person cannot provide both formative support (e.g. supervision and coaching) and then later evaluated the overall performance of the teacher for purposes of continued employment. Another tension with the supervision-evaluation or formative-summative tug-o-war is the fact that in many schools, evaluation is practiced as instructional supervision; however the purpose of evaluation and supervision needs to not be in direct opposition. (p.108)

Teacher evaluation works best when it is a dialogue between equals. Many proponents encourage collegiality in the process, where trust both the process and the evaluator will be built. Yatvin (2012) in looking at the need for partnership in teacher performance evaluation noted, “As for the evaluation process itself, it needs to be yearlong, with evaluators working alongside teachers and observing many different lessons. Thus, they will see what good teachers do: grading papers at lunchtime, coming in early to tutor a struggling student, staying late to meet with a worried parent, inspiring students to learn more than required. Sawa (1995) writes:
Evaluators should know the subject matter, pedagogy, and classroom characteristics of
the teacher being evaluated (McGeachy, 1992), as well as take into consideration the fact
that experienced and excellent teachers are capable of pedagogical performances that
educational theory and research can neither explain nor predict (Shulman, 1987). These
risk-takers and innovators must be encouraged not stifled. Consequently, an effort to
define standards for teaching and operating them in an evaluation must reach beyond the
judgment of academic experts. (p.3)

What is therefore needed is a form of evaluation that helps the teacher in his/her aim for
higher creativity and excellence. Evaluation works better when administrators and teachers have
access to comprehensive evaluation models that capture the complexities of teaching.

“Traditional summative evaluation models are not necessarily structured to support dynamic,
regenerative school environments. Evaluation procedures that focus on complying with
regimented sets of behaviors do not encourage teacher involvement in their self-development or
in the development of collaborative school cultures.” (Weiss and Weiss 1995)

Weiss and Weiss (1995) maintain that evaluation should be more than just merely placing a
check mark beside a set of predetermined standards:

Principals and teachers are becoming frustrated with conventional evaluation practices used to
determine teacher effectiveness and thus, tenure and promotion (Brandt, 1996). These
evaluation practices stress accountability and frequently are based upon teacher-directed
models of learning such as lecture, demonstration, recitation, and modeling designed primarily
to transmit knowledge and cognitive skills to students. These evaluation procedures risk
becoming meaningless exercise for the majority of teachers who are already performing at or
beyond the minimal level. (p.1)

Peterson (1995) describes a good teacher performance evaluation system as fair and just.
It should meet demonstrated needs of the client, answer the questions of interested audiences,
and be cost effective and free from unjustifiable side effects. He describes a good evaluation
system as one which should be technically sophisticated to encompass the full range and types of
duties. It should also be researched based and like any good assessment seek to ensure validity
and reliability. He concludes with a description of what is said in many arenas as a good teacher evaluation system, he noted:

Most current teacher evaluation consists of a principal’s report of teacher performance, usually recorded one checklist form, and sometimes accompanied by a brief meeting. These reports are based on informal and formal classroom visits. More advanced systems ass “clinical supervision” components, including pre observation conference, agreement on elements to be observed, post observation conference and direct link to in-service training…checklist for teacher evaluation are based on a wide variety of suppositions about what good teaching should look like.” (p. 15)

Part Two: The Teacher Performance Summative Evaluation Process

Most summative evaluations take the form of a cycle (or stages) as identified in most literature. In most cases reviewed in the literature the complete cycle is used for the summative process. This is the same in the Jamaican context and in particular with the participants this process is based on summative evaluation. The Jamaican evaluation follows the rule of the cycle as it is ongoing. Evaluation never ends. Once a teacher reaches the end of a traditional cycle (feedback), then that information is used to influence future planning for the next stage, which is the start of the process. The execution of the teacher performance evaluation process is not just about the four main stages, (planning, monitoring, observation and feedback). It also involves the evaluators and also an examination of the undercurrent that supports the process – collaboration and communication.

The Jamaican Ministry of Education teacher performance evaluation cycle involves the three stages of planning/goal setting, monitoring and feedback. Stiggins and Duke (1988) in their research conducted with four schools districts in Oregon and Washington found that most formative or summative evaluation cycles all much followed a traditional approach. These were as follows:

   District 1: preconference, observation, post conference
Iwanicki (1990) supports the use of the traditional cycle. He affirms, “There are some key features of the Teacher-Evaluation Cycle, which are important to emphasize. First, the cycle begins with a strong accountability orientation by focusing on the intensive appraisal of teacher performance thorough the classroom-observation process. Recommendations are made at the conclusion for each formal observation to strengthen or enhance the teacher’s performance . . . the cycle is manageable. (p.166). In research studies, teacher performance evaluation cycles comes in many forms and with many different titles, most similar in meaning, as with the schools districts of Oregon and Washington. For the purpose of this paper, I will examine discuss the cycle using the terms planning, monitoring, observation and feedback. This process is used for both the formative and summative processes.

**Planning.** Planning as described by the *Ministry of Education Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook*, “involves the definition of job responsibilities, setting of performance goals and development of an action plan.” (p.2). This is often time conducted in what is traditionally called the pre-observation conference. This is also a major part in the dynamics of a formative evaluation system. This allows the teacher to plan for the school year or term; these goals are not just for the teacher but also for his class and students. These goals are normally revisited resisted during the formal summative evaluation process. This allows both teacher and evaluator to measure individual teacher growth and success both in and out the classroom. The goal here is to help that teacher’s daily growth and development in his/her area of expertise. Nolan (2004) denotes that:

“Throughout the cycle, supervisors are encouraged to develop genuine and supportive relationships with teachers. They develop those relationships by recognizing and building
upon the teachers’ existing strengths, individual styles, and unique teaching contexts, rather than focusing on shortcomings. The supervisor task is the starts wherever the teacher might be in terms of classroom practice and to facilitate the teacher’s growth beyond that point through data-driven decisions making. (p.49)

Planning in itself is no longer seen as an individual teacher activity but as a collaborative effort. The individual teacher plan is influenced by the school strategic planning process, which is influenced by the ministry of education inclusive plan for the school year. It is recognized that teachers execute their delivery in different ways and therefore it is necessary that each teacher has his/her own plan for the school year. This very plan will set out the measurable goals and objectives for the teaching-learning process and will be the plan that evaluators will use as part of their testing and measuring process. Hendricks (1994) voices:

If practitioners and evaluators work collaboratively during the planning stages of an evaluation, the quality of evaluation design and the applicability of findings will almost certainly improve. It is a foundational level where teams develop data-gathering methods and terms of reference (objectives) that recognizes the particular needs and interests of both groups.

**Monitoring.** The next step in the cycle is monitoring. Monitoring takes many shapes and forms. It can take a very structured form such as a formal formative evaluation done monthly. It can also be as informal as continuous conversation with the teacher during the walk-about. The purpose of monitoring as defined by the Jamaican Ministry of Education evaluation policy document is to provide coaching, counseling, correction and training as necessary. Keeping clear records in an evaluation file is important so that one does not have to rely on pure memory when completing the final evaluation document. During the monitoring process it is also good to have the teachers keep their own running records or a better yet a portfolio. Lesson plans, students test results and teacher participation in extra-curricular activities are very common ways to monitor what is happening. It is very important at this stage to use a variety of methods to
collect data about teaching and overall teacher-school interaction. Roelofs and Sanders (2007) contend:

The first choice in collecting evidence of competence relates to the nature of the evidence. Basic forms of evidence are: lesson documentation, lesson observation (live or recorded, focus on teacher actions or student activities), teacher logs (focus on actions), reflective interview (focus on decision-making processes), and student tests (focus on results), and written teacher test (focus on knowledge base or decision-making processes), multimedia teacher test (focus on knowledge base or decision-making processes). (p.132)

The amount of monitoring will vary from teacher to teacher and this is where the school administrator must know their teachers and be able to decide what levels of monitoring are needed. Monitoring also comes from heads of departments and grade coordinators. Monitoring can be done by using many other sources. Lesson plan books/records have been one of the most commonly used forms of monitoring, but many experts in the field are suggesting other means of monitoring. Hickcox, E., Lawton, S., Leithwood, K., & Musella, D. (1988) suggests, “Other sources of information such as plan books, standardized tests, conversations with students and parents, interviews, and so on are used. . . only multiple sources of information will place any controls at all on the notoriously unreliable ( and perhaps invalid) characteristics of traditional observation.” (p.5)

The call is therefore for other sources of information to be used to monitor our teachers. Many schools have been using others sources such as reflective journals, portfolios, students evaluation, and self-evaluation as other sources of monitoring. These are the checks and balances that are needed on a continuous basis to ensure teachers develop the necessary trust in the system. Hickcox, et al (1998) state, “checks and balances defuse the “gotcha” quality inherent in any evaluation and they increase teachers comfort with and thus their openness about their performance. The checks and balances also testifies to the district’s appreciation of the
complexity of the teaching task and its intention to undertake evaluation in a serious, professional manner.” (p.125)

Multiple data sources make for an effective monitoring process. Data sources should be as varied as the type of teachers in a school. Teachers have different strengths and their classroom dynamics is of such that a single data source, such as lesson plans, will not be able to fully capture the layers of planning, interaction or student achievement in a school. Peterson (1995) expounds on this issue:

Teachers should have the option to assemble other kinds of data than those listed and described above. This provides teachers the opportunity to document and have taken into account unique contributions and creative endeavors, or to adjust to unusual teaching assignments or circumstances. The burden in evaluation is on the teacher to present information that shows that a unique data source is pertinent to his or her situation, to make claims for educational need and quality, and then to document the accomplishments. (p.80)

Peterson and Peterson (2006) also support the use of multiple data sources:

Multiple data sources expand evaluation beyond teaching processes to include student outcome results and teacher preparation to teach well. Multiple data sources improve teacher evaluation because teaching is so complex that no one source sufficiently captures all the role of performance. Also no single data source is valid or feasible for each and every teacher in a school. Rather, multiple and variable data sources are needed to accurately and fairly evaluate all teachers, taking into account their setting, style, actual performance (not mere compliance with the overgeneralized model), and document results.(p.4)

They go on to list a number of other possible data sources:

a) Student reports (surveys, focus group)

b) Parent surveys

c) Student achievement data

d) Teacher tests (subject matter, pedagogy)

e) Peer reviews of instructional materials

f) Documentation of professional activity
g) Action research or school improvement project

h) National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Certification

i) Data uniquely pertinent to an individual teacher

Peterson (1995) also links multiple data sources with a number of teacher performance areas that can be impacted by effective use. These areas include student gain, academic quality, ethical practice, parent relations, creating more opportunities to learn, and becoming a better member of the school community (p.81). However, every data source does not work for every teacher.

**Observation.** Monitoring is followed by an official classroom observation. Observation is defined by Danielson and McGreal (2000) as “a source of data for use in collecting evidence and for use as a focus for professional discussion and reflection on teaching and learning. It is one of the information-gathering activities available to the supervisor that, when taken together, help inform professional judgment” (p.84). One thing is certain in all the reading is that classroom observation remains the most practical activity for collecting formal data about the individual teacher practice, teacher and classroom dynamics, student learning and student–teacher interaction. “To no one’s surprise, classroom observation is the most common source of information, and it is most of the principals who do the observation.” (Hickcox., et al, 1988, p.5)

Harris (1986) describes the classroom observation process:

Classroom observations are useful to nearly any meaningful form of evaluation of curriculum and instruction. For developmental teacher evaluation, observers are indispensable. Observations produce data - they are not to be equated with evaluations, but are ways of implementing the data gathering step in an evaluation process. While observations are usually viewed as an outside “visiting” the classroom, other observers are always present: namely, teacher and students. The use of at least three observation data sources, offers unusual opportunities for better data and better collaboration, too. Comprehensive observations are most demanding and, unfortunately, not often systematically employed. Despite the difficulties, descriptive-categorical recording and teacher self-reporting techniques are available and practical. Comprehensive efforts to
view all aspects of the teaching learning process promote insights for both observers and teachers that are not likely to be produced otherwise. (p.152)

Barrett (1986) describes classroom observation as “the most popular evaluation method, usually performed by school administrators for experienced teachers and more frequently for beginning teachers. Observations reveal information about such things as teacher interaction and rapport with pupils that is unavailable from other sources.” (p.2). She also describes the process as “potentially biased, invalid, and unreliable.” This of course is one of the most argued aspects of teacher evaluation as there are various proponents and opponents for using observation as the main form of data gathering.

Classroom observation can be announced or unannounced. Zepeda (2006) discusses the nature of formal and informal observation:

Classroom observations take two primary forms- informal and formal, and both provide the administrator the opportunity to obtain a sample of a teacher’s performance in the classroom. Informal observations typically forgo the pre and post observation conferences whereas formal classroom observations, if they are to be meaningful, include these processes. Informal observations have been referred to as ‘pop-ins,” “walk-ins,” or “drop-ins.” The interest in informal observation has heightened recently with the refinement of the “Downey Walk Through.” In which administrators make several informal observations per day, spending between three and five minutes in a classroom. (p.112)

Classroom observation is very time consuming and this is often where the breakdown in terms of consistency and standardization is seen. This is why the Downey Walk Through model is now used. It will also require much planning, coordination, and time management on the part of the evaluation committee. It is still noted to be the most popular method being used in teacher performance evaluation. Barrett (1986) shares:

This is the most popular evaluation method, usually performed annual by school administrators for experienced teachers and more frequently for beginning teachers. Observation reveals information about such things as teacher interaction and rapport with pupils that is unavailable from other sources.
There has been much discussion about what classroom observation should look like and who should be involved in this section of the process. During observation times teachers and students can become an act and display the “desired” behaviours that they know the evaluation process recommends and by so doing not give a true picture about what is really happening in the classroom. It is for this reason that there is a divide between the use of announced and unannounced evaluations. Marshall (2009) in her quest for better evaluation systems and in particular more effective classroom observations, suggests the follow three things that she used as an administrator involved in classroom observation:

1. Classroom visits would have to be brief (to fit into your hectic day) but not so brief that I wouldn’t be able to focus on what was happening.

2. Each teacher would need frequent visits; otherwise there wouldn’t be enough of them to balance specific praise with specific criticism. (It is tricky to criticize a good teacher if your critical comment is the only one you’ve made all semester.)

3. Visits would have to be unannounced; otherwise I wouldn’t be seeing everyday reality as students were experience it. (p.46-47)

**Feedback.** Feedback is essential for individual growth and development. People need positive feedback and validation on a regular basis. Harris (1986) defines feedback and establishes its purpose:

This term, so widely utilized in the various human professions, is unfortunate in many ways. It was borrowed from the field of electronics, where it refers to an amplification process that produces annoying, screeching noise (Jenerette, 1981). In many minds, feedback tends to emphasize telling and selling by an authority figure with passive listening by the teacher (p.186)

Few management or supervisory actions are able to have the same effect on a teacher as performance evaluation and encouragement. This comes in many forms. Some of these forms can be team teaching, coaching, mentoring and instructional supervision. Duke and Stiggins (1999) in their work examined a 55 item Teacher Evaluating Profile Questionnaire in which they
noted that that the 10 items mostly highly correlated with teachers ratings of quality and impact were those directly associated with feedback and growth. Five of those that related directly to feedback were:

1. Credibility of evaluator as a source of feedback
2. Quality of ideas contained in the feedback
3. Depth of information contained in the feedback
4. Persuasiveness of evaluator’s rational for improvement
5. Usefulness of evaluator’s suggestions. (p.124)

This drives home the fact that teachers require feedback. They value what others think about their work and they value any suggestion to make their work better. Duke and Stiggins (1990) affirm:

Where feedback is provided to show progress in relations to goals, individuals tended to experience greater success. While few would dispute the benefits of performance feedback, those familiar with the hectic pace of life in most schools acknowledge that finding time to provide feedback is difficult. (p.127)

Feedback can indeed be very time consuming but is necessary for the wheels of evaluation to spin properly. This is strangely the place where the evaluation cycle breaks down for so many people. Feedback doesn’t always need to be ideas for growth and development. However, it should be expert advice from which a teacher can get ideas about your own practice, engage in reflective practice, and gain other ideas on best practices. Danielson and McGreal (2000) share:

The participation of department chairs in the evaluation process has some important benefits. Because of their content expertise, such individuals are able to adequately assess content-specific pedagogy and other related aspects of teacher’s performance. This content-related assessment is more accurate than is possible for most administrators, who may have expertise in one curriculum area but rarely in all subjects taught in comprehensive high school. Further, the judgments of department heads will be more likely to be respected by the faculty, because they are closer to the instructional process than are most administrators and have taught (or are still teaching) in the same setting. On the other hand, precisely because they are close to the realities of teaching, it may be more difficult for them to make suggestions regarding the performance of a colleague. (p.59)
Feedback should be honest, creative, skillful, tactful, and useful. Marshall (2009) in her practice of teacher evaluation, shares three ideas about feedback that has worked for her:

First, all teachers, even very good teachers, need reassurance they are doing a good job, but praise from the principal must be based on specific examples of actual events in their classrooms, not just a glib, uniformed “Great job!” Second, teachers are well aware that they are not perfect, so if all they get are positive comments, they’ll know that the principal is not leveling with them. And third, teachers need candid criticism, specific and constructive, to improve their craft and so the best possible job with students, but it has to be delivered with tact and skill. (p.46)

Feedback can also indicate how much the lesson was enjoyed or how impressive the teacher delivery was. Feedback is also about reflecting on practice as a teacher. Stronge (2006) reminds us that while experience can be valuable in the teaching profession, experience without reflection does not improve instruction or teacher effectiveness. Rather it is a combination of experience and thoughtful analysis that makes teachers more effective.

Feedback is intended to allow teachers to grow from the evaluation experience and acts as a mirror to their practice. It is hoped that at the end of the day teachers will openly receive this feedback with the purpose of improving on practice. McLaughlin and Pfeifer (1988) states:

Feedback about performance can be effective only if it is received, it is heard, and if it is acted upon. The teacher evaluation activities we observed are those reported in the Rand Cooperation study join with the general literature on organizational behaviour to suggest that effective feedback is central to meaningful teacher evaluation. (p.125)

Feedback can however be effective if the person providing such feedback is knowledgeable, skilled and able to communicate with the teacher what happened during the evaluation process and what needs to be done to make it better or sustainable. It is for this reason that there is an emphasis on not just quality feedback, but quality evaluators. There will be no quality feedback, if there are no qualified, trained and capable evaluators. Andrews (2004) in his
study of Bridges (1990) suggested a number of “special knowledge and skills” needed from the evaluator to ensure the process of feedback is a good and effective one:

1. The ability to describe and analyze what is happening in a teacher’s classroom.
2. The ability to provide an unbiased rating of a teacher’s poor performance.
3. The ability to diagnose the cause(s) for a teacher’s poor performance.
4. The ability to prescribe remediation that is appropriate to the teacher’s classroom deficiencies.
5. The ability to conduct conferences with teachers regarding their instructional performance. (p.104)

Part Three: Problems and Issues - Policy, Practice and Perceptions

In policy development and in the broader field of educational administration, educators make decisions each and every day to achieve improvement in schools and education systems. Teacher performance evaluation is one of these reforms or policies that were created to ensure quality, accountability and growth. As time went on and the process went through more policy enhancement exercises it was redefined to accommodate different educational settings. Millman and Darling-Hammond (1990) in their discussion on policy as it relates to teacher performance evaluation, state:

Implementation of any school policy, including a teacher-evaluation policy, represents a continuous interplay among diverse policy goals, established rules and procedures (concerning both the policy in question and other aspects of the school’s operations), intergroup bargaining and value choices and the local institutional context. (p.20)

Gordon (2006) states, “Teacher evaluation and professional development are two leadership functions that historically have not been done well in our schools. All one needs to do is to ask teachers from several schools what they think of the two functions as currently practiced and you will receive informal verification of this analysis, often in rather blunt terms.” (p.268).
The word “standardization” is a very closely related concept to that of policy in the Jamaican context. Many teachers believe if something is a policy then it is automatically standard practice or standardized and the same process then applies to anyone. Anything done different from that policy is there a breach in the level of standardization and therefore a breach in the actual policy. This can be noted in the reporting of findings where participants argued for standardization of the process within all schools. For many Jamaican teachers, their perception and thus admiration for “standardization” comes from our historical autocratic schooling legacy where standing in a straight line, sitting neatly in rows listening to the teacher, teachers all dressing in a certain way, performing tasks to a similar standard is considered – success! Therefore in the Jamaican context, the idea of standardization is admired. This level of standardization is something still be admired and is considered discipline, being a part of the team, adhering to a policy and a hallmark of efficiency.

The impact of policy shows itself in practice. Practice is where the “rubber meets the road”, where the “proof of the pudding is in the eating.” Policy is without power if at the end it is not seen clearly through the working of the practice. We often see systematic problems where there is a lack of harmony between a policy and its practice. Millman and Darling-Hammond (1990) declare:

Teacher evaluation can be routine, pro forma activity with little utility for shaping what goes on in school, or it can be an important vehicle for communicating organizational and professional norms and for stimulating improvement….the outcomes of evaluation often depends as much on the condition under which it is designed and implemented as on the formal designs as it exists on a page. (p.19)

It is for this reason as stated above that the practice of teacher performance evaluation must be guided by sound policy. This policy must be clearly communicated to those affected by the practice. This is totally dependent on the practice held at the school level. Disconnect
sometimes occur when policy is designed and directed for implementation at the board or district level, when in actual fact it is carried out at the school level. The aim of an effective harmonized system is to ensure that those who carry out the practice at the school level understand the design, the intended purpose and usefulness of the policy as created at a higher level. There are many questions that one should ask at this point. What is the practice? Who is doing evaluation? How is evaluation being done? Are the answers to these questions in individual schools the same and if so do they correspond with what is defined in the policy document?

Attitudes (perceptions) of the stakeholders in the teacher performance evaluation process are essential to its impact as a policy and its implementation as a practice. Perception impacts:

- Understanding of the policy
- Buy in of the policy
- The value held about the policy
- The way policy is practiced at the school level
- Impacts the usefulness as it relates to the growth and development of teachers

Perception is reality for many people, and for teachers it was no different. Many saw the introduction of teacher performance evaluation as the infamous contentious process they have heard it to be and this perception propelled their emotional stress, encouraged fear and foster anxiety. In so doing, many of the elements of the teacher performance evaluation process therefore becomes issues of concern and/or problems.

**Part Four: Teacher Performance Evaluation – Supporting Teachers Work**

Earlier in this chapter I discussed the purpose of teacher performance evaluation and examined the process and the harmony that must exist between policy, process and perception. In this section of the literature review we will examine two areas of benefits: *teacher professional*
development and student achievement. Teacher evaluation, if done correctly, holds benefits at all levels of the education system. It is intended to be a win-win equation. Good teaching should lead to student achievement and automatically to school-wide effectiveness.

Professional development. There is much debate and discussion on the separation or combination of teacher performance evaluation and professional development. Professional development is defined as “the process or processes by which minimally competent teachers achieve higher levels of professional competence and expand their understanding of self, role, context, and career. This definition draws a clear distinction between the achievement of professional adequacy and the pursuit of professional excellence.” (Duke and Stiggins, 1990, p.117) Some stakeholders see the two as inseparable and working together in achieving the goals of teacher development, teacher effectiveness and school improvement. Proponents of formative evaluation share that the process of teacher performance evaluation is designed to enable teacher growth and development. Two of these proponents, Tucker and Stronge (2005) share:

Teacher evaluation systems are often intended to serve the purpose of providing feedback and guidance for improving professional practice. In fact, most authors identify the fundamental purposes of teacher evaluation as improving performance and documenting accountability. The performance improvement function relates to the personal growth dimension and involves helping teachers learn about, reflect on, and improve their practice. The improvement function generally is considered formative in nature and suggests the need for continuous professional growth and development. (p.6)

One of the primary problems with staff development is that it is usually treated as an independent entity. Schools and school systems usually have evaluation programs, instructional programs, financial plans, and staff development programs, but each is treated as if they are separate and nonrelated functions. Why are these functions not incorporated as interdependent parts of a single effort directed toward student outcomes? It is suggested in this chapter that staff development is derived from evaluation. Of course, evaluation and all components of the
curriculum delivery system must be interrelated and directed toward the central focus of the school or school system. (Manning, 1998, p.75)

Many researchers and school agents who have tested the teacher performance evaluation and professional development process and are indeed great supporters and proponents. The following argument is also provided by Wise and Gendler (1990). Based on their years of work both in policy and practices working with professional development, they contend:

It goes without saying that improvements in performance need not be linked to an evaluation system as formally defined in educational practice. Teachers can, introspect, read, take a course or be given advice by colleagues, students or administrators as a basis for improvement. In this sense, teacher improvement is closer to the term professional development….Evaluation for teacher improvement and professional development is a school district and individual responsibility. As an individual responsibility, it implies the acceptance of a professional ethic of continuous development – the need to improve oneself and to keep abreast of new knowledge. As a school district responsibility, the link between teacher improvement and professional development is obviously determined by the nature of the district’s evaluation system (p.384)

Teacher performance evaluation has indeed gotten a bad rap from many educational fields. There is much fear and trepidation on the part of teachers being evaluated and much cynicism on the part of school administrators on the purpose or true benefits of such a process. Stiggins and Duke (1998) noted, “In fact, much of what has been conceptualized about teacher evaluation over the past decade reflects this decidedly negative perspective.” (p.1). Those who have used teacher evaluation in a formative way, which is for growth and development, continue to see the benefits of such a process especially in the area of teacher growth and development. Stiggins and Duke (1998) supported this strong belief of the value of teacher performance evaluation in their work where they examined teacher evaluation as a commitment to growth:

This positive problem-solving approach to evaluation spurred by our strongly held views that teacher evaluation practices should be defined in terms of the best possible outcome for an evaluation: the professional growth of the teacher evaluated. . . .The second purpose is to promote the professional development of teachers. In this case, evaluations
provide information on teacher strengths and weaknesses, so appropriate training can be planned. (p.2)

In other collaborative work Duke and Stiggins (1990) identified five general areas in which teacher performance evaluation and professional development and growth can occur:

1. Instructional development emphasizes the development of skills involving instructional technology, microteaching, media, courses and curricula.
2. Professional development emphasizes growth of individual faculty in their professional roles.
3. Organizational development emphasizes the needs, priorities, and organization of the institution.
5. Personal development emphasizes life planning, interpersonal skills, and the growth of faculty as individuals. (p.117)

Duke and Stiggins are firm believers who are convinced that when teacher performance is done well, it can only lead to personal growth and professional esteem. They also believe poor evaluation indeed leads to anxiety and will drive qualified and effective teachers away from the profession. In their research focus for teacher evaluation leading to teacher development, these two proponents of teacher performance leading to professional development and teacher growth, back in 1986, performed a study of 30 teachers who had experience positive growth and attributed this growth to having had effective evaluations. In their study, the following were listed as the main contributing characteristics:

- There is a system-wide commitment to the evaluation process by the school board, administration, and teachers.
- Administrators and teachers are full partners in the design and monitoring of the evaluation process.
- Necessary resources – staff, materials, funds, and training – are available.
- There is a clear sense of the goal or purpose of the evaluation process.
- Teacher evaluation takes into account the individual teacher’s competence, personal expectations, openness to suggestions, orientation to change, subject knowledge and experience.
- Regular review of existing procedures, improvement of the teacher evaluation environment, and upgrading of the evaluators’ skills occur on an ongoing basis.
• Persons responsible for teacher evaluation have credibility, patience, trustworthiness and good supervisory track records as well as the ability to persuade those being evaluated of the need to change.
• Recommended and required evaluation procedures are carried out to the letter.
• Carefully planned procedures for feedback which is delivered, rich in specific suggestions, for change by the individual teacher, are in place (Andrew, 2004, pp.83-84)

Teacher performance evaluation and professional development should be viewed as the inseparable pair. Thomas (1984) posits, “An evaluation system, if well designed, teachers with the necessary feedback to assess their own professional growth. . . . The main purpose of evaluation should be to provide information to help teachers improve their teaching performance. Accordingly, a good evaluation system should reflect respect for individual worth and dignity by encouraging teachers to set personal and organizational objectives.” (p.2)

Professional development in relation to teacher performance evaluation will involve a number of key factors such as collaboration, trust, valuable, honest and meaningful feedback, and provision of resources that will be used in the teacher development process. Many of these resources can be found within the school system, as more advanced/experienced teachers can help underperforming or new teachers. Other times this help and development may need to come from teachers doing additional college credit courses, further education or advance subject matter courses. Duke and Stiggins (1990) state:

During the period between evaluations for accountability purposes, teachers and supervisors in these new systems undertake professional development activities. While the results of these activities are evaluated, the purpose of the evaluation is to provide formative feedback rather than a summative judgment. Eliminating annual evaluations for accountability frees school administrators to devote more time and energy to helping experienced teachers grow, thereby permitting them to function more as instructional leaders (Duke, 1987). In addition, by involving peers in the evaluation activities attending professional development, administrators can be freed to spend more time with teachers who are deficient in minimum performance standards. (p.129)
“Educators in highly effective schools….do not seem to regard the organizational culture as beyond their control. They talk about it and work on it as if it were a tool they can shape and wield to achieve outcomes they desire.” (Jerald 2006) The teacher sits at the heart of the school dynamics. Culture is learned and therefore teachers are at the heart of the learning process. A school culture sends signals to staff. In many schools the culture is defined by professionalism and collegiality. In some schools, the culture among staff is one of trust and collaboration and, in other school; there is a high level of mistrust and dislocation.

Teachers impact the school and its culture as they develop and as they growth. Wise and Gendler (1990) shares:

The use of individual formal teacher evaluation results as a guide to school improvement or collective staff development is not common. School improvement and staff development in America’s schools are generally motivated by developments external to school districts…. The notion that the evaluation of teachers should be reflected in school improvement and staff development is based on the idea that managers will evaluate individual teachers and then plan collective activities to remedy their deficiencies…. This shift, while not representing a shift among levels of government, does restructure the functions at the school or school district level. Teachers and administrators jointly assess the state of practice in the district and plan staff development and school improvement activities. In this way, the expertise of the teaching staff is unleashed and brought to bear on evaluating practice, planning and delivering staff development, and improving school performance. (p.387)

**Student achievement.**

The most compelling information about teacher quality lies in the learning gains made while students have that teacher. However, we also care about the conditions of that learning, and it is not possible to document the achievement gains attributed to all teachers in all situations. When the primary indicator of student achievement is not available, we must turn to secondary indicators such as the processes and materials of teaching, the reports of satisfaction of students and parents, and the third-level indicators of preparation to teach well as evidenced by documentation of professional activity. (Peterson & Peterson, 2006, p.40)
In this paper student achievement refers to all performance related documents and activities that can be used in the formal educational setting to measure individual growth and development. These include standardized tests, teacher-made tests, class assessments and evaluations, and reading levels. Peterson (2000) recommends, “A wide range of classroom assessment techniques should be considered and used by the teacher.” (p.148). This of course is another area of contention within the teacher performance evaluation studies and discussions. Some teachers are for the practice and others are totally opposed to it. Some researches describe student achievement as the most compelling line of evidence for teacher quality; others consider it as inadequate to form judgment on its own. Peterson (1995) sheds some light on both arguments:

Student achievement, how much and what pupils learn, is the single most important concern, about educational programs. To many, it presents the most compelling evidence about teacher quality. In particular, the interest is in what students gain while working with the teacher – the difference between where pupils start and end in their achievement. Essentially, this data source requires a determination of the contributions of the teacher, or teacher effects, on student learning. Advocates for using pupil achievement in teacher evaluation argue that if students are leaning important well, other issues like teacher preparation and teaching methods are not of much concern. . . . Teacher quality and effort are not always directly tied to student learning. For example, lack of student effort can thwart the effects of the most brilliant teachers. in addition, research shows that such factors as parental expectations, prior achievement, socioeconomic status, and the general educational quality of the home ( value, reading , conversations, travel) add up to a greater influence on pupil learning than does the teacher. (pgs. 112 – 113)

Other researchers in the field have also examined the possibility of using students’ achievement in teacher performance evaluation and have concluded that the practice is something to be cautioned. Nolan and Hoover (2011) states:

Student performance is not a direct measure of teacher performance. The teacher cannot control the student behaviour. Students always have the final say. They make the decisions about how much effort they will put into learning. Sometimes this decision reflects directly on the quality of the teacher’s performance; other times, it says very little about the teacher’s performance. The difficulty encountered by those who wish to use
student learning as proximal measure of teacher performance is that the relationship between student effort and teacher performance is often not very clear. Unless student learning data is coupled with other data sources such as administrator observations, teacher materials and video recordings, it is impossible to ascertain to what degree there is a relationship between student learning and teacher performance. (p.74)

It is assumed that if teachers are growing in personal mastery, this means they are doing better at their craft, which means they are teaching better, which means that students should be achieving more. Travers (1981) shares:

Over the last half-century there has been a slow accumulation of studies that have attempted to discover relationship between pupils' measured gains in achievement under a particular teacher and the personal characteristics of that teacher. Such studies generally show the kind of relationship between teacher behavior and pupil learning that one would expect on the basis of common sense, though not always so. Teachers most effective in producing learning are clear in the expression of their ideas, variable and flexible in their approaches to teaching, enthusiastic, task-oriented and so forth. (p.19)

This achievement in formal education is most commonly measured by test scores and standardized examinations. Many teachers are against the idea of test scores and other forms of student achievement measurement being linked to their performance evaluation. If the ultimate goal of teaching is to foster student growth and achievement, many other scholars then see no reason why student achievement as an ultimate part of the teacher performance evaluation process should not be linked. However, many teachers have their own reasons why student achievement should not be linked to teacher performance evaluation.

Barrett (1986) states that “Nationally standardized student achievement examinations often are used to evaluate teachers and schools systems by ranking the student, class and school according to national norms. Research shows that under certain circumstances tests scores are positively correlated with teacher behavior.” (p.3) Lashway (1999) further strengthens this argument during the explosive period where all educational stakeholders were call for more accountability in schools, and this accountability to be more measurable. He noted:
The call for greater school accountability has found a receptive national audience. At a time of rising costs and declining achievement, Americans thought it only common sense to hold educators responsible. Educators themselves may question specific policies but rarely argue that they not be held accountable. . . . Schools leaders now must not only do well, but also demonstrate they are doing well. . . At one time, principals and teachers could satisfy the demands of accountability simply by working hard and following accepted professional standards. . . Rigorous content standards are established; student progress is tested; professional development is aligned with standards and test results; results are public reports; and results lead to rewards, sanctions, and targets assistances.

This level of accountability and call for teacher performance evaluation to be linked with student achievement has been echoed in many national educational systems seeking improvement, teacher effectiveness and greater accountability in and out of the classrooms. This is still a very sensitive topic and the line of support for using student achievement to measure teacher performance is still split down the middle. Travers (1981) discusses the early dynamics:

The difficulties of assessing teacher effectiveness in terms of test scores of pupils seem to be almost insuperable at this time. Although such an idea has been backed with enthusiasm by some administrators, school boards, writers in the popular press, and even by some groups of parents in the present age, these groups have often been motivated by a resurgence of the idea of applying concepts of business efficiency to education. Whether this is a practical idea is a real question. There are also questions whether, in schools that have good materials, the responsibility for learning should rest with the pupil or with the teacher. (p.19)

**Conclusion**

Ineffective teacher evaluation systems and practices will minimize dialogue, reinforce institutional hierarchies, and risk poisoning otherwise productive working relationships among school professionals. Administrators must work together with teachers to set performance goals, training needs and career opportunities. That is why it is so important in the induction process of any organization that employees are made to know the organization’s goals and know exactly what is expected of them in any particular job area or task. The best teacher evaluation systems
let administrators and teachers communicate – share ideas, opinions, and information. Danielson and McGreal (2000) contribute:

There are no experts in the complex act of teaching, and all practitioners can learn from one another. A collaborative culture of inquiry requires that teachers and administrators all expect the activities they do as part of the evaluation process to be professionally rewarding. Leadership is required to maintain focus on the quality of student learning, but within that context everyone in the school is “in it together” to enhance student achievement, and their efforts should be seen as working in concert. (p.29)

Unfortunately most traditional reviews/appraisals put administrators into the position of uncomfortable judges, ostensibly telling teachers how their work either fit the bill – or didn’t. This is one of the many reasons why teachers see the performance appraisal system as so threatening. They fear being evaluated and many don’t see the need for development since they are already trained and/or certified teachers. Arreola (2007) adds:

No one enjoys being evaluated. Few people enjoy being told that they need to improve, or, worse, need to be developed – especially people who have spent six to eight years in college being evaluated and developed to the point where they have been awarded advanced degrees. Thus, the overall phenomenon of faculty resistance is composed of two reactions: resistance to being evaluated and apathy toward being developed… This last anxiety is not unusual or unexpected, even though most faculty may attribute most of their concern to the second factor. (p. xxv)

It is not an instrument designed and constructed to make the process of termination official possibly because of these most traditional appraisals are no better than the administrator’s off-the-cuff judgments and some can be illegal. “Having teachers without sufficient time, training, or expertise running around with the same old checklist, squeezing in observations of other teachers will not enhance the quality of teacher supervision or improve opportunities for professional development.” (Evans and Tomlinson, 1989)

Because of these problems, new types of appraisal are coming into play. Most require that evaluation be done not for raises and bonuses, as just a thing that must be done at the end of the year for the infamous staff termination determination form, or for growth, development and
communication between the employee and other people. Organizations and institutions benefit from better communication and management. A good teacher evaluation system can help to improve communication, while aiding people to increase their own effectiveness and to clarify their own jobs and responsibilities. This communication and collaboration contributes and aids in teacher growth and teacher self-assessment and intentionally or unintentionally leads to professional development and school-wide effectiveness which fosters a culture of growth and development. Danielson and McGreal (2000) share:

A system that builds in collaboration, particularly if that collaboration demands reflection on practice, is more likely to yield genuine effort than one that does not… Teachers are professionals; they are practitioners of a complex craft. Teachers tend to know where their areas of strength and relative weakness lie and are keen to bring all areas of their practice to higher levels. If provided with a safe and respectful environment, most teachers will choose to concentrate their efforts at professional growth in those areas in which they have the greatest need. (pgs. 24-25)

Also an innovative system could not only improve the performance of the workers but also help them to work together, with common goals and few obstacles. It is also important to remember to include the employees in the process.

“Performance appraisal can be a good way for organizations to boost employees’ motivation and hone their competitive edge. But creating useful performance appraisals and making sure they are used effectively throughout an organization is not easy. It is common knowledge that most managers and employees find participating in formal performance appraisals as appealing as having a root canal. It is however also true, for better or worse – formal appraisals are an inescapable part of organizational life.”(Longenecker and Fink, 1999)

The process of evaluation introduces a number of ways to determine teacher development, professional growth, student achievement and school wide progress. Evaluators and teachers have choices about how the classroom instruction and their total performance are viewed and analysed. Time invested in teacher evaluation improvement is time well spent as teachers engage in developmental strategies and make better choices about their teaching and learning situation. Weiss and Weiss (1998) share:
The next generation of evaluation systems will further integrate teacher accountability with professional growth. Eisner (1992) conceives of evaluation as inherently part of teachers’ everyday work life. Evaluation needs to be participatory and reflective in order to be meaningful for teachers. Reform of teacher evaluation systems is already supporting the success of broader school reform efforts, which include the requirements of teachers’ evolving roles—the goal of these changes being meaningful learning experiences for our children.

School administrators can get wary in the process and just view it as another set of paperwork. Nolan (2004) reminds us;

Districts that abandon teacher evaluation or that fails to take it seriously shirk their moral commitment to ensure that no child is harmed by the instruction received. Consequently, teacher evaluation is a legalistic and bureaucratic process. It must be carefully articulated to ensure that the rights of the state and its children are protected and to ensure that the teachers’ rights to due process are not violated. (p.28)

In many schools teacher evaluation has become a bureaucratic requirement that is done at the end of the school year, filed away in a teacher’s permanent record and becomes history.

Teachers anticipate a brief annual visit from the principal, who, according to the stereotype, stands stone, faced at the back of the classroom filling in a form. And principals rush to squeeze in their visits to teachers amid their myriad other duties. Hurried conferences are held and forms are filled and signed. The exercise does little for teachers except contribute to their weariness and reinforce their skepticism of bureaucratic routine.” (Evans and Tomlinson 1989)

The general purpose of teacher evaluation is to safeguard and improve the quality of instruction received by students, therefore it is vital that a process is provided that allows and encourages supervisors and teachers to work together to improve and enhance classroom instructional practices.

The primary purpose of evaluation is the improvement of teaching and learning. It is not to seek out the incompetent teacher. It is hoped that when teachers are given proper evaluation that follows a systematic and standardized methodology, it will foster their personal development of mastery in the areas of needs. Administrators should enter the evaluation process thinking teachers are competent; it is there to recognise and record that competence and to provide
support to help improve the teacher’s skills. The single most important aim of this whole process is to make the teacher better and improve students’ learning.
Chapter four: Methodology

The Design

The purpose of this study is to understand the teacher performance evaluation process from the vantage point of trained Jamaican public school teachers. This study took place in Jamaica with a small number of participants from across the island. For this study I chose to use the qualitative methods of inquiry as influenced by interpretivists and constructivists such as Glense (1999), Lincoln and Guba (1985), Denzin and Lincoln (1994) and Eisner (1993).

There were few questions that I had to internalize. I examined the purpose and desired outcome of my study and weighed the strength and weakness of methods in relation to my particular research concept. In deciding which research method to use, consideration was given to the purpose of my inquiry, my primary audiences for the findings, the questions that would guide my inquiry, what data would best illuminate the inquiry questions and what resources were available. I wanted to employ a research approach that would allow me to give the participants full range to share and discuss openly without constraint particular issues that impacted their daily lives and working environment directly. I was convinced that qualitative research approach could accomplish this. Patton (2002) argues for such method of inquiry, “Qualitative methods facilitate study of issues in depth and detail. Approaching fieldwork without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry. (p.14)

Through the qualitative method of inquiry I was better able to capture people’s inner experiences. I could learn more about their perceptions and how they interpreted those perceptions. It is also important that in such cases I could document how events have affected
their thoughts and feelings and this can be gleaned from body language, facial expressions, gestures and other non-verbal cues. As such, I chose to do the interviews in person, rather than over the phone. My reason for using qualitative method of inquiry can be supported by Weiss (1994) as he listed the research aims that would make qualitative inquiry the method of choice:

(a) Developing detailed descriptions.
(b) Integrating multiple perspectives.
(c) Developing holistic description.
(d) Learning how events are interpreted.
(e) Bridging intersubjectivities (pgs. 9-10)

The following arguments for qualitative methods, offered by Merriam (1998) were also used to guide this decision:

a. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world. (p.6)
b. This type of research builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than tests existing theory. (p.7)
c. The researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. (p.7)
d. The product of qualitative research is richly descriptive. Words and pictures, rather than numbers are used to convey what the researcher has learned about the phenomenon. (p.7)

Dei, Mazzuca, McIsaac & Zine (1997) state that:

The openness of this type of inquiry and how it allows the researcher to approach the inherent complexity of social interaction and to do justice to that complexity, to respect it in its own right . . . Qualitative method instead recognizes that reality is a social construct in which complexity and context of the emerging data must be considered; the subject not the methods should be the primary focus.” (p.32)

In the qualitative approach, the feelings, thoughts and ideas of the participants are seen as crucial in expressing the findings to the intended audience. It will allow me to capture the actual experiences of those involved, which may prove difficult, if not impossible to express in numerical terms.
This study is a descriptive-exploratory research study. Its goal was to explore the reactions and perceptions of trained public school teachers in Jamaica to the present teacher performance evaluation programme. This descriptive design was used “to get a rough sense of what is happening on a particular topic for which we don’t yet have enough information.” (Nardi, 2003, p.10).

The choice of an exploratory study to support the research questions is appropriate for three reasons. First, “exploratory research is warranted when an interesting issue has not been subject to prior theory or empirical research” (Schwab, 2004, p.294). Second, “findings from exploratory research are better thought of as hypothesis generating” (Schwab, 2004, p.294). Additionally, the exploratory design was used to “provide basic information describing the topic and respondents involved” (Nardi, 2003, p.10). I am connected to this work as a Jamaican teacher myself who is convinced my growth and development as a teacher could have been better nurtured if I was given the opportunity of an effective teacher performance evaluation.

I chose a qualitative research design because I wanted individuals intimately involved in teacher evaluation to share their teacher evaluation experiences. It was important for me to use individuals who were so close to the action so that their meaning could be constructed. I particularly wanted this meaning to be constructed by those persons who have to deal with the process on a daily basis. Eisner (1993) writes that “experience is the bedrock upon which meaning is constructed and that experience in significant degree depends on our ability to get in touch with the qualitative world we inhabit” (p. 5) The work of Eisner (1993) supports the notion that we do research to understand. “We try to understand in order to make our schools better places for both the children and the adults who share their lives” (p. 10). These teachers whose lived experience was teacher performance evaluation were more than able to provide their
own meanings and through this process helped me to better understand their lived experience as it is situated within the larger context of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica.

**Recruitment**

Potential participants were solicited through snowball sampling. I have been living away from Jamaican for over ten (10) years and so I needed teachers who could recruit others to help. “Start with those who are available to you and ask for referrals.” (Weiss, 1994, p.25). He also informs that the people who I want to interview are likely to know others like themselves. I believed that the use of snowball sampling and particularly through word of mouth would get the expected results faster. There were teachers I wanted to reach in the rural areas, bearing in the mind the added challenge that many teachers do not use or have ready access to email or social media. Teachers also do not have official work email, as in Ontario, Canada, where each teacher is assigned an official school board email. Snowball sampling would also be more effective since a teacher informing another colleague about the research would be somewhat of a recommendation for them to participate as this verbal conversation would offer my intentions as genuine and me as trustworthy. I am also aware that snowball sampling can underrepresent those who have a few social contacts and limit participant to those who are only in a particular circle. This however, was prevented as I was able to gather more interested people then needed and was strategic in making sure that I used persons from very different parts of the island.

The initial participants were solicited through word of mouth and social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn. I had contact with a number of Jamaican teachers through past professional relationships and interactions. After the ethical approval process, I sent potential participants the information email, posted the information as a Note in Facebook and sent
messages in LinkedIn (Appendix D) which outlined the plan for the study. These initial contacts were then asked to circulate the information email to other teachers they believe may be interested and able to participate.

These contacts gave my contact information and asked interested teachers to email or message me in Facebook or LinkedIn. This communication/interaction continued through email or social media with those who showed an initial interest. At that time, I thanked them for their interest, informed them of my present enrollment at the University of Toronto and my plans for my upcoming research project. In some circumstances I had to send them another copy of the information email to ensure they were fully informed. At that time they were provided with other possible contact information including my telephone number. I requested of them an email address at which I could send all future correspondence relating to this research. I allowed them between 1-3 days to reflect on their desire to participate and ask any questions they may have and then provide me with an initial confirmation of interest. This initial interest was indicated by a written reply of “yes” through email, Facebook or LinkedIn or a verbal “yes” via telephone. Most participants responded within 2-5 days.

The demographic survey questionnaire (Appendix A) was then sent by email to all persons who had indicated an interest. They were asked to complete this within a week and return it to me by email. The majority of the participants completed and returned it within the time frames; others completed the survey immediately before their interview. This information was then used to reinforce the commitment to participate and gather demographic information which assisted me in the gathering of information about each participant in order to compose a detailed profile of each participant. All participants are first language English speakers and as such there was no need to translate recruitment materials.
The Sample

The inclusion criteria for selection can be summarized as trained Jamaican teachers who are currently employed in public schools and have undergone teacher performance evaluation using the new 2004 evaluation process at least once. Fifteen (15) participants took part in the research. I was then able to arrange a suitable interview time and location. It was my original intention to have the participants drawn from the different levels (infant, primary, All-age & Secondary/High Schools) and schools. However, based on the direction of the snowball effect I had to use more than one teacher from a school type, but did not exceed two participants. Table 8 gives a summary of the 15 participants, followed by a description of each participant.

I believe that this sample of participants has provided me with very rich data. Participant’s demographics were diverse in relation to age, years of classroom experience, geographical location, educational level, experiences of teacher performance evaluation before 2004, present positions and roles held in schools, and in some cases, experience with teacher performance evaluation from both angles of evaluator and evaluatee. I also realized that having conducted quite a few of the interviews on the school ground contributed to the participants’ high levels of comfort, relaxation and openness. I had previously assumed that they would have been more comfortable and open being away from the school, but was very delighted to know that many teachers wanted to be interviewed at school during their lunch and planning periods. Glesne (1999) states, “School-based interviews usually follow a teacher’s free-period schedule and a student’s study-hall period. Barring these class-time opportunities, before and after school and lunchtimes are other possibilities. Consider evening meetings if they are a teacher’s preference.” (p. 78)
The demographic survey collected information related to gender, age, educational level, years of teaching, school type, and geographical location. As part of setting the tone for the interview and developing rapport with the participants, preliminary questions/dialogues about their general teaching career, their class dynamics, and the socio–economic setting of the school were also included. This I decided after the first two interviews, realizing that there was a need for a period of ease at the beginning. It was important that participants found the session to be pleasurable and comfortable. This idea is supported by Glesne (1999):

Rapport is tantamount to trust, and trust is the foundation for facilitating full and detailed answers to your questions…You must also remember your responsibility for the quality of the respondent’s experience. Are you attending to aspects of the interview that make it not just agreeable but pleasurable for the respondent? Just as your pleasure may be confined to the verbal goods you receive, your respondents’ pleasure derives from the satisfaction of talking to you. How satisfied respondents are can affect their willingness to continue to talk to you, the effort they put into their talk, and what they may tell other interview candidates about being your interviewee. (pgs. 82-83)

The fact that I could only get four males of the fifteen participants was in no way deliberate, but due in part to two reasons. Firstly, snowball sampling process was used and I did not have the luxury of refusing too many participants, since most of these were the ones who were willing and readily available during my data collection trip to Jamaica. Secondly, the ratio is also a true reflection of the Jamaican teaching population, as there are far less male teachers in the teaching profession than females. In a report prepared by Barbara Baily for UNESCO on gender and educational policy in Jamaica, she provides data, where at the primary level, grades 1-6; there were 617 male teachers and 5286 female teachers. Bailey (2003) declares:

At the highest level of the education system where policy and decisions that govern the system are determined, there is an approximate 1.5:1 female to male ratio and females are, therefore, well represented in decision-making structures of the system. In the general teaching force there is approximately a 3.3:1 female/male ratio. (p.2)
Table 8
Participants’ Demographic Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Highest qualification</th>
<th>Years teaching experience</th>
<th>School Level</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Receive Evaluation before 2004</th>
<th>Number of Evaluation in last school Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P01</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Teachers’ Diploma</td>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P02</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P03</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>11 – 20</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Teachers’ Diploma</td>
<td>6 – 10</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P06</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>11 – 20</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P08</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>20 +</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P09</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>11 – 20</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>20 +</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>11 – 20</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>20 +</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Teachers’ Diploma</td>
<td>2 – 5 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participant P01** is a young male teacher in his late twenties who has been teaching for the past four years in a rural primary school. He teaches Grades two and three, a total of 40 students in a small obviously over crowded space. He holds a Teachers’ Diploma in Primary Education with a focus on literacy. He is presently pursuing his Bachelor’s Degree in Literacy Studies online. The interview was conducted in a small room in the school that served as both staff room, sick bay and store room. Though humble and cozy in nature, it provided a private setting that was conducive for the interview.
Participant P02 is a male teacher in his late twenties who holds a Bachelor’s degree and has been teaching for the last five years in one of the country’s most prestigious all boys school, classified by the Ministry of Education as a traditional high school. This school is located in the capital, Kingston. During the interview he beams with pride when he talks about his school’s holistic approach to education and his personal feeling of fulfillment and accomplishment as an educator. He has planned to migrate to North America at the end of the present school year. The interview was conducted in the study hall of the University Campus. He started teaching after 2004 so was unable to make a comparison or share reflection on any experience of teacher performance evaluation before 2004.

Participant P03 is a female in her early forties who holds a Bachelor’s Degree and has been working as a special educator in one of the largest urban primary schools in Jamaica for the last six years. She has been teaching for almost twenty years and had never received any form of official teacher performance evaluation before 2004. The interview was conducted in an exquisite garden restaurant located in a sub-suburban area of St. Andrew’s parish.

Participant P04 is a female teacher in her early thirties who holds a Teachers’ Diploma in Primary Education and has been teaching in a large urban primary school (enrolment approximately 1800) located in a densely populated dormitory community. She has been teaching for the past nine and a half years. Presently, she is being evaluated once per term, but had never received evaluation before 2004. The interview was conducted in a computer lab during her prep time.

Participant P05 is a female teacher in her early fifties who recently completed a Bachelor’s degree. She has been teaching at the same school for over thirty years and indicated
that she never received any form of evaluation before 2004. The interview was conducted in her classroom as the students were in another room taking a mock exam for Grade Six Achievement Test - GSAT (Jamaica’s official national standardized assessment for students entering secondary education, which is taken in grade 6).

**Participant P06** is a female in her thirties who holds a Bachelor’s degree and has been teaching in a popular traditional high school for the last eleven years. As head of department (HOD), she has experienced evaluation as both evaluator and evaluatee. She is one of the few participants who had experienced some form of formal evaluation before 2004 and notably one of the few participants not evaluated at her last school. The interview was conducted in a very small staff room. The space was intimate and the participant was very relaxed and assertive.

**Participant P07** is a young female teacher in her early twenties and very new to the profession. She is in her second year of teaching. She holds a Bachelor’s degree and teaches in a large urban traditional single sex high school. The interview took place in a small quiet staff room during the first period of the day, her prep time. Being new in her career, and having started teaching after 2004 she was unable to make a comparison or share reflection on any experience of teacher performance evaluation before 2004.

**Participant P08** is a female teacher in her fifties and has been teaching at a small rural primary school (student population 134) for twenty-eight years. She holds a Bachelor’s degree and is second in line to the principal, being the only senior teacher on staff. The interview took place in a quiet staff room. The general tone of the school was significantly quiet as it was lunch time with so many students at play. She shared of receiving some form of evaluation, though unofficial, before 2004.
Participant P09 is a female teacher in her thirties who holds a Bachelor’s degree and has been teaching for over ten years, the last three at this present small rural primary school. The school is located in a farming community and recently performed impressively on the National Education Inspectorate (NEI). The interview was conducted in the staff room during a specialist break. She too shared receiving some form of school-based performance evaluation before 2004.

Participant P10 is female in her fifties who holds a Bachelor’s degree and has been teaching for over twenty years in a large rural primary school. The interview was conducted in her classroom while students were actively engaged elsewhere with volunteers. She had never received any form of teacher performance evaluation before 2004.

Participant P11 is a female in her twenties who holds a Bachelor’s Degree and has been teaching in a large rural school for four years. She shares a divided classroom and teaches fourth stream of a six stream grade. The interview was conducted in an empty classroom at the end of the school day. She started teaching after 2004 so was unable to make a comparison or share reflection on any experience of teacher performance evaluation before 2004.

Participant P12 is a male teacher in his late thirties, who has been teaching for over fifteen years in a large (estimated 1500 students), double shift, and co-ed urban new high school. An estimated eighty percent of these students are placed in this school after not being able to attain a space in the traditional high school, and are from neighbouring inner city communities, some of which have high incidence of crime and violence. He recently completed a Bachelor’s degree and is looking forward to beginning his master’s degree during the upcoming school year. The interview was conducted in the early morning in a fast food restaurant. He has had experience of some form of school-based teacher performance evaluation before 2004.
Participant P13 is a female in her early twenties who holds a Teachers’ Diploma. She is new to the profession, this being her second year and teaching in a very small rural primary school. She teaches a small mixed ability group of grade one students some of whom are engaging in formal education for the first time at age seven. Attendance is an issue in this small farming community. The interview was conducted in a small comfortable staffroom. Being new to the profession, she was unable to make a comparison or share reflection on any experience of teacher performance evaluation before 2004.

Participant P14 is a female in her late fifties who holds a Bachelor’s degree and has been teaching for twenty-eight years in a small rural primary school. She has experienced evaluation from both sides because she is the only senior teacher on staff. She spoke of retiring this year after over forty years in the teaching profession as both a pre-trained and trained teacher. The interview was conducted in a quiet staffroom. She never experienced any form of teacher performance evaluation before 2004.

Participant P15 is a young male teacher in his early twenties who holds a Teachers’ Diploma and is in his second year of teaching. He teaches in a very large urban, prestigious, single sex, traditional high school. The school is popular for having a vibrant parent teachers association (P.T.A.) and supportive alumni association. An estimated eighty percent of these students come from middle class to upper class families. The interview was conducted at an apartment. He started teaching after 2004 so was unable to make a comparison or share reflection on any experience of teacher performance evaluation before 2004.
Instrumentation

I developed an instrument, a semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix B) which was used to gather the perceptions and reactions of the teachers to their teacher Performance Evaluation process. The respondents were asked carefully crafted questions and were free to respond to them in their own words. I chose to use a semi-structured interview schedule that sacrificed uniformity but achieved fuller development of information. This decision is supported by Weiss (1994) as he posits, “we gain in the coherence, depth, and density of the material each respondent provides. We permit ourselves to be informed as we cannot be by brief answers to survey items.” (p.3)

The interview schedule was used to collect teachers’ previous experience with the teacher evaluation processes, their perceptions of the present teacher evaluation process, recommendations for future development, and any other information deemed necessary in order to gain a clear view of the teachers’ individual reactions. These interview questions were developed from the major research questions and the conceptual framework. Though subjected to modification, omissions or substitutions, the majority of the interviews were conducted without modifications of the questions. However, due to the flow of the interview I did not find it necessary to ask all set questions in a few instances. This occurred as I reviewed my interview notes after each interview. Glesne (1999) expounds:

Review your notes, listen to the tapes, and transcribe as soon after the interview as possible. In these ways, you also gain some idea of how you are doing as an interviewer, what you need to improve, what you have learned, and what points you need to explore further. If you wait until you have completed all of your interview before hearing your tapes (or reviewing your notes), then you have waited too long to learn what they can teach you….As you move from respondent to respondent, the nature of the interaction will change, as will, depending on the topic discussed, the location of the interview, and the temper of the times. (p. 80)
This was necessary in order to accommodate not just the possible emergence of new issues, but also to enable a comfortable strategic flow of the discussion during the interview process.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

During the interview process, all information was recorded using a laptop. In all of the initial cases participants were not comfortable with their voice being tape recorded, and the recording was done using the laptop. I found that this pattern worked well for me and I gained somewhat of an initial control over the data management process. Therefore, I decided to conduct the remaining interviews using the laptop. I was technically capable of doing this since I was a trained typist and have worked for years as a school secretary and speed typing was part of my job description and among my most common task.

This data collection was done through speed typing and only in a few instances was there a need to ask participants to regulate their response. Because the participants knew I was typing their response, they would pace themselves while responding to questions and also would repeat their thought if they felt that I needed more time to type their response. I typed verbatim as participants shared. I decided to make this option available to participants based on previous research experience within the Caribbean context. Many of the participants did not want their voice recorded and I felt strongly that this level of discomfort with the tape-recorded process would have influenced their responses and provided me with less rich data. Of course the drawback to this process was that I was unable to attend to all the non-verbal cues and sustained eye-contact. Glesne (1999) states:

You can only intermittently maintain eye contact and attend to all of the verbal and nonverbal cues that have bearing on your procedure. Interviewees may generally be
patient and slow down, even wait for you to catch up if you explain your desire to capture their words as fully as possible. (p.78)

The participants were comfortable and the process proved to be far less obtrusive. This philosophy was further supported by Glesne (1999):

Whether by hand, audiotape, or videotape is a matter of your needs and the respondents’ consent. It is not quite a toss-up as to whether you note by hand or tape recorder. With handwritten notes (or notes typed into your laptop computer), you are closer to being done writing when your interview is done; this is their distinct advantage. Also noting by hand is less obtrusive and less intimidating to some persons. (p. 78)

In the initial phase, data analysis was done simultaneously with data collection. This enabled me to remained focus and shape the study as it proceeded. The process also encouraged a consistent reflection and organization as I tried to discover what the data was telling me.

Merriam (1998) declares:

The right way to analyze data in a qualitative study is to do it simultaneously with data collection. At the outset of a qualitative study, the investigator knows what the problem is and has selected a sample to collect data in order to address the problem….Without ongoing analysis, the data can be unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming in the sheer volume of material that needs to be processed. Data that have been analyzed while being collected are both parsimonious and illuminating. Simultaneous data collection and analysis occurs both in and out of the field. That is, you can be doing some rudimentary analysis while you are in the process of collecting data. (p.162)

I was very comfortable taking my time to read and engage very closely with the data. This also gave me a higher level of personal engagement with the data. I did however ensure that all data was properly recorded in a standard word processor and I also created a system of retrieval of my own design using Microsoft word. This was very much in order to manage my data. Merriam (1998) states “computer does not analyze qualitative data, it only manages it.” (p.167). Creswell (2002) corroborates this notion saying, “unquestionably, there is no single way to analyze qualitative data – it is an elective process in which you try to make sense of the information” (p.258).
I then engaged the participants in member checking where copies of interview transcripts were sent to participants to review. At this time participants had the opportunity to provide additional information and make other suggestions to ensure that their sharing and ideas are being represented accurately. This process also provided the least amount of ambiguity and ensured an established agreement with participants on the information gathered. Participants were also given the opportunity to decide whether they would like any part of the interview omitted.

The narratives will guide the analytical process. The teachers’ interview played the major role in the creation of knowledge in this research. These narratives were treated with a high level of respect and all information was treated and considered important. These teachers did not just trust me with their narratives; they also became vulnerable when they expressed their emotions and desires. Dei et al (1997) state, “methodologically, the qualitative, and particularly the ethnographic, approach has the advantage of preserving the individual stories and highlighting some of the common threads of a shared experience.” (p.34)

I designed a preliminary outline to organize the information according to my research questions. I gave each group of information tentative names as I read and reread each transcript, writing the name of the code/domain in the margin wherever a statement or critical incident appeared to be related. Colourful sticky notes were also used to highlight interesting and study-relative points to be used as actual quotes within the final paper. As the interviews proceeded and transcripts were reviewed, additional themes emerged into which large chunks of narratives were placed. Glesne (1999) states, “As the process of naming and locating your data bits proceed, your categories divide and subdivide…in the early days of data collection, coding can help you to develop a more specific focus.” (p.133). These themes along with the previous codes/domains
were reviewed and proper names given that would be used in the data interpretation section of the final paper. The computer was used in the data preparation and data management process. In particular I created my own data management/organization system using Microsoft office programs.

I started out by chucking/placing information in preselected categories/themes based on my research questions. Some of these categories/themes were - Problems, Feedback, Evaluation, Team, and Observation. This was done by using search word, which would locate all responses with that work. I would colour code these and then return to read them individually for actual relevance to the pre-selected category/theme. While reading responses, other related common arguments emerged and these would form new categories/themes. Examples of these were quotes on fear, anxiety and others related to collaboration and trust. I had to determine where quotes spoke of more than one theme, where within the paper would that statement make a better contribution to the conversation. After this was done, I read through all the transcripts where no colour was added. These were then placed within themes based on their relevance. Most of the information was able to be placed in categories/themes since the interview process was very deliberate and being semi-structured, I was able to redirect participants to ensure that the information I received was relevant. The remaining quotes were disregarded since not everything that was said could be used or was relevant to immediate themes of the study.

Ethical Issues

Prior to participating in the Demographic survey questionnaire and interview, I emailed a letter to the participants outlining their participation and soliciting their signature confirming their consent (Appendix C). Completing and submitting the completed questionnaire was the participant’s first official indication of consent. Once the interview time and location was
confirmed, participants were informed that they could sign the form and return it to me in person when I arrived for the actual interview, at which time I reviewed the consent form orally again and answered any questions they had before starting the interview.

The letter contained information that participants needed to know in order to sign the consent form. The letter contained the title of the project and my contact information and that of my supervisor. Participants were informed that the project’s main purpose was to examine how Jamaican Public School Teachers perceive the present Teacher Performance Evaluation process implemented by the Ministry of Education in 2004. My aim was to explore what is being done in the process, how much of what is to be done is actually being done, and who is doing what is to be done. I wanted to understand teacher perceptions and to give the teachers a voice on issues concerning their own evaluation. They were told that the interview would take forty-five to seventy-five minutes and I would be asking questions about their general perceptions of teacher performance evaluation, the 2004 Ministry of Education teacher performance evaluation process and how they viewed its impact and influence on their work and their growth and development as a teacher.

They were told that the session will be tape recorded and transcribed and they would be asked to sign for their specific approval of this point. They had the option of choosing if they did not wish to be tape recorded or to have their participation recorded by speed typing. They were informed that their participation was completely voluntary and they would be free to withdraw at any time. Participants were told that at no time will they be judged or evaluated and at no time would they be at risk of harm and no value judgment will be placed on their responses. They were informed that they may also refuse to answer any questions that they were not comfortable with. They were also informed that the information was to be retained in a secure location in my
home and kept confidential as their names and the names of their schools would not be used in the study in reports, publications and presentations.

In order to maintain confidentiality of each participant, each participant was given a case number and all documents will be numbered accordingly in the participant’s file along with any notes taken. Where the participant named specific institutions or persons in the interview, these were given a factitious title or name in the final transcription of the data and not mentioned by name or title in the dissertation or in any publication.

In the transcripts, names and other identifying information about participants were systematically changed. Identifying codes that could connect participants were also changed. Pseudonyms were utilized. Names of schools were also held in confidence and pseudonyms used. Through the use of pseudonyms, no reference to participants’ personal contact information or identity would appear in the interview transcripts or in any other oral or written communications or publications arising from interviews. Participants were informed in the consent forms that the data will continue to be confidential in the publications, public presentations and other reports if they are to be used.
Chapter five: Teachers’ Understanding of Teacher Performance Evaluation

This chapter reveals the findings of teachers’ understanding of a number of areas associated with evaluation. The first section focuses on teachers’ experiences of evaluation before 2004. I share the findings concerning participants’ understanding of the definition and purpose of teacher performance evaluation. Within this definition, I examine the two major purposes of teacher performance evaluation; formative evaluation and summative evaluation, which helps in the establishment of working definitions. I will also share teachers’ perception in regards to the two umbrella purposes of teacher performance evaluation – accountability and development. This will be followed by the finding of the present teacher performance evaluation practices in the different schools and the varied experiences of participants within a proposed standardized process.

Experience with Teacher Performance Evaluation before 2004

As discussed in chapter two, there was no official system of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica before 2004. Many principals created their own system of evaluation and others had used bits and pieces of programs from textbooks printed either in the United Kingdom or North America. “There was nothing before 2004. My principal used to pass by the class and would stop for a while and maybe say something about the lesson, but nothing like this. Not even close.” (P10). These are the sentiments of one of the participant who has been teaching for years and can therefore compare the nature of teacher performance evaluation before and after 2004. In order to get a real feel of what teachers experienced before 2004, I talked with teachers about it. Finding any written history was difficult. Searches did not unearth much information.
Before 2004, anything used was independently designed or more often borrowed from a textbook. Most often the process was summative and used for a general record of what the principal determined to be individual teacher quality. One participant noted:

The principal would at that time visit your class, sit for a while and make notes. She would then, make copious notes on your strengths and weaknesses. There were not much criteria as there are now in the evaluation process. Only the principal would carry out evaluation then. This was in the late 1990's. (P14)

One of the only official systems recorded was the Ministry of Education Triennial Examination. This was more of a general school inspectorate, but individual teachers were also “assessed” as part of the process. One other participant shares:

Years ago we had something called Triennial Examination. This was done every three years but was not consistent. I taught for 30 years and should have gotten 10 but this was not so. However when it was done it was very rigid. The team from the Ministry of Education would come in and spend 2 – 3 days and observe everything in every class room and a report was written and sent to the principal highlighting their finding and highlighting each grades. (P08)

There was no culture of teacher performance evaluation before 2004. Those principals who did any form of written teacher performance evaluation were pioneers and exercised this as their individual leadership style and intent. It was something that a principal would draw on when he or she needed to make some form of decision (often times promotion) and needed some form of written documentation to support his/her decisions. Many principals had an idea of an evaluation tool. Those who created something did so independently of the Ministry of Education or any official educational policy.

**Present Practice with Teacher Performance Evaluation**

All participants acknowledged that it was necessary to have one set standard evaluation process to guide all schools. They had one standard evaluation instrument and so many believe that the process should also be standardized for all the schools. However, from participants’
shared experiences, it was clear that schools were carrying out teacher performance evaluation in many different ways. They were aware that the process should include more than one evaluation and also foster development through formative evaluation. However, a number of participants described their evaluation experience only in a summative way; receiving only evaluation at the end of the school year. One participant noted:

Teacher performance evaluation should be ongoing. It does not help if it is only summative and in many case that is what is happening. It does not feel like it is geared towards development as they proposed. (P07)

Schools carried out teacher performance evaluation in different ways based on the administration understanding of the process, ability to carry out the process or having the time to conduct the process as intended. One participant noted:

Evaluation is there to provide a formal evaluation that is standardized in all the schools so that teachers can evaluate and identify their short comings and get constant monitoring and feedback. If every school is doing their own thing, then we don’t have a proper system. The system should be island wide and everyone must be doing the same thing. I think some principals just don’t have the time to do it properly because they are so busy or they just don’t know how to do it properly. (P08)

Some participants felt that their administrators did not fully understand the process clearly and so what happened at their school was based solely on administrators’ misguided understanding of the process or administrators lackadaisical attitude towards the process. One participant shared:

Although it is ongoing, rigorous and fair, I think sometimes due to time constraints many of the issues are not addressed. We don’t all get the same experience during the evaluation process. I also think it is based on who does the evaluation and how they think they should conduct it. I also fear that some administrators may just not understand the process or some just don’t give the time and attention that it deserves. (P15)

Others felt that their administrators did understand the process and knew the standard requirements, but had to make adjustments due to time constraints or other factors such as
observer bias and lack of sufficient human resource. Observer bias in this case would be anything that prevents the evaluator from seeing a situation or the teacher objectively. Biases may be subtle and not recognized by the person who has them. In this case the evaluator’s preconceptions and presupposition about a teacher can impact what he or she pays attention to during an observation and influence judgments. One participant noted:

Observer bias can affect the whole outcome of the evaluation process. Within the school environment even though we have colleagues who seem to be with you, deep down they are not together all for you so when they come to do evaluation they find something to pull you down with even though they know that you have actually done a very good job. They use the observation to push their own agenda and even in cases where they know that you are in line for a promotion or something. If they can use the evaluation to undermine you, they will use it. (P01)

Though expected to be standardized in both policy and process, participants revealed that teacher performance evaluation was being done differently in many schools. They felt that lack of uniformity within schools can leave room for bias, discrimination and substandard teaching. This general tone variation can be summed up in one participant’s comment:

It creates a disparity within the profession, as some teachers are over evaluated and shows that they are doing extremely well or extremely bad when that is not the case, while on the other hand others are under evaluated and show that they are not doing anything in the classroom which is not the reality. So there should be no difference in doing evaluation as it will not reflect a teacher’s true potential and allow for teacher growth and development. (P01)

However, few participants did not object to the “adjustments” and “accommodations” being made at their school. They argued that these changes depended on their individual school context. In some instances there might be a need for an emphasis to be placed on a particular standard or purpose of evaluation that might warrant different route or tweaking of the process that would not necessarily take away from set desired outcomes of the teacher performance evaluation practice. One such context was the idea of the evaluation team. Some participants did
not see the possibility of having a team of three people conducting an evaluation when a school had a total teacher population of less than ten. One noted:

If the same idea is being used but tweaked to make the process easier and the outcome is the same, then there is definitely no fuss in that. (P03)

Though many elements were present in each school, as described by participants, there were numerous interpretations and demonstration of those elements. Discussions also revealed that the level of satisfaction with different elements of the evaluation cycle varied from participant to participant.

Table 9

*Comparative Summary of Teacher Performance Evaluation elements experienced by participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Given notice of evaluation</th>
<th>Monitoring During the school year</th>
<th>Classroom observation by a team</th>
<th>Selected a peer as part of observation team</th>
<th>Post evaluation conference</th>
<th>Received feedback</th>
<th>Signed and received copy of evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P01</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P02</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P03</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P06</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P08</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P09</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 gives a summary of the elements that were present and the main areas of the evaluation process that saw the most differences and deviations. The table below shows what
elements of the teacher performance evaluation process were experienced by each participant in varied degrees. The table shows that all participants reported being monitored during the school year in some way, checking of lesson plans being the most common form. Fourteen of the fifteen participants were given notice of evaluation. This notice however, was mainly given for the summative evaluation to be conducted at the end of the school year. Thirteen participants were evaluated by an evaluation team, though of varied composition, and only five participants got to select a peer to sit on the evaluation team. Thirteen of the participants shared that they received some form of feedback, however only ten participants had an actual post evaluation conference and only three participants received a copy of their teacher performance evaluation. This table shows that the various elements of evaluation are being carried out in some schools, again, based on what the principals understand to be done. These decisions are also made based on what the principals choose to be done based on time constraints, their understanding of the process or what they believe is enough to ensure they are seen as accountable and engaging in the process of teacher performance evaluation.

There was a difference in opinion on the part of participants when questioned further on their views in regards to unannounced observations. Most of the participants held to their point that they needed to be informed of the pending observation, but the majority of the participants agreed with the above philosophy of Andrews (2004) - teachers should always be prepared to teach, and any time is a good time to observe a teacher’s interaction with his/her students. The following is a view by one participant:

The Education Regulation of 1980 clearly states that regular teaching activities include, developing lesson plans on regular basis, evaluate and test students, and keeping adequate records of students’ progress. Hence, if we are doing the job that is clearly outlined in the Education Act we should not have any fear or questions about unannounced class visits. Unannounced class visits should happen as it will give the evaluation team a firsthand experience of what is going on in the classroom on a daily basis. If teachers are aware
that they will be evaluated and received class visits on schedule days, they will be going out of their ways and do everything possible to make things perfect in their classroom. I am comfortable with unannounced class visits as I always try to do what is required of me. Additionally, unannounced class visits will allow the evaluation team to accurately diagnose and identify problem in the teaching and learning environment and make suggestions to improve the said. (P01)

Others simply welcomed unannounced visits. A few participants believed that a teacher must be delivering the highest quality of education they can. A teacher should always be prepared. It will keep them in check and on their toes. It ensures more accountability and perhaps a certain level of standard across the board as well as to obtain more equity in terms of delivery and recommendations for actions. They also see this as a guaranteed way of getting an idea of what is happening in the classroom. They consider that teachers should always be prepared for an evaluation. They believed that unannounced visits would be very effective in getting a true picture. It forced teachers to be at their peak. One participant noted:

Sometimes it is not objective. People at times don’t look at organizational goals and what they do is impress the team when they know they are going to be evaluated. They put on a real show and everyone is perfect. When you however go unannounced then you see the reality of the situation. (P08)

Another participant asked me during the interview, “What would you honestly do if you know your boss could come by your class anytime and see if you are a good teacher or not?” She went on to provide the response, “you would be ready, very very ready, that is what you would be.” She went on to express that it eliminates the possibility of complacency among teachers and was a sure way of assessing whether or not a planned approach is being taken by teachers

Of course, there were others who believed that this was not so and would only enhance the level of mistrust, fear and anxiety already held by many teachers about the purpose and aim of teacher performance evaluation. One participant noted:
I believe it is normal to be fearful during any sort of evaluation. Lack of preparation, ongoing disciplinary issues with the class or even a tense relationship between the teacher and assessor can cause anxiety. Not everyone trusts everyone. (P11)

All participants said that they had been monitored during the school year. The most common form of monitoring was through the review of lesson plans. The selection of the evaluation team revealed the most variation. A number of participants were evaluated using the observation team design mandated by the ministry, which says “each appraisal will be conducted by a team and not the principal alone. Typically, the team will be comprised of the principal, head of department and a professional within the school chosen by the teacher”. (Ministry of Education Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy & Procedure Handbook, 2004). Five participants reported having a single person being their observer (principal, vice-principal or head of department) and the remaining evaluation team reflected various combinations.

Feedback was given in many different forms and many different places. The most common place was in the principal’s office, but there were other environments such as the evaluatee’s classroom and the staff room. The nature and substance of the feedback was a contention for many teachers. Most feedback was given in a post-observation conference setting, while others were written and yet others did not receive any. In some schools the evaluation team was selected without the mandated number of assigned personnel, while in others, the number of times that the evaluation was conducted varied from teacher to teacher.

The Ministry of Education 2004 teacher performance evaluation is designed for all publicly funded schools. This policy was implemented for all schools and all schools were given the process and procedures. However, it is clear that the evaluation lacked consistency across the island. One participant noted that there must be a high level of rigid uniformity for evaluation to be effective:
If there is to be consistency and standardization, then this should be a uniformed operation through country. Teachers leaving from one institution to another should feel comfortable because he/she will be meeting the same standards. The education system will also be a better one as measurement and evaluation will be the same throughout and all stakeholders will strive for excellence. (P02)

**Purpose of Teacher Performance Evaluation**

The overall understanding and the purpose for which evaluation is carried out holds different meanings for different participants. Teacher performance evaluation as a concept also varies among participants. This is not a new occurrence. In many research studies, the meaning held by participants and school organizations depends largely on the purpose of evaluation.

Some participants noted that the purpose of teacher evaluation was to assess the output of the teacher to ensure that the information and the methodology used by the teacher are effective. They said that it also helps the teacher to remain effective, current, relevant and developing.

Noted one participant:

> I think the purpose of teacher performance evaluation is to identify strengths and weaknesses and also for her to receive feedback on where she can make improvement as well as develop further. This helps you to grow as a teacher as you should constantly be growing. (P13)

The most common purpose as shared by participants was to simply identify strengths and weaknesses and see how best to improve. They also felt that this was what an effective evaluation was about. Additionally, they also mentioned self-evaluation and reflective practice. Many believed that teachers have the ability to self-correct when they are evaluated and see their weaknesses. One participant shared:

> Teacher evaluation is essential to the developmental aspect of a particular teacher. The aim should be to identify areas that need strengthening and provide the opportunity for those areas to be addressed. This can be done with the help of other teachers and the principal, but more importantly, it helps the teacher to examine herself and figure out what she can do to be a better teacher. (P06)
Others described the process as one for determining the weaknesses or strengths of teachers in order to enable school administrators to help where intervention is needed. One participant relayed that:

Teacher evaluation helps to find out the weaknesses. For example we are using laptops to teach. But what we find when we evaluated them is that they have the tools and yet the children are not learning. The children are still bored and not learning. So through evaluation we can find out these things and support. We are having that same issue in our school. So we plan seminars to help these teachers and we also get resource persons who come in and teach them how to use technology. They also encourage them to upgrade themselves as many of them are from the old school and they use the chalk and talk. So they get to go to workshop and training to learn how to use these technologies. (P05)

They also saw the process in a collaborative manner, defined as the pooling ideas. This was another common theme with a number of participants. One shared:

Certainly from my experience we were able to pool ideas. This is a two prong approach. You get to share ideas within your department and you get to share your ideas. From this then all the heads of the departments have a conversation with the school leadership based on what was discussed with all the teachers. The principal will then come back to us and all those ideas are trickled down. We do this for such things as the changing of a text book or what national competitions we should be involved in. For the most part it is a democratic environment and much information sharing. (P15)

Others look at the purposes based on concepts of accountability such as staff assignment, contract renewal and even staff termination. One participant shared:

It is a useful and powerful tool for human resources decision. We are hired to do a job and the evaluation can be used to either give reward or penalty. It is a score card and it should be used to make decisions. It is the same when student in our class does well we promote them, and if they don’t do well there are consequences. If it was a one-off evaluation then I would say not to use it but this evaluation is throughout the year so it is valid. (P02)

Others saw teacher performance evaluation as a means to give praise and credit where it was due. This was highlighted by one participant:

Offer praise and credit is definitely something that comes up in the evaluation process. For myself, I was rewarded, especially being new on staff, I was rated highly on the evaluation and I was rewarded. There was verbal reward and also monetary reward. Of
course, it may be small but it is important. Some teachers are given a treat. It can be a token or gift, whether it is something inside or outside a school. In my staff meeting I was recognized by my principal. For the principal and vice principal to be giving me this credit in front of the staff, I was humbled and of course I felt good. It feels good to be recognized for your hard work. This feedback was on-going for me. (P15)

Others saw the process as development and an opportunity for teachers to share strategies and best practices. They believed the purpose of evaluation is to extract ideas from teachers through classroom observations and pass those ideas on to other teachers through feedback sessions.

Other teachers mentioned other purposes to include ensuring good classroom management, that teachers are implementing the curriculum as suggested, being accountable in general areas of school-life and development. In the words of one participant:

The purpose is to see how well we are imparting our knowledge based on the curriculum to the students, how we are controlling our class and overall to see if we are assessing the students properly. (P04)

Two words that appeared frequently in participants’ definitions were monitoring and feedback. They believed these two words could capture the essence of what the teacher performance evaluation process was all about. One participant noted:

The purpose should be to see the strength and weaknesses of the teacher and how best to assist him/her to improve. This is to provide a formal evaluation that is standardized in all schools so that teachers can evaluate and identify their shortcomings and get constant monitoring and feedback. (P08)

It was evident that not all participants understood the difference between summative and formative evaluation, or if they understood, they often chose one side to be their main focus. Many participants were more concerned about the areas of evaluation that constituted accountability (summative evaluation). They defined the evaluation process in mainly summative ways. These include tenure, summative performance, promotion, termination, awards
and recognition, and class assignments. One participant who also had opportunities to sit on the evaluation team noted:

Oh yes! As I said before, you will know if someone is not teaching they may need to go. It helps in decision making with staff allocation and dismissal. I think it should because there are rules, regulations and policies to follow. When you look on the corporate world people are given KPI to meet and then they are evaluated. I think in the same way we should be evaluated and this be used for decisions. The caution with that however it should not be a one-off thing. It works when there are constant evaluation and documentation. (P03)

Others rested their understanding of teacher performance evaluation heavily on the formative measures. In their expression of what they believe evaluation should do, they looked at areas such as, professional growth and development, instructional supervision, coaching and mentoring. One participant shared:

I think it is similar to the writing process. These people who do the evaluation can add to you and allow you to grow. You start at a point and you keep adding and adding and adding until you reach a point where you yourself can now be a mentor or coach to someone. It sure is a way for teachers to grow. All the evaluators are teachers themselves so they have ideas about teaching that they can pass down to us. (P13)

All participants answered with great surety when asked what they felt were the purposes of teacher performance evaluation. A few may have had issues in forming a clear definition while others seemed to have grasped the concept well. This conclusion was based on their ability to express their answers on more complex levels, not just using their personal perspectives, but also enhancing their response with the use of specific terminologies. One participant noted:

I think the purpose of evaluation is to give me the foundation and backbone on which to make my professional decisions. It should be about teacher development. It should be part of the driving force behind which teachers grow, not just as subject matter experts, but as professionals. That is why I am all for formative evaluation. I am for teachers getting an opportunity to better themselves through appraisal. If the feedback is specific and direct then it should allow me to grow. What is the point of evaluation if you can’t help that person to develop their skills? (P06)
All participants believed that teacher performance evaluation is certainly useful and is there to help the teacher to see his/her strengths and weaknesses and improve on them to becoming a better teacher, which will in turn improve student performance and school-wide effectiveness. All participants spoke with a high level of confidence when expressing what they believed was the purpose of teacher performance evaluation. The following purposes of teacher performance evaluation were shared by one participant:

To determine the weaknesses or strengths, so that the administrator can be able to help where we need intervention. It is also good to pool ideas and take care of those who need to be taken off the job. I think it is for the school to be able to spread the staff evenly in their correct area. Give praises where they are due and share strategies. They get ideas from teachers and pass this on to other teachers. (P05)

They also saw the Ministry of Education teacher performance evaluation process as the best way to provide formal evaluation that is standardized in all the schools so that teachers can identify their shortcomings and get constant monitoring and feedback. Many participants underlined the need for standardization of the process. One participant shared:

We do because we need a high level of consistency. We don’t need fluctuation. You don’t want in one point a teacher is given more assistance and then in another situation a teacher is not given much help. We need everyone to be given the same thing and use the same instrument in the same way. It cannot be left to the opinion of the team. (P13)

For years teacher performance evaluation has been treated as unnecessary Ministry of Education paper work that is usually filled out and filed away somewhere, with no definite purpose and usefulness. One participant noted:

Most of the principals just file them away. They need to complete their paperwork. They do come and do evaluation and they do at times give you pointers as to what to do but they never come back to check if you did what they ask you to do. They really don’t make it seem like they are real about the feedback. They have the ministry document to complete and that is what they are doing. (P13)
The responses of the participants revealed that teacher performance evaluation can be effective and useful in many areas. Its use/purpose and value is established within the process design and implementation. It involves commitment on both sides of the evaluation, supported by an atmosphere of professionalism, collaboration, collegiality and trust.

**Emotions about the Teacher Performance Evaluation Process**

The emotions expressed by participants ranged from confidence and optimism to anxiety and fear. Factors that influence different feelings included previous experience with other forms of teacher evaluation, teaching experience, and exposure to teacher evaluation global practices based on academic exposure/qualification, teacher-principal relationships and the level of trust, collaboration and collegiality within the school culture.

Some consider the move to establish a standard teacher performance evaluation process to be timely and should have been done long ago. They think the process is detailed and thorough and indeed good. They welcomed it and were not intimidated in any way. Others were very intimated by the process based on their own experience. One participant noted:

> Well as a teacher of course I was intimidated. I was thinking I was done with exams and test and now I am going back into being tested again! And they kept saying that this is going on your file. I was nervous of course. And then I did not feel like you can use that one lesson and decide if you are a good teacher at all. You know you are going to be evaluated so you plan a “bashment” (exciting; full of life and vigor; fun) lesson just because you are going to be evaluated. So I was intimidated and even think – what the hell is this. (P13)

Many expressed that they were comfortable and enjoyed teaching in the presence of their leaders and team mates. They were not afraid to be evaluated due to their experience and are very involved in what they do. They were not anxious about the process as many other teachers were and looked forward to being evaluated so they could “deliver”. They were aware of the
process but were also aware of their skills and abilities as a teacher and did not see the reason to be fearful or anxious. One participant noted:

I think I was very insignificant and ignored in the initial stage. Our school does that kind of constant evaluation and constant feedback, so as far as I know there was nothing to think about. We had something in place and it was neither welcomed nor feared it was just another thing happening for me. For me it was something regular that we did three times a year. (P03)

However, it was evident that a number of the participants did have a fear for the process and thought of it in punitive ways based on the socialization of the principals or ones’ relationship with the principal. One participant noted:

Well at first I was a bit nervous and fearful at the beginning and I read from brochures about the evaluation. I have a good vice principal I have gotten about 70% comfortable. The fear decreased. I am a shy person, and when I heard there were going to be six people in the classroom then I was so scared. (P04)

Most of this fear that came from participants was based on the unknown and the many presuppositions that were being communicated through informal channels. People started to feel a sense of “weeding-out” and statements in the media did not help. In interviewing one participant, the fear she had was evident. She also wanted to ensure that what she said to me was not going to be communicated to the principal. She was visibly uncomfortable at the start of the interview and joked about me being from the ministry of education. She later was more relaxed and opened up. She was new and felt like she did not have any knowledge of and support for the process. She noted:

My first knowledge of it was in college. We were exposed to it in college. I had no clue what it meant. I had however formed some ideologies in my mind about it. I wondered if it would help me to grow or if it was just to help in my dismissal. I did not have any formal knowledge. It really drove a fear in me at that time as I felt like it questioned my competency. (P13)
Those participants who either held a degree in educational administration or had experienced other forms of evaluation or appraisal from previous programmes hosted by the Ministry of Education in years past seemed to see the process differently. They spoke with ease and also a clear sense of pride, being self-aware that they had much more knowledge of the subject matter than the average teacher. One participant noted:

Basically the teacher performance evaluation is done annually. It is done in three stages. Teachers know their job description; they know the goals of the Ministry of Education and the school. They form their own action plan. This is preferred to be done in August. We use the incident review form and we do the checking here periodically. At the end of the process the teacher signs off and the Board Chairman gets it. At times, being a small school we invite the Board Chairman in and he gets to dialogue with the teachers. This is good to build rapport and make the Chairman more visible. (P08)

Two of the more experienced teachers described the introduction of a standard teacher performance evaluation system as a good move. They are now able to see their strengths and weaknesses.

Five of the participants also had the opportunity to sit on evaluation panel. They were able to express their feelings based on the fact that they saw the evaluation process from the other side. One who had the opportunity to also sit on the evaluation team at her school noted:

Oh! It is all about growth and development and that is why I went to study. I wanted to know when I am out there I was making valuable contribution. I got feedback from my principal and his team and they encouraged me to do more studies. They know what they are doing and they understand what to give us. The administrators were given training by ministry and they pass this on to us. They were trained what to look for etc., they are the head of the team. I learn a lot also since I got to do evaluations on the team too. They brief us on what to look for. They actually do a briefing each time they have to go out. So anywhere you turn, there is learning going on in teacher evaluation. (P05)

Summary

This chapter responded to research question one: How do teachers understand teacher performance evaluation? Participants had various levels of understanding of the definition and
purpose of teacher performance evaluation. Participants differed in regards to the purpose of teacher performance evaluation. It was clear that not all teachers experienced the intended complementary nature of the formative and summative processes within their individual schools. Most participants felt that teacher performance evaluation should be used for either purpose but not for both. Participants all agreed that teacher performance evaluation should be carried out in the standard way as prescribed by the Ministry of Education. However what was clear was that teacher performance evaluation was being conducted differently in some schools.

In this chapter participants also described the nature of teacher performance evaluation before 2004. It is clear that there was no formal system of teacher performance evaluation before 2004, and school leaders, ministry officials and other invested stake holders used various evaluation tools borrowed mainly from the United Kingdom and North America. Most of the information gathered was anecdotal since I could not acquire much documentation. A comparison of the elements of the ministry of education 2004 teacher performance evaluation as presently being practiced by various schools was also examined. The chapter concludes with an examination of the emotions expressed by participants concerning their own teacher evaluation process.
Chapter six: Teachers’ Perception of the present Teacher Performance Evaluation Cycle

This chapter will focus on the evaluation cycle as presently being practiced. A review of the literature reveals a number of variations in evaluation cycles. However, four basic elements are generally always present in these typologies: planning (goal setting), monitoring (data sources), observation and feedback. Other key elements such as pre and post observation conferences will be discussed within the main elements. I have chosen to discuss the evaluation cycle using the basic and most common elements. These are the constant elements in a number of models. (Stronge 2006, Nolan and Hoover 2011; Duke and Stiggins 1986).

This model, though discussed in a progressive/step by step methodology, should not be seen as static. It is not so static that it ignores individual teacher need or particular school context. With that being said, the Ministry of Education model does require all the steps to be taken into consideration within a teacher performance evaluation occurrence. Stronge (2007) describes the process as a “continuous improvement cycle.” (p. 17)

This chapter will also include participants’ perception of the evaluator selection process, their arguments surrounding the practices, expertise and training of the evaluation team.

The Evaluation Cycle: Planning

A major part of the teacher performance evaluation cycle and the first step in the cycle is planning. This is also often considered to be goal-setting since it looks at what data and other information and offers set goals and plans for the future. The planning process includes two types of planning, that is, general planning and planning for evaluation. The levels of general planning are all important to the evaluation process. General planning includes the Ministry of
Education Strategic plan, the school improvement plan (SIP) and action plan and the individual teacher class plan. These plans should naturally connect to the evaluation process through their work, through student engagement, through assessment and evaluation and through general school life involvement.

Planning for evaluation (pre-observation conference) is the other form of planning. This is where the evaluator meets with the evaluatee and organizes or decides what the nature of the evaluation process will be. This planning meeting is also called a pre-observation meeting. Planning for evaluation is also an individual process where a teacher prepares his or herself to be evaluated. In that they engage in reflective practice, look at what they have been doing, through this process they also do some self-evaluation.

For the purpose of this research however, the discussion surrounding planning will be limited to classroom planning and in particular lesson planning, since this was clearly the only level of planning that most participants were associated with or engaged in. This planning focuses on their lesson plans and teacher resources. In many schools, the lesson plan book is the main record used to determine teacher’s level of planning and preparation. These lesson plan books will span the entire school year and gives a general and often times specific feel of the teacher’s work. A teacher is able to see his/her goal for the school year and the leadership is better able to measure that teacher’s level of accomplishment. One participant noted:

We are involved with each other all the way. We have planning sessions and the evaluation plans are talked about. This group planning is very good as they help us to focus and ensure that all the students with the subject area and grade level are getting equal content and exposed to the same things. If we are unaware of something, then we are reminded through staff meeting and group planning. When it comes to evaluation we sometimes plan lesson together and even plan to use the same aids. (P13)

Most participants reported that their planning was solely based on lesson plans for each week. Other areas of the school that demands planning would either be conducted by the
principal or special committee and this information is given sometime during the school year. In most cases planning was very top-down and the only area of planning that they would be significantly involved in would be their own lesson plans. In some cases planning time was given at various levels. One participant noted:

Well, let me start from the top. The principal makes up a calendar and this has activities that involve everything that will happen in the school, everything including academics, sports and culture and everything else. The principal, the vice principal and the head of department will meet and plan and discuss every single area. We take the time to plan in certain areas like Mathematics. We meet and plan strategies and how to plan for success. So this goes right back down to the teacher and then we the teacher has to plan how to make sure we get results in our own class. We have very weak students at our school so serious planning for academics at the start of the year is done. The planning starts right at the top and comes right down to the very students. (P12)

In schools these events and activities can easily become a “distraction” if they are not properly integrated within the formal planning process and teachers are aware and ensure that these are included in their own planning process. Participants responded that this level of planning was indeed lacking. He commented:

Planning is lacking a lot. Some of the teachers fail to complete their plans and others do none. The principal leads the planning and she puts together the school improvement plan. We are supposed to help but she does it herself. I think we should be involved in the planning as we are the ones who know what is happening. Our class action plan is supposed to mirror it but we don’t even know what is in the plan. For me personally, I don’t even send in my plan for months and this should have been sent in from September. I am still waiting to see her plan. So there is no channel-down to the plan. I am still waiting to hear what the plan is for this year. At evaluation time she doesn’t mention the plan as she knows there is none. (P01)

It should be noted that this was one of the highest areas of neglect as reported by participants. They understood the value and contribution to school overall effectiveness that collaborative and structured planning can have, and therefore felt high levels of disappointment that they were not being given the opportunity to participate more in the decision making process.
through other levels of planning. One participant expressed than at his school there was indeed a disconnect between administrator’s expectation and classroom outcomes on many occasions. He added:

The disconnect is with the leadership. It is a pure leadership problem. You cannot manage a school by sitting in the office. The leaders need to know what is happening in the school. My school is a big school so there should be far more walking about of our leaders to know what is happening in school. The VP and HOD does most of the work and our principal is an office principal. He does not sit on evaluation team much so he has no idea what is going on or even how to influence. It comes right back to supervision and leadership. (P12)

This process was clearly being ignored by many schools, as part of the code of conduct as prescribed by the Ministry of Education Teacher Performance Evaluation Handbook, “Awareness that ratings should reflect the teachers performance in relation to the goals and action plan agreed on during the earlier part of the school year.” (p.14). Most participants just did not have any “action plan agreed on”.

Of course the level of planning is not a guarantee that learning will take place but it helps the observer to determine to what extent the original intentions were actually implemented. In regards to the level of planning and the purpose and value, one participant noted:

Planning is very important to me. It is important to the school in general and more so to me as a classroom teacher. I must know where I am going and how I plan to get there. I review previous evaluation to identify areas in which I need to improve. I plan my unit and lessons, paying close attention to formulating a variety of activities to appeal to different learning styles and to address weaknesses I have identified in the particular year group. (P07)

**The Evaluation Cycle: Monitoring**

There are many different ways by which administrators monitor the teacher evaluation process in their schools. Lesson planning has always been considered as the most common form
of monitoring and in this study that was the reality also. Another general common form of monitoring is through staff meetings, department meetings and team planning meetings. Participants who engaged in team planning meetings found them to be very useful and contributed to high levels of collaboration and trust building. One participant noted:

Monitoring is being done every day. It is done by colleagues and it is ongoing. They (administrators) watch every move you make. They have their pulse on the school and know what is happening or what should be happening and if there are changes they will note. There are so many meetings, meetings, meetings, meetings. I think there is enough monitoring just through the meetings. (P15)

Monitoring can take many forms. One of the most common forms is frequent informal walk-throughs. Through this process, administrators can also monitor teachers by keeping their ear to the ground, keeping themselves informed and in touch about what is being talked about generally in schools and more specifically in classrooms. Another good way of monitoring is talking with the students and parents. What are students saying? What are parents saying? One participant shared:

One year at my school they had this thing where some teachers had some questionable characters and these teachers were targeted. They gave certain classes an evaluation to write about their teachers and they had to share their opinion. The VP took out the ones that had bad comments so the ministry has no idea what is happening as the leadership is sheltering them, as they know it will come back to them about their own leadership. So I guess they are protecting themselves also. I actually am happy that my students get to write about me. Those who are teaching have no problem; the ones with the issues are those who are not teaching. When you are a good teacher you don’t care who comes to evaluate you - education officer, principal, vice principal, head of department, grade coordinator, and even student. (P12)

Principals can also engage teachers in varied conversations in order to get additional insight about what teachers are doing in and out of the classroom. Principals can also monitor by sharing with teachers. They can share opinions, reactions, insight, knowledge, perception and experiences.
Finally, one of the most valuable means of monitoring is listening.

Listening works two ways. The higher authority, being the head of department, vice principal or whoever have to listen to your challenges and what is happening. This is how the teacher can learn and grow from the feedback. It is also necessary for the teacher to listen actively and take this feedback into consideration. It brings about mutual understanding and consensus. Listening is not a simple thing. It is dynamic and helps all of us to achieve our goals and this goes across all areas of school effectiveness. Listening bring about deep conversations. There is a clear difference between hearing and listening. (P15)

Table 10

Summary of types of Monitoring received during the school year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lesson Plans</th>
<th>Sampling of students works</th>
<th>Teacher portfolio</th>
<th>Informal observations (Walk-a-bout/Walk-throughs)</th>
<th>Sampling of records</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P01</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P02</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P03</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P04</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P05</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P06</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P07</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P08</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P09</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 gives a summary of the various types of monitoring experienced by the participants. All fifteen participants reported that their lesson plans were used for monitoring. Six participants had their student work samples used in the monitoring process while five participants reported the use of record samples. These include grade books and classroom logs. Six participants shared that they were also monitored using the Walk-through system. Lesson
planning is considered the old fashion main method of mentoring teachers’ work. In the literature review, many parts of USA, Canada and UK have long moved past lesson planning as sole monitoring tool and have given teachers more autonomy in the process and the ability to share much more evidence of their work, through the use of teacher portfolio. The Three-Minute walk-through, in its many variations today is one of the most popular means of monitoring being used in many North American institutions. It is considered less threatening and allows for administrators to observe teachers in a more natural way and offer a more professional development focus rather than those of accountability.

Looking at the Jamaican situation from the teachers’ experience, there is still that great emphasis on lesson planning and a lack of other forms of monitoring. The study revealed that the most common method of monitoring being used in the teacher performance evaluation cycle was lesson plans. One participant’s comment echoed that of many other participants:

Lesson plan is a must. It is handed in every Monday. They also come in your class from time to time to check on you. (P09)

It was however agreed by many participants that more elements of their work should be used in the evaluation process. They wanted such things as their extra curricula involvement, students’ projects and displays and samples of students’ work to be examined also during the observation process. One participant noted:

The lesson plans don’t effectively show your true potential as a teacher. They should take everything in consideration. They should watch me teach a lesson but also think about my interaction with my students in and out of class and also my interaction with colleagues. They have to also look at the things I do outside of the classroom. Sports, quiz team, workshops, community activities. All these things must be taken into consideration. The lesson plan alone cannot capture the essence and true potential of the teacher. (P01)

Record keeping was also an area of monitoring. One participant noted:
When they tell me they are coming, I make sure my records are up to date, students assessment is a weak area for me so I go back and ensure that everything is in order. I make sure my lesson and teaching aids are ready and my children and attentive and well behaved. (P04)

Other participants talked about the use of classroom walk-throughs a type of informational evaluation and monitoring. She noted:

We have informal observations and walkthroughs. (P14)

The preparation and submission of lesson plans proved to play a major role in the monitoring process. When asked about the frequency of lesson planning done, one participant responded:

I would say it was done twice per month. We did lesson plans and at least twice per month and these were submitted electronically and we would get the feedback electronically. (P03)

Other participants noted that at their schools, each teacher is attached to a vice principal, who is responsible for examining their lesson plans. They are monitored by that person and this monitoring is not just limited to lesson planning. However, for most of the participants, lesson planning was the sole form of monitoring. Some handed in their lesson plans every Monday as requested by the school policy, others are submitted once per week.

Lesson plans were significantly used in the monitoring process. There was a lack of other possible documents that could have been used to shed more light on what is happening in classes. There was one participant who shared of having much more opportunities for monitoring at her school, other than just lesson plans:

They look at the lesson plans, they check the register, the students’ journals, students’ books, students’ attentiveness and your whole teaching plan. They ask about your field trips. They really like to look into the children books and see for themselves what is happening. They sit at the back and at times they would walk around and look at the children book and they also will ask the students questions. (P09)
The Evaluation Cycle: Observation

Many participants have common experiences during the classroom observation process. There may have been many variations with what happened before and after the observation, but many similar things occurred during the observation. The following is one experience shared by a participant:

In the department meeting we are given the evaluation sheet and informed of the impending evaluation. We were then sent email with the date. She came in and sits at the back and watched. She looked at students notebooks, and in terms of her manner she was very relaxed. It did not feel very formal and she also responded to what was happening in the class. That placed me at ease. Afterwards, she went through her findings with me and she gave me the opportunity to explain or clarify anything. (P07)

Some participants report the team coming into the class and sitting to the back of the room and operating like an invisible member of the class. Sometimes they walk around and look at students’ books. They also will stop and ask students questions about the lesson being taught in order to see if they know what is being taught. Most often however they just sit at the back. Another participant shares his experience:

The head of department tells you when she is coming based on the timetable. She will give the exact date and session. She will come in and sit at the back of the class. She has the instrument and sits through the lesson and marks off on the instrument and makes notes. From time to time they will interject in the lesson if there is something she can add to it. After the whole assessment, at the end the feedback is given orally. They will look at what works and what could need a compromise. It is a rigorous assessment. It takes me back to teaching practicum with so many dimensions. (P15)

When participants were asked to describe their most recent evaluation experience, most described the evaluators as coming announced and sitting at the back of the classroom. A number of them also included that some of the evaluation team members walked around the class and looked at bulletin boards or children’s books while the lesson was in progress. One participant shared:
I sat on a teacher evaluation team more than once. If the teacher is teaching then we just sit at the back and don’t disturb the actual lesson. We all have a copy of the lesson plan so that we can follow the lesson. It is normally about 3 – 4 of us and each person has a target. One of us looks at the records and mark books, one look at the children books to see if they are being marked. We look for signs of motivation in the children books such as stickers and stars. We look at the corners and centers in the room to see if they have materials to engage the children when there is no seat work. We look at the visual stimulations. We look at everything. We look at even the cleanliness of the classroom. We look at the teacher student rapport. We can tell if the children are scared of the teacher and how comfortable they are with the teacher. If a teacher is even having a bad day on the evaluation day, that is fine. We can look at the children’s book and quiz the children and see if she has been consistent in the past. So it is not really about that one day or that one lesson. (P05)

One participant did not have as pleasant an experience as the majority and shared hers with me:

I study part-time on the weekends due to bad time management I don’t have much time to do all the things I need to do in terms of making charts for my class. Lesson plans take all of my Sundays. So as a result of this I was assessed a week ago and I was not prepared in relation to my classroom environment, and I really was not prepared. I was disappointed as I had no idea they were coming. I just have to be better prepared for the next time. (P11)

Classroom observation takes on many different forms. These forms can be qualitative or quantitative in nature. The form that a classroom observation session will take will be determined by the purpose of the observation. The style of classroom observation also differs from evaluators to evaluator based on their training, expertise and experience. One participant noted:

The evaluators who have training and good experience know what to look for and they know how to talk to a teacher and share ideas. This is skill that has to develop over the years. If they don’t have that expertise then this affects the person being evaluated. So we need expert to do this task. (P04)

One of the impressive features of the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation system is the requirement for multiple evaluators/assessors to be present during the observation process. A review of related literature reveals this process as one of the many best practices in effective
teacher performance evaluation system. It builds trust and lessens biases. Participants all agreed that this was a very good system and one that offered not just collaboration but built trust among teachers, schools leadership and more importantly, for the evaluation process. One participant described her team:

I don’t find my evaluation team antagonistic; we have a good rapport so I don’t feel any fear or worry. I won’t think no one is trying to kick me out. They are cool people and they answer any questions I had about evaluation. I trust them and know that they had my interest at heart. I have worked with them for years and found them to be very professional. (P03)

She valued the use of the multiple evaluators and found that this was also useful in getting different perspectives about your teaching from different people.

**The Evaluation Cycle: Feedback**

Many of the participants did not feel that the feedback they received was deep and thorough. Significantly only one participant mentioned that there was an incident review and feedback form designed to be used during the observation process. This would then form the basis for the post observation conference dialogue. She noted:

There is an actual Incident Review and Feedback form, which we should use for feedback. We used it here at our school so we can keep a proper written record. This is used to record my constant feedback and monitoring that I do with my teachers here. (P08)

She showed me the actual form which had an actual notification of the bottom of the form reads “Use this form to assist with coaching and/or providing timely feedback.” During follow up communication with other participants I enquired of their knowledge of this form – they were not aware. The Ministry of Education Youth and Culture, Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2004 states:
- The purpose of this form is to ensure proper record keeping for recall of information during the appraisal process.
- More importantly it provides the basis for on-going dialogue and support for the duration of the assessment period.
- The Team Leader/Reviewer is required to record incidents that are especially commendable (4-Exceeds Expectation) or that would represent a significant failure (1-Unsatisfactory).
- Any item considered important enough to be entered on this form must be discussed with the teacher.
- The form provides space for the following information:
  - Date of Observation
  - Accomplishment or Failure
  - Action Discussed
  - Date of Discussion with Incumbent
  - Follow-up Results
  - Incumbent’s Signature

- Items given a rating of 1 or 4 on the Performance Appraisal Form should ordinarily be substantiated by information entered on the Incident Review and Feedback Form (p10)
- A number of participants indicated that in a number of cases feedback was given immediately following the classroom observation. This was done without a proper report being written or time for reflection for both evaluatee and evaluator. Some proponents agree that feedback should be given immediately after the actual lesson when the memories and reflections are fresh. Others advised that teachers should be given time to reflect on their own practice before feedback. One of the major concerns during the feedback was also the nature of the delivery. Some teachers who got feedback felt like it was a one-sided discussion and more of a “telling” or directive approach than one of communication, collaboration or collegiality. One participant noted:

  They came to my classroom and after I finished teaching she just said I expected better and she found all the negatives and she did not give me a chance to say anything. I felt embarrassed and belittled. She was the team leader and she said what she had to say and left the room, leaving the other team members. I was shocked and felt small. She also spoke loud and even the kids could hear her. (P04)
Others had clearly different experience. One participant said he felt appreciated and valued and that he had participated as a professional. He will also be more open to the suggestions and even high levels of critiques and remediation. He noted:

One thing that comes to me is that this depends on the leadership and culture of the school. It comes down to your being a team player. You have to accept that you are just a unit in the whole. If the whole, which is the school, is trying to achieve something, then you have to go along. Yes you are independent and a teacher in your own role, but this runs concurrent with remembering that you are also a team player. You are not alone and you can share best practices with each other. I may fall in a certain area and someone who is better in that area can help me. So when I get the criticism, I know it is not malicious, but that we are working as a team and we are here for the same reason. My output is valuable to what is happening on the whole. So we have to be mindful that we are working together as much as possible. (P15)

Those who did not receive feedback were especially not pleased with the fact that there was a lack of feedback and also noted this was a missed opportunity to participate in all the elements in the cycle. One participant attributed this lack to time constraints and unavailability of substitution for the class when needing to meet with the principal. She elaborated:

Feedback is lacking due to time constraints. At times you want to go and work with a teacher and offer coaching but your class will be left unattended as there is no one to cover your class when you have to be on the team. (P08)

Formal or official feedback normally takes the form of a post conference. “During the post observation conference, the information collected during the observation along with analysis is presented to the teacher for review, discussion and recommendations.” (Beach and Reinhartz, 2000). The following is one participant’s reaction toward his feedback:

I am somewhat frustrated with the lack of feedback that I have gotten. I am uncertain with where I am in some regards since I have none. However in relation to those I supervise and I try to give feedback but it is not intimate since I don’t have an office. At times I borrow someone’s office. I give them feedback twice per term since that is when I do the evaluation. (P06)
There was a clear frustration on the part of participants, who were also evaluators. They knew the value of feedback, but confessed of not being able to offer much quality and substantial feedback due to time constraints and their own workload. Few participants described their feedback as being done one-on-one. They consider it as being constructive and felt that this information was being given to help them improve. Others did not have much to say about feedback as they did not receive any. One participant when asked about his feedback, looked at me smiled and expressed, “None!” (P01)

I probed and asked if he knew of other teachers who had gotten feedback and why he thought he got none. He responded:

I don’t know of any other teacher who got feedback at my school. (Laughing) I don’t think my principal knows how to use the instrument properly. I say this because sometimes she conducts the evaluation process when it is long overdue. School is closed, everybody is gone home and no one knows how and when she completed the paperwork. I just think she does not know what to do with the instrument. There also need to be more sensitization from the ministry of education on how and when to properly do evaluation – I just think they honestly don’t know – they really don’t know. They have no idea how to use it to contribute to some teacher development. It just does not make sense that it is being done years and years and we don’t know what the outcome of it is. (P01)

Feedback delivery was held in different spaces in all the participants’ experiences. These spaces were staff rooms, principal’s office, at the back of the classroom or in the lunch room. Everyone who did report getting feedback did agree that it was done confidentially and even when in a shared space, was not in the earshot of anyone else. For the majority, feedback was delivered orally. Very few participants shared of receiving written feedback. One participant noted. “It is written and discussed from the evaluation form. This is done in private.” (P13)

This teacher was from the same school, where a teacher reported earlier of not receiving any feedback at all. Both teachers were evaluated by the same person.
Most persons had the same experience of receiving the positive news first and then the negative news or areas of concern. They were also afforded the opportunity to ask questions or give their own comments. One participant noted:

At the end of the session of whenever the time is available they will call to private office. You are told of your weakness first and then of your strengths thereafter. You are also encouraged to use technology and other creative measures in your lesson. (P12)

One other issue that came up in the discussion of feedback was that many teachers in the system do nothing with the feedback they are given. One participant was very emotional in regards to this concern, as she expressed herself:

In my opinion, some teachers believe that they know what they are doing and they don’t think that anyone should tell them what to do. They think they have been teaching the class for 5 years or more so they think what they can tell me since I have been doing this so long and been getting results. They believe that they are confident and effective in whatever they are doing enough so they don’t need to act upon the feedback. Especially in the case where the principal is new or the teachers are even younger. They don’t want to take advice from people who they think don’t know more about them. (P13)

There was also the issue of peer feedback. In most instances, the official feedback was given by the school administrator, as prescribed by the Ministry of Education handbook. In the case of the Jamaican evaluation team model, there is a classroom teacher (a peer) on the team. Feedback from such a person is also valuable but should be done in a carefully crafted manner as there are implications of bias, prejudice and mistrust that can come from either the evaluatee or the peer evaluator. One participant who got what she considered to be an excellent amount of feedback was very happy. I asked her what made her experience with feedback so valuable. She explained that she got the feedback from all the members of the evaluation team. She added:

Feedback is very important. To have four persons watch you teach and then each of them give you feedback was very very good. Since you have a lot of different opinions. I got to get ideas from each of them. Some of them just have a suggestion or a little idea, but that was good for me to use in my class in the future. I also want to do my job to my best so I would want the opportunity to learn and grow and do my best. (P13)
The Evaluation Team: Selection, Practice, Expertise and Training

Credible, trustworthy, patient, knowledgeable, flexible, familiar, expert, qualified, and fair are words that were repeatedly used by participants to describe a good evaluator. Some were happy they had evaluators that had these qualities. One participant added:

My evaluators were extremely supportive. They were very strategic in how they respond to issues on a daily basis and also in an evaluation feedback experience. In my opinion they were very democratic. My head of department is very understanding and hardworking. As a young teacher that motivated me to try to emulate that good work ethic and leadership qualities that stood out during the evaluation process. (P15)

One of the very first things to establish is that the training and expertise of the evaluator will depend largely on the purpose of evaluation. At this point consideration is given to those who will make up the evaluation team, the skills that team members require and the focus of each team member.

The evaluation team model as designed by the Ministry of Education includes administrator, vice principal (VP) or head of department (HOD) and a third teacher selected by the teacher. Teachers get the opportunity to select the third member of the team, which often times was a fellow grade level teacher.

Some teachers thought this was indeed a great idea, while others did not feel so safe in the concept. One participant noted:

We have the administrators - Principal, Vice-principal and Grade Coordinator and then the person to be evaluated suggests one person of their choice. I believe this is how the ministry says it is supposed to be. (P10)

My findings indicate that teacher evaluation was not at the anticipated national level of standardization. The evaluation teams were formed in different ways in different schools and in
others there was no team. One young participant, who was also on a team, described her being on the team as a training opportunity. She was not sure how the team was formed at her school:

I am not quite sure. I think they assign the vice principal, a senior teacher and a junior member of staff. They needed younger people on the team so that they can get the training also so I got to sit on a team. (P04)

In actuality, less than half of the participants were experiencing the evaluation team as designed by the ministry. A number of participants were still being evaluated by the “one man evaluation team” (the principal) and there were three with very “special cases.” In other schools there is no evaluation team and the principal or another administrator is the sole evaluator: “The HOD does the evaluation.” (P15).

It should be noted that the various diversions from the prescribed team formation was not only seen in small schools, where one would think that for a school of eight (8) teachers, it is okay to have one evaluator. This practice was also seen in very large schools with over seventy (70) staff members. Some teachers were comfortable with just one person doing the evaluation. This seems to be based on their level of comfort with the person who performed the evaluation. In one situation, it was clear that the teacher and her sole evaluator (head of department) were very close friends. Later in the interview after discussing problems and issues within the evaluation system, she suggested that if someone else from another department sat on her evaluation she might get to see other areas of concerns that may have been taken for granted based on their relationship. She said:

The head of department does it. I am comfortable with just one person doing it as she reads my lesson plan and her evaluation would be more informed than any other. However someone else from another department sitting on the panel would be great. They may be able to see other areas for growth and improvement that may have been taken for granted based on our relationship. (P07)
At other schools the team was selected randomly. She thought this process leveled the playing field and reduced anxiety and mistrust on the part of the teachers. It helped with objectivity and lessens the incidents of personal grievances or animosity. She described the process:

The team is selected randomly. At my previous school the names are placed in a box and we have to select three names and those three persons along with the principal make up the team. It levels the playing field for you and it helps with objectivity and lessens the incidents of personal grievances or animosity. (P13)

At another very large school, the process was done by the senior teachers. These are the teachers who are considered master teachers. They are the ones who make up that team. One participant added:

At our school, the principals, vice principal, senior teacher and a young teacher make up the team. Most of us who make up the administrative staff are senior people, so we add a young person to the team so that we have a balance. (P05)

It is clear that teachers looked at this phenomenon and the impact it has had in their immediate teaching environment, as we know the dynamics are different in different schools. Similarly, the participants too had their list of skills and abilities that they think that evaluators must possess to be able to be effective, fair and ethical in their judgment:

Evaluators must know extensively the content area they are assessing an individual on, they must have tact in delivering feedback as well as they should be able to examine objectively, hence separating personal feelings and perceptions when evaluating an employee. Finally they themselves must be able to first accept criticisms. (P07)

Participants also felt that those who evaluate teachers must have a clear understanding of the performance expectations against which they are going to evaluate the teacher. Not only should they know them on paper, but be aware of how these expectations are to evolve, or how to identify them. The evaluator must have a methodology and procedure as to how to go about
doing evaluations, that is, have different instruments to do the evaluation, criteria, knowledge
and skills and be able to evaluate any given teacher. One participant noted:

The evaluator should be meticulous and observant. This person must be able to identify
strengths and weaknesses, commend and criticize where necessary and make all attempts
to help the person to improve on weak areas. The persons should therefore understand
that the evaluation process is developmental. They simply must know the system. They
should also possess the skills to differentiate between different teachers. The evaluator
must have a professional behaviour to ensure that evaluation is fair and without
biases. (P01)

It is for this reason that there was so much support for team evaluation from the
participants and having a teacher of choice, who is not just a pal, but someone who is
knowledgeable of the content area.

Participants feel that evaluators should have knowledge of the school system/curriculum.
They should have the ability to stimulate the school leadership and the quality of teaching.
Having the knowledge of the purpose and focus of the evaluation they are able to understand the
results and act on them. They should also have credibility. One participant's description of an
effective observer:

One who is fair in judgment. An effective evaluator is one that is not intimidating and
one that tries as much as possible to be inconspicuous. Consultation with the teacher after
the evaluation in a constructive manner with the aim of helping the teacher identify
weaknesses, address them and set goals for improvement, would also be a part of the
process for this evaluator. (P07)

Trust and credibility were two major points that participants demanded of their
evaluators. They believe that a number of the issues and concerns that are related to teacher
performance evaluation has stemmed from the lack of trust and credibility. This trust and
credibility is not just from interpersonal connections and collaboration efforts in schools, but
from also professional integrity and professional expertise. Teachers want to know that their
evaluators know what is happening in the classroom and they are not novices to the dynamics of teaching and learning.

Most participants also felt that persons who evaluate teachers should have knowledge of the most recent "best practices" or they must know the vision, requirements, focus of the institution for which they work in order to determine if that teacher is communicating it effectively. In short, they must know what they are looking for. They must know how to read the students in order to determine the level of engagement and understanding of the teaching. After all, the best presented lesson means nothing if the students are not grasping the concepts. They should also be adept at the art of questioning, questioning of the student to assess that learning is taking place and to what level, and questioning of the teacher to cause self-reflection and increased effectiveness.

Many times teachers felt like they were being attacked by the principal who was doing the evaluation. They felt that the evaluation processes can be extremely subjective and even lead to professional abuse. In most traditional formative review processes the principal has the final say on what is written on the evaluation sheet. No matter how fair they try to be, what they write will be influenced by the extension of their beliefs of what constitutes good teaching. Therefore requiring a review panel is an impressive commitment. One participant noted:

We do evaluation throughout the year. The team is made up of three persons. The principal, senior teacher and a teacher selected by the evaluatee. It is great to provide opportunity for teachers to work with each other on their weak areas and grow from there. It reminded of me of my practice teaching. For me it is a normal process for me. Well the thing is that when someone is there and watching you they can give your ideas and share with you, some new teaching methods. You not only have one person, but you have a team and so you can get many different ideas. (P09)
A crucial part of teacher evaluation is the person or persons doing the evaluation. Who will be making such calls and determination of a teacher’s performance that will become a part of that teacher’s professional portfolio and history? What role this person will play and how important it is for this person to be educated about teacher performance evaluation, qualified to conduct teacher performance evaluation, trained in the art of teacher performance evaluation and has enough credibility, respect and trustworthy of those he/she will evaluate?

There was no divide or disagreement among participants in regards to training and the benefits for the evaluators. Participants all insisted that training was necessary and was also lacking in many areas. One participant noted:

Training is very important. Then and there you are comfortable to know that they have the skills necessary to provide the proper feedback to build the teacher and in turn develop the school environment. (P01)

Not many of the participants thought that their supervisors were qualified to perform such a task. A number of them voiced that their principals had no special training in school administration or school leadership. One participant, who also sat on the evaluation team at her school, thought she indeed needed training to be better at the process. She shared:

I think it is important that they are trained as they need to have a basic idea of what to look for. I am on the team and I was not trained but from the experience I am growing and understanding it more now. The first time I went out as an evaluator, I was also nervous; I did not know what to look for. I really think that we need to get the training so we know what exactly to look for and we don’t need to feel so nervous about it. (P04)

Many are still promoted to the position of principals based on years of service and going up the rank from senior teacher to vice principal and then principal. Even for those who are trained in educational leadership or educational administration, teacher performance evaluation is not necessarily part of that training. I did a master’s degree in educational administration through the
University of the West Indies back in 2004 and I had no course of training in the area of teacher evaluation. Participants therefore had good reason to be concerned about the qualifications or proficiency of their evaluators. One participant noted:

Oh yea. It is important. People need to know what you are looking for and also be very sensitive to people. If you don’t know how to be sensitive then you can go in and destroy a teacher. If that person is having a bad day and can impact that teacher in a bad way. If you are not trained then all you can give is “good lesson” when you know what you are looking for then you can give suggestions. If you are not trained then you may not be able to do a good job. The administrators were given training by ministry and they pass this on to us. They were trained what to look for etc., they are the head of the team. They brief us on what to look for. They actually do a briefing each time they have to go out. (P05)

Most of the participants agreed that special training was needed in order for evaluators to be effective.

Oh very important! It can be a much subjective thing. There may be someone who doesn’t like a noisy classroom, but the lesson may just require noise but they get turned off due to this. They need specific training to understand the dynamic and the training reduces the level of subjectivity coming from the evaluator. (P03)

Many teachers prefer to be evaluated by senior administrators, than by peers. Many of these teachers have more expertise in their work than the administrators who “supervise” them.

Most participants shared that the information they had about teacher performance evaluation and any “training” received for the process, was conducted through staff meeting, memo and other communications. Participants also shared that they got some exposure from more experienced colleagues, especially those who had knowledge of any previous school-based or ministry conducted evaluation system. One participant informed me that there were indeed workshops but these were for the principals. As the only senior teacher at her school, she attended the training. She added:

Well I was trained. I attended workshop with the ministry. It is very important. This enhances objectivity. Evaluation is not about friendships but about speaking the truth. In the training you get to know that and know how not to be bias or those things. (P08)
Their training in most cases seems to be what they got from doing some degree program in educational administration or those who attended a School-based Assessment Workshop over 15 years ago. They spoke of transferring those skills acquired from that training into their teacher performance evaluation practice.

Most participants also had an opportunity to sit on the evaluation teams as they themselves held posts of responsibility such as Head of Department, Senior Teacher or Grade Coordinator. Some were also selected by their peers as the teacher of choice to sit on evaluation teams. This affords them an opportunity to experience the process as both an evaluator and an evaluatee. They considered this as training and so they considered themselves as trained evaluators. For them the experience as an evaluator was more important than the training they received.

**Summary**

In this chapter I discuss the teacher performance evaluation cycle. I established that there are many variations of systematic cycle; however, there are four common elements of the teacher evaluation cycle. These are planning, monitoring, observation and feedback. Planning occurs at various levels of the teaching and learning process. Monitoring is progressive and allows the teacher to demonstrate his or her accomplishment through various data sources. Observation is continuous, supportive and focuses on formative measures so that summative evaluation is recognized as automatic next step. Feedback is seen as a dynamic network flowing through the entire cycle providing guidance and developmental opportunities for the teacher throughout the process.
This chapter covered the responses of participants in regards to research question 2: How is teacher performance evaluation carried out in Jamaican schools from a teacher’s perspective? Participants’ experiences of teacher performance evaluation varied from one practice to the other. Participants’ experiences revealed poor evidence of system-wide planning. Collaboration at the planning level was poor. Lesson planning was the most popular means of monitoring experienced by all participants during the school year. Again there were many deviations of how often lesson plans should be submitted. Not all teachers were being observed. The frequency of official classroom observations also varied from participant to participant. The nature and substance of the feedback was a contention for many persons. Feedback was given in many different forms and places.

Participants wanted evaluation team members who were credible, trustworthy, patient, knowledgeable, flexible, familiar, expert, qualified, and fair. Another factor that concerned participants was the qualification and expertise of the team. There were many variations in how the evaluation team was selected at each school. Participants all insisted that training was necessary and was also lacking in many areas. The chapter closed with a discussion on the selection and practice of evaluation teams compared to the Ministry of Education prescribed standard and the training needs of evaluator and evaluatee were discussed.
Chapter seven: Problems and Issues in Jamaican Teacher Performance Evaluation

This chapter examines the problems and issues in the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation process as perceived by teachers. Some of these problems and issues are directly related to the actual evaluation process, others are a result of levels of deviation from the prescribed process, and others are peripheral problems, but nonetheless concerning to teachers. The chapter will close with an examination of the evaluation team, looking at selection practices of the evaluation teams, the qualities of the evaluation team members and training of evaluation team members.

Problems and Issues in Teacher Performance Evaluation

The following is a list of responses given by participants when asked what they thought the major problems or concerns were with teacher performance evaluation:

- Inadequate feedback and follow-up from evaluators
- Lack of consequences and penalty for failing teachers
- Underutilization of evaluation data
- Using teacher performance evaluation only in a summative way
- Lack of objectivity on the part of evaluators/evaluator bias
- Unannounced evaluations
- Anxiety and fear that comes with evaluation
- Lack of other forms of evaluations
- Lack of resources within classroom, especially technology
Participants experienced the problems above in varied ways and in varied degrees. Not all participants experienced all the problems. The average participant spoke of at least three of these problems/issues. The most common issue was that of inadequate feedback. Though most participants spoke about receiving some form of feedback, most thought it was inadequate, often general observations, lacking specifics and often times lacking options, solutions or feed-forward elements. In the review of related literature, inadequate feedback was considered to be one of the most common problems within teacher performance evaluation in most systems examined in North America. Feelings of anxiety and fear were the second most common issue discussed by participants. This came from not having much information about the purpose of teacher performance evaluation, the public discourse from differing stakeholders which played out in the media and just a personal reaction to the idea of being judged and labeled. Unannounced evaluation was the third most common issue. This was linked closely with the fear and anxiety they felt and the idea of all that coupled with not being given time to prepare or “proper notice.” Another of the most common ones was lack of resources within the classroom. This they believed impaired their ability to perform to their highest, impacted their creativity in lesson delivery, and their ability to be more engaging and student-centered. Some complained that they were accused by their evaluators for still doing “chalk and talk” when they had not been provided with other options. They also mentioned the lack of equity in schools and the varying degrees of resources provided at schools. The other five problems were less common but hold significant reaction in regards to how teachers perceived the teacher performance evaluation process.

**Inadequate feedback and follow-up from evaluators.** As described in a previous chapter, feedback and follow-up is necessary for teacher development. One group received no
feedback. The majority of participants got either formative or summative feedback during the process. Both formative and summative feedback was received by only three participants, while ten others noted that they received some form of summative feedback. However, of those that received summative feedback, most expressed that it was inadequate and they therefore did not see much value in it. It should also be noted that four of the five most experienced teachers, some of who held positions as head of departments, and sat on observation panel/evaluation committee, all received feedback. They noted that they asked for their feedback and they knew the value of such feedback. One who did not receive feedback from this group stated that it was due to time constraints and since she was considered a part of the team, she felt her principal felt, she could do without it.

Participants were concerned that feedback was not immediate, was vague or in many cases, there was no feedback at all. One participant noted:

There should be some dialogue with the person you are going to evaluate. There are no expectations. There is also a lack in feedback. Feedback should help you to grow and provide some form of coaching. Sometimes feedback is almost non-existent. There are some opportunities but it is slow and low and still others here don’t have the opportunity at all. It also depends on those who manage; they have their style of doing things. (P10)

Other participants shared that the process of feedback in their school was inconsistent and in some cases filled with bias, assumptions and presuppositions. The participant shared:

The follow-up is not consistent. You may have one department functioning very well and then another where nothing is being done. The administrator does not monitor to know if it is being effective or even if it is being done. Training is critical in evaluation. People can only give what they know. Persons need to be aware that personal biases cannot interfere with the process. Persons need training. In Jamaica you do something twice and you become “always”. We based a lot on assumptions so I really think persons need to be trained as how to not allow their basis to interfere with the process. They need to be really trained on how to do a proper evaluation. (P06)
There are some evaluators who wait for the last minute to complete an evaluation when the expected period was not covered. One participant noted:

We take far too long to get back feedback and sometimes we don’t get any. Feedback is very important. It allows us to know where we are failing and if we are on the right track so next time around we won’t make the same mistakes. (P04)

This affects new teachers the most when they are not directed properly in their practice and a final evaluation indicates that they are weak. Standards across the system differ from school to school. One participant noted:

I have had some good experiences of feedback. Not all good but I have had some good ones. I think it is really based on the quality of the evaluators. When they are done I feel valued at times, yes at times I do. Of course at times I think the comments are way off or prejudiced but mostly I feel valued since I figure they do have my interest at heart. (P04)

Participants noted that this difference was based on principal’s ownership of the process, principal’s exposure, knowledge and training, time constraints, level collaboration, level of instructional supervision, value placed on evaluation, quality of staff, staff motivational levels and the commitment of the leadership team to teacher performance evaluation. This continues to be a problem even today.

The reality of many of the participants, as found in the review of literature, is that they do not get enough feedback. In some cases when they do, the feedback is way too general and does not deal with the specifics of lesson delivery, student engagement, and use of instructional material, classroom management and other areas of the teaching and learning dynamics that teachers want to hear about. He added:

We have had feedback given in staff meeting. So they will do a general talk about the performances and what is happening in classes. They will say things like “some teachers need to be accountable” so you don’t have any idea of who they talking. We have over 70 teachers so it is a lot for the two VP to sit down with everyone one-on-one. So we all sit through the talk about evaluations. Some benefit and some don’t. (P12)
Lack of consequences and penalty for failing teachers. In some cases it is almost impossible to have Jamaican teachers removed from the teaching service, unless of course for a criminal act. For years under-performing teachers go under the radar due to inadequate instructional supervision, weak and irresponsible school administrators and strong union backing. One participant echoed the responses of a number of the participants in regards to why many teachers did not grow from the teacher performance evaluation process. She said, “there is no penalty really. We should have a penalty.” (P02)

Another participant expressed what she believed was another major contributing factor to this problem. She said:

The main other basic short coming is that there is no mandatory consequences for those who do not perform. They are left on their own and many times the principal just ignores them. Year in and year out, these are the same teachers. Many of them teaching here a long time so they have their space. They are here a long time. There should be mandatory workshops for them to attend developmental sessions during the summer in their weak areas as an option to dismissal. (P08)

Participants agreed that the lack of consequences and remediation was a major contributing factor to what they described as “failing teachers”. One participant shared her opinion of what a failing teacher looks like in the present school system:

A failing teacher is one who is unable to communicate information in a way that students can understand. Moreover, this teacher would not have taken advantage of opportunities and resources to improve this situation. The failing teacher also has poor class control and a poor relationship with students, which creates an environment that is not conducive to learning. This teacher would not have taken the necessary steps to remedy this. (P07)

Participants responded that this was also due to the size of many school communities, where teachers were very close to members of the school boards. One participant noted that her school board chairman was the pastor of the church in the community and most teachers were also members of his congregation. Another participant noted that most teachers, especially those
within smaller communities, were cronies with school leadership and school board members and as such there was no threat of termination. She added:

This should not be. People are very close especially in a small community and therefore opportunities for termination or remediation or correction is not done, due to emotional connections and friendships. We have to strike a balance between professionalism and friendship. My principal and the school board chairman refuse to put professionalism in front of friendship. We have to strike our boundaries but this is very hard in a small community. (P13)

All participants defined failing and incompetence as the level a teacher is at after remediation is not adhered to. Participants in their own definition and description on a failing teacher listed the following:

A failing teacher is one who is not connecting with his or her students even after external efforts have been made to aid the teacher in his or her efforts. (P06)

One of the major causes of this kind of negligence is the lack of proper instructional supervision. One participant shared her own experience:

We just used to run our own show. Not much was done. Persons did their own thing. It was okay as long as you wrote lesson plans. But not even that was looked at much. It is sad because those days we missed out on a lot since persons could have given us ideas on teaching strategies. (P05)

One participant felt that the system has allowed this level of mediocrity and unaccountability to continue due to the lack of effective instructional supervision in many schools. He noted:

The responsibility for ensuring that teachers are doing what they are hired to do is the responsibility of the principals. They set the tone and through evaluation they can do better at managing the school. Yes they can’t be everywhere at every time, but if they assure that evaluation is being done then they would know what is happening in the school and know if they have a well-oiled system or not. (P02)
Teachers are concerned with the lack of accountability not just on the part of the underperforming teachers, but on the part of administrators who do nothing. These sentiments were expressed by one participant:

The Jamaican education system is designed in such a way that to axe a teacher from the system is a very long and tedious process. Often times the principals turn a blind eye due to lengthy process and all the things that come with it, they just can’t be bothered or take it on. This is also coupled with the fact that the system is full of cronyism. The principal may want to get rid of a teacher but then that teacher is related to someone in power or close to the board chairman or even a member of the chairman’s church congregation as you know many of these chairmen are the neighborhood pastors. (P01)

**Underutilization of evaluation data.** One of the main purposes of conducting teacher evaluation is to determine where teachers are in their teaching and use that information to provide avenues for growth and development and opportunities for remediation. There is also the opportunity to share best practices of teachers who gain exceptional results on evaluation. When teacher evaluation data is underutilized no one benefits from the process. One participant echoed a very strong sentiment:

What is done with the data afterwards? What is done with it? What is the application of it afterwards? We don’t know! You sit in my classroom and stare in my face for an hour or more and then that is it. What is next? I had no issue with the document itself or the process. My issue was the “hype” that came with it. There was too much excitement and fear and anxiety. Also I do not see what is done afterwards. It is not used to do anything. (P13)

The formative measure of instructional supervision has been a general point of concern for all participants. When the principal as chief instructional supervisor, or the head of departments and senior teachers, work with teachers in their development and growth (formative evaluation) through the use of walk through and informal observations, then the teachers are given constant feedback which leads to growth and development. Data can be collected at all stages of the process. Data collected from walk through and informal observations are very
valuable and helpful in guiding future competency and allowing that teacher to be better in time for a formal or summative evaluation. One participant expressed:

Data collection in my department is not limited to the head of department (HOD), senior teachers and other leadership from time to time come into your class and watched what you are doing and give you feedback. My HOD and vice principal (VP) are very visible. They are all over the place. Any given day my HOD can just come into the class and sit in. It is not just left there. There is normally a follow-up. My HOD will call me in anytime for a one-on-one to share something that he saw or just to share some knowledge to strengthen the teaching and learning experience. I believe that these informal one-on-one feedbacks have helped to make me such a good teacher. This pushes me to be better at what I do. It also may seem very informal but I also believe it is relatively coordinated. I think that is a part of the reason why we have such a good school and produce such good students. They even plan workshops based on these feedback. I call it a “call to action.” (P15)

Evaluation can be looked at as a cycle for continuous professional development.

However, in many cases, evaluation is an annual event that is used to complete confidential staff reports for the Ministry of Education. This concern was shared by a number of participants. Consequently, teachers do not see the evaluation data as a tool for identifying areas for improvement. Nor do the school leaders utilize this data to plan appropriate professional development strategies. Another participant noted:

I don’t know of any other teacher who got feedback at my school. (Laughing) I don’t think my principal knows how to use the instrument properly. I say this because sometimes she conducts the evaluation process when it is long overdue. School is closed, everybody is gone home and no one is there and she completes the paperwork. I just think she does not know what to do with the instrument. There also needs to be more sensitization from the ministry of education on how and when to properly do evaluation. I just think they honestly don’t know – they really don’t know. They have no idea how to use it to contribute to some teacher development. It just does not make sense that it is being done years and years and we don’t know what the outcome of it is. (P01)

The other side of the argument is that teachers will be provided with feedback but they themselves do not utilize this feedback or corrective measures. Many teachers do not see the value in teacher evaluation or there are those who see the value, but do nothing to improve. They
see evaluation as another bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork to be completed at the end of the school year, and thus they have scant regard for it. Participant one continued:

Many teachers don’t see the purpose. They see it as unnecessary paperwork. I know it is very very important but not all of us see it like that. As they hear that they will be evaluated there are many teachers who say “wha dat fa” (what is the purpose of that). They should not have this attitude towards evaluation as we all can improve from it. (P01)

**Using teacher performance evaluation only in a summative way.** In previous chapters I differentiated between formative and summative evaluation. I have also discussed the implication of the formative process versus the summative process, in relation to growth and development (formative evaluation) and matters of accountability (summative evaluation). Many of the participants understood the value of formative evaluation and some shared that they were not getting the benefits of the formative process. One participant noted:

The fact that teacher performance evaluation should be ongoing. It does not help if it is only summative and in many cases that is what is happening. It does not feel like it is geared towards development as they proposed. (P07)

A number of participants expressed fear for their own professional growth and development where evaluation was only being focused on summative purposes. They felt that with the lack of formative evaluation, there was limited instructional supervision and missed opportunities for growth. Teachers also felt with the lack of formative evaluation they were not being given honest feedback on their level of competence and opportunities for personal reflection. Participants’ expressed the need for teacher evaluation to be an ongoing process. The number of times teachers were evaluated during a school year differed from participant to participant. Some participants were evaluated three times over the year (once each term) and other participants were evaluated or merely written up at the end of the school year in order for
their principal to meet another accountability indicator. This was a checked box on the principals’ end of year to do list. Participants felt once this was done, teacher evaluation for them was no longer geared towards development as was proposed. One participant noted:

At the end of the school year you would be evaluated and this form written up but during the year you would not see anyone coming to your class. That is my issue. (P09)

**Lack of objectivity on the part of the evaluators/Evaluator bias.** Participants expressed a high level of trust in the actual instrument and its ability to capture what was happening in the classroom. However, the same amount of trust was not given to evaluators. These were based on perceived bias, interpersonal conflict, social dynamics, and training and qualification. Many participants believed that this impacted the level of objectivity that should be demonstrated. One participant revealed:

Sometimes it is not objective. People do things to impress the team when they know they are going to be evaluated. They put on a real show and everyone is perfect. The team members look at what they do in different ways and they all don’t judge everyone the same way. (P08)

Evaluator bias was one of the most common issues as listed by participants. I believe it stems from the fact that all evaluators are known to the teachers. The team is made up of fellow co-workers: administrators and peer teachers. Participants felt that mutual respect and trust among the staff, especially in the relationship of evaluator and evaluatee should be displayed, but this was not the case. One participant noted:

It cannot be seen in any department that friendships are affecting the balance of judgment and professionalism in regards to the evaluation process. This would be very unfortunate and will lead to a breakdown in communication. In my school one person alone does not do the evaluation. There would be negative implications if bias is found. The head of department and vice principals have to be credible. If this does not happen then there will be a breakdown in trust. Let me share this with you, in my department there are teachers who everyone knows that they are not working hard enough. If they get great evaluation, then people will question it and the reputation of the evaluators will be questioned and this will also demotivate the team. (P15)
A number of participants felt that their ratings were impacted by interpersonal conflicts, personal issues and past conflicts. These can also be influenced by evaluator perception. One participant shared:

Some of the persons on the team are not fair in their judgments. There are often times personal issues and the evaluators take them into the evaluation and a fair grade is not given. (P11)

Another major issue was favoritism. This became a topic of discussion within a significant number of the interviews. Participants felt that the level of favoritism in schools impacts the quality and honesty of the teacher evaluation process. They felt that principals had their favorite and already “handpicked” those who they wanted to be promoted as head of departments and senior teachers. They would then use the evaluation to back their personal favorites, by awarding high scores. One participant indicated:

No. It can be biased. It is internally done and we are people and leadership tends to have their favorite and so it is not very objective. (P10)

Leaders are expected to be professional and act accordingly. However, if there are any issues between evaluator and the evaluated then even with standard rubric teachers can be targeted. The bias may not always be deliberate but human nature may have some teachers getting a ‘satisfactory’ rather than an ‘excellent’.

**Unannounced Evaluation.** Many teachers are anxious about the evaluation process. The majority of the participants did not agree with unannounced evaluation. Unannounced evaluation oftentimes adds to this level of nervousness and anxiety. This is often happens in situations where teachers do not readily trust the process. This also happens in situations where teachers do not understand the process or have their own experiences where they feel the process has been vindictive. Participants have shared stories where they felt unannounced evaluation were being
used in a “gotcha” situation. One participant remarked, “Unannounced evaluation can be threatening.” (P14)

Others disagree and found unannounced evaluation to be non-threatening. These participants trusted the system, had good experiences with previous evaluations or were of the philosophy that any time was a good time for an evaluation since teachers should be prepared from the beginning to the end of school. They believed that unannounced evaluation keeps the teacher “on his feet” and allow for better quality of work and higher accountability. One participant affirmed:

Yes it should happen. It eliminates the possibility of complacency among teachers. It is also another way of assessing whether or not a planned approach is being taken by teachers. Although it would be my preference to be prepared for evaluations, I understand that its purpose is to test the teacher’s regular/normal teaching methodology, classroom management, etc. It should happen because it gives a better gauge of the teacher’s general preparedness for classes and the fact that one will always be prepared and the students will benefit positively from the teacher who will always put out his or her best in the lesson. (P06)

Anxiety and fear that comes with evaluation. As discussed earlier, teacher evaluation brings with it anxiety and fear for many teachers. One participant believed that this fear and anxiety was normal and should not be taken as threatening. Many others believed that there was a level of “natural” fear and anxiety that should come with any such process. One participant remarked:

Yes. This is natural. Scrutiny can make some persons feel uncomfortable. All the more reason why different forms and methods should be used. (P12)

There were others who believed that teachers, who were fearful and anxious of the teacher performance evaluation process, were those who were unprepared. Others also contend that they have legitimate reasons to be fearful based on their school’s culture and climate surrounding the teacher evaluation process. Others confessed that their fear came from fear of
being unfairly evaluated based on “bad blood” between evaluatee and evaluator(s). One participant specified:

I believe it is normal to be fearful during any sort of evaluation, especially if you are not prepared. Lack of preparation, on-going disciplinary issues with the class or even a tense relationship between the teacher and assessor can cause anxiety. (P07)

**Lack of other forms of evaluation.** During the data collection process, it was clear that majority of the participants also believe that teacher evaluation should include other sources of data than just the present rating scale. Some considered one form of evaluation to be too subjective. They argued that teachers should be given the opportunity to showcase their skills and talents in different ways. This would provide a better framework for identifying a teacher’s strengths and weaknesses. One participant noted:

One form of teacher evaluation doesn’t give an accurate or complete picture of a teacher’s practice, and certainly this would limit the understanding of the whole learning process which is also varied. (P07)

When asked what other sources of data collection they would be comfortable with, self-evaluation, student evaluation and teacher portfolios were the top three. Student evaluation or student ratings also can be valuable to teachers as a source of meaningful feedback. One participant shared what she considered to be the value of student evaluation:

This would aid teacher in the planning of future lessons. This would allow teacher to recognize if lessons were favourable or unfavourable in the eyes of students and the adjustments that would have to take place in order to make lessons effective. (P11)

One of the surprising revelations of the study was the number of teachers who expressed a desire to have student input in the teacher evaluation. Some of these are the participants who refused to have student achievement be used as part of their evaluation, but they were very open to having their students’ opinion and perceptions considered. They wanted and welcomed this
kind of feedback. Some suggested this could easily be done by the Ministry of Education including a “smile sheet” for students’ use at the time of evaluation. One participant noted:

I think a part of it is that it is teacher focused. I think it should look or consider heavily students input. It needs to have some components where it assesses grades or something of that nature. (P02)

A number of participants felt that teacher performance evaluation should not solely rely on the teacher’s teaching and deportment at school. Some thought that students input can be essential in the evaluation process. They are the ones being taught and spend most of their time in the presence of the teacher. Students know when they are being taught and learning is taking place. There are many forms of evaluation that can be employed to gain the responses and “rating” of students.

There has been quite a bit of research done in the area of student rating at the college level. This is considered also as the most popular means of feedback used by college and university professors. (Arreola, 2007). As a matter of fact, many colleges and universities have been criticized for the use of student rating as the only component for faculty evaluation. The value of student feedback should be taken into the secondary classroom and even the elementary classroom. Children too have opinions about teaching and the lessons they enjoy and the methods of delivery and engagement that they have been exposed to. Another participant noted:

Students can be used to evaluate teachers. Their notebooks and test results, especially when compared to diagnostic tests can be particularly useful in this regard. Interviews with students can also be helpful; however close attention should be paid to the issues that can influence a student’s or class’ perception of a teacher. Knowledge of the relationship between the teacher and the class/student, in addition to an interview with the teacher regarding student perception would also be necessary. (P07)

A teacher portfolio is another way of addressing evaluation requirements and advancing personal growth. This is a way for a teacher to be able to showcase his/her achievements and
allow the evaluator to not just see what happens within a short observation period but have solid
testament of the teacher’s work and contribution to the school. One participant who was excited
about the idea of using a portfolio added:

If they include the use of a portfolio then they can get to see evidence of how that teacher
is growing over a period of time. There are so many workshops and seminars that
teachers attend that they have nowhere to show these things. All these evidence of growth
should be used as part of the evaluation process. (P01)

**Lack of resources within classroom, especially technology.** One of the issues with the
present teacher evaluation system was in the area of classroom resources, especially with the use
of multimedia and technology. All participants shared their own stories of how they believe the
lack of technology has impacted not just the teaching and learning dynamics, but their own
ability to bring greater levels of student engagement within the classroom. One participant was
very clear with this disconnect as she revealed a section of the rating scale that spoke directly to
the use of technology:

Another concern is the lack of resources and technology. On the teacher performance
evaluation ratings scale, PE PSL4 talks about the use of technology. They look for this
and yet the Ministry of Education does not ensure that that we have the necessary
technology and resources. We just got a few computers at our school just the other day
from the Member of Parliament. (P08)

I examined the ministry document to ensure I understood the context in which the use of
technology was being required. Example of such as established in the Teacher Performance
Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook, “PSL-4 Plans and integrates the use of available
resources and technology.”

Lack of classroom resources make it more difficult for teachers to provide differentiated
instruction. It makes it more difficult to facilitate the acquisition of 21st century problem solving
skills. Participants also felt that the lack of adequate and necessary technology in the classroom
prevented them from being able to demonstrate their own mastery and skills that they have in terms of dynamic methodology. One participant noted:

At my past school, the lack of resources was an issue. There are basic things like having a proper assigned classroom. I know of a teacher who had to be moving each week to find a proper spot for her class. This leads to frustration and I have seen where they affect both the children and the teacher’s motivation. Computers and projectors were not available and this lead to serious frustration. We say children learn different ways but we are forced to teach in just one way. We just don’t have the resources. If I even wanted to play music in a class for a lesson I have to bring my own radio from home. This is frustrating. This affects your evaluation. You cannot get to show certain creativity and flex your muscles as you don’t have the things you need to make the lesson interesting. And of course this will affect your evaluation. (P02)

Exceptional learners at both levels of the continuum are neglected. Students especially in the rural areas are not being exposed to basic tools, such as the internet, that has become a common place, teaching tool in urban areas. This resulted in more teacher focus methodologies and the continuous use of “chalk and talk”. One participant summed up the comparison quite well:

Even the very method that is used is influenced by resources. At my school we have laptops, projectors and many other stuff that was purchased by the PTA. In many other schools there is just nothing. This of course impacts the teacher’s ability to deliver a lesson. When you go to some other school (sighs) my God! They can’t even afford the bulb for a projector. I am sure you know how expensive that is! (P15)

This they argued would in fact affect their evaluation. Along with the lack of resources often comes the issue of large class sizes. This reduces the teacher’s ability to effectively respond to the individual needs of learners, and may play it safe, teaching to the middle or average learner.

The Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook (2004) clearly states, “Complete and send sign copy of the appraisal forms to the relevant appraises … he or she should receive a copy of the Performance Evaluation Report that will be included in his or
her permanent record” (pg. 7 – 8). As noted in the handbook, the evaluatee/teacher signature was necessary “to verify that appraisal was conducted.”

Summary

This chapter examined major problems and issues in the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation as perceived by research participants. These issues and problems were examined in the Jamaican context. These were also examined keeping in mind the individual school culture and climate, school leadership, the value placed on evaluation by school leadership, education and training of evaluator and evaluatee, adherence to the Ministry of Education evaluation standards and individual teacher support/opposition to the process of teacher evaluation.

This chapter responds to research question three: What problems or issues do Jamaican teachers see in the current teacher performance evaluation? The findings revealed that participants describe feedback as being inadequate from evaluators. Only three of the fifteen participants reported ever signing or receiving a copy of their evaluation. The general consensus was there is a lack of consequence for failing teachers. Evaluation data was being underutilized by both administrators and teachers. There is a need for students (student rating) to be added to the evaluation process especially at the high school level. In some cases the evaluation report was seen as just another Ministry of Education end of year paper work.

Participants were generally concerned with the level of objectivity of evaluators. Participants felt that effective teacher performance evaluation system was being jeopardized in many instances due to favoritism, interpersonal conflicts, past conflict, and personal issues. Unannounced evaluation made some teachers nervous and anxious while it was clearly non-threatening for others. There was a general consensus that teacher performance evaluation brought with it a natural level of fear and anxiety. Many participants believed that using a single
rating system was not enough for teachers to show case their skills and for administrators to get a complete picture. Participants felt there was a disconnect between the prescribed use of technology and the obvious lack of resources. Many classrooms lacked resources, thus allowing lessons to be teacher centered.
Chapter eight: Teacher Performance Evaluation Supporting Teachers’ Work

This chapter will examine two major arguments as put forward by teachers as supporting their work. These two elements are accountability and professional development. The chapter first examines teachers’ arguments concerning accountability and its role in impacting and supporting their work as teachers. The chapter will then discuss teacher professional development and personal growth as influenced by teacher performance evaluation.

Teacher Performance Evaluation and Accountability

One of the ways in which participants felt that teacher performance evaluation could support their work was in the area of accountability. The summative evaluation process holds teachers accountable to their job description. Through the summative evaluation process teachers are aware that they will be measured against a checklist of expected teacher performance behaviours. They are aware that this process is no longer one of support and growth as in the formative evaluation, but one where they will be actions are held up to the microscope and an actually determination is made about the quality of their teaching. Often times this determination is represented by a rating. There was a 100% agreement among participants that accountability was essential and had positive implications for their work. One participant spoke of the value of accountability in supporting her work:

For me accountability is important. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 been extremely important, 10.5. Like I said before, people respect and appreciate you when they see that you have such high accountability for yourself and the job you do. Your peers know you are a hard worker and accountability and this helps. You are called upon to sit on many committees and there is a high level of trust that your peers and the principal give to you. They know you are a performer. For me that respect alone makes my job worth it. (P03)
Participants agreed that accountability is a necessary process within the system and there should be a way for teacher to determine their level or their performance quality in relation to their peers. They were however aware that the value placed on data at the end of the summative process and what the data was used for was highly dependent on evaluator(s). I have seen in my experience where summative evaluation (accountability process) data is used to determine such things as promotion, special paid assignments and class placement. How that data is used and what decisions the data is used to determine also lies with the evaluators/school administration. Even with that being said, they held strong beliefs that an accountable teacher was a good/better teacher. One participant noted:

At the beginning of the school year we receive a new set of students. It is our job to propel them to the grade level or above to which they are presently in. Yes, there will be students in our class who have learning challenges, but there must be some level of education development showing in the students. If this is not evident then I must be held accountable as a teacher, it cannot be that at the beginning of the school year I receive a new set of students as “flour” and they remain as “flour”, it is my job to turn them into dumplings, ready to be eaten. This I believe has helped me to be the teacher I am today. I take my job serious and I because I am so accountable, I am a way better teacher. (P01)

Participants shared instances where they felt that the demands of accountability had aided in their development as a teacher and supported their practice. One participant expressed:

Having a sense of accountability helps and motivates me to work harder. The idea that we are a team and the other members need me to do my part does inspire and make me push through the drudgery. I also don't want to be the person who dropped the ball, so the fear of failing my team is also a major push. Working at a school where I am held to levels of accountability has that effect. It drives you to do your work and ensure it is done well. (P02)

They spoke of the benefits of being accountable or working in a school where teacher performance evaluation and accountability was treated seriously. One participant noted:

Being accountable helps you to stand your ground and the respect and admiration you deserve as a professional. When you are that accountable, people around you appreciate and respect your work and word. As a result of doing evaluation of student and lesson,
and logging information, I was able to refute a parent's claim that there was no evidence of the academic challenges of her child. The evaluations were used during parent teacher conferences with the view of getting the child assessed. (P03)

Participants felt that accountability on the part of the teacher was even more important to their role in regards to student achievement. However, this was the area in which they differed as some believed their level of accountability towards to student achievement could only be considered based on a number of issues. The use of student achievement data as part of the teacher performance evaluation process was one of the most contentious issues for participants. They agreed that there must be different means by which teacher quality and effectiveness should be judged and standards of professional practice in which they must be held accountable. They saw the value and all agreed that student input would be worthwhile. However, their views on what their input should look like varied. One participant shared his reasoning:

At the end of the day, the ultimate goal is for the student to learn. If a teacher is performing at a high standard and the students are not grasping concepts and what is being taught, then learning would not have taken place. The ultimate goal of a teacher is to teach. (P02)

Others see it as a natural indicator, since the teacher’s role was student achievement. One participant was very strong in her response as many others. He expressed:

Yes. Students should be screened. They should be given diagnostic tests at the start of the school year. The data is provided to the principal and those on the evaluation team, at the end the school year, when students have completed their final exams, these results should be matched back to the diagnostic testing and there you can measure the improvement. Thus you will see what the teachers have done with those students. Right there you can use the results to judge the teacher's performance in the classroom. (P01)

Others saw the use of student achievement data as unfair and impossible to measure. They feared that this would do more harm than good. They considered that there were too many other factors to be considered before thinking of using student achievement as part of a teacher’s performance evaluation process. One participant shared:
No! Because the profile of the student you get is very important to the success. How do you measure S and how do you measure A. If you start out with students who are always hitting 90% they have not moved, they have not grown. But if you get children who are 30% and then you move them to another level though they don’t even pass the national exam, then that teacher has done well. Teachers also lack resources and have very large classes. These teachers are forced to “teach to the middle”. I think the Jamaican primary schools by and large, teachers are given “baskets to carry water”. We have too many teachers coming to us without the necessary pre-requisite skills. (P03)

They saw student achievement as any measureable or notable movement in a child’s educational development that allowed that child to move from point A to point B. One participant shared:

Yes because at the start of the term you get children who cannot read or write and later at the end of the term there must be some form of improvement. Teachers must be able to move the children from point A to point B. No child should come and leave the same way. That would not make sense. So yes we can use that measure to apply to teacher performance evaluation. (P09)

Most participants believed that evaluation improves teacher performance. They also agreed on the need for a link between evaluation and student’s achievement. They agreed that student achievement is directly linked to teacher performance. However not all thought they should be evaluated based on their students’ academic performance. They agreed that teachers are highly responsible for the achievement of their students, but they were also equally aware of the many factors that are involved in the learning process, especially those that are outside the realm of control of the teacher. One participant noted:

This is tricky as this could lead to performance-based pay which is tricky in itself. The classroom is such a dynamic place. There are so many external factors that impact the internal factors. For this reason, I would not include it in the evaluation. It is however something that could be looked at as it is important. It can be used but not now. It has to be carefully looked at before. You can’t leave out the students, but we are not ready to use that now. It just simply has to be looked at. It is known fact that the challenges are real. (P15)
Many of the participants believed that as a teacher the ultimate goal is indeed student achievement and as such there was no reason why this element should not be considered. This they considered was true accountability. One teacher shared:

Yes. That is the main aim of teaching. Students must be able to absorb and receive something from whatever you have taught. If you are cooking rice and peas, then you want everyone to eat what you prepare. If there are people who don’t eat rice and peas, then you need to cook it so good that everyone will want to eat your rice and peas. So teachers must be able to make sure that students achieve. My ideal evaluation is 360 degrees where the students play a role. The student should play a role. If there is no evidence of growth what will be used to measure the teacher’s progress. It should not be the only thing but indeed it should play a part. We set targets and objectives in relation to how students should grow, so why not measure? (P13)

There were repeated laments of the lack of resources and its present impact on teacher performance and ability to offer students higher level of engagement and experiences. One participant’s comment reflected the overall consensus and concerns of the group:

It should. However I have no idea how they going to do that. There are too many variables to student achievement to make it a class level decision. This means that we must have diagnostic evaluation before every unit that can be evaluated. I also know that it is hard to find that kind of time to do that kind of data analysis with the diagnostics test to make it effective. The psychological and social issues that they face, make it very difficult also. I also think their physical changes they go through at certain times are also another issues. A class going through puberty is whole different thing, they are going through their “in between years” and their attitude towards work is difficult. (P07)

Participants shared and were emotionally charged about the factors that they believed should be taken into consideration before student achievement and test scores can be used as a part of the teacher performance evaluation process. Participants cited many factors that should be taken into consideration. External and internal factors/issues that impacted the teaching-learning process were considered to the hindrance to accepting student achievement as a performance indicator in the teacher performance evaluation process. These factors included:

- Lack of Classroom Resources
- School Profile and Student Profile
Professional Development & Personal Growth

What are the means by which teachers grow? How important is professional growth and development? How do we foster growth for both the novice and the master teacher? What does professional and personal growth look like in the teacher performance evaluation process?

These questions are constantly at the forefront whenever the conversation of professional and personal growth and development for teachers is discussed. How do we use the process to guide individual teacher development and encourage competence and mastery?

The decision to grow as a teacher is indeed a personal choice but also one of professional responsibility. One participant shared:

Growing requires effort and requires teachers to assess themselves from their evaluation. As a professional, it is most important that teachers are growing. We live in an ever-changing world and we have to move with the time and know how to reach our children. It also helps to build confidence, especially for young teachers. Evaluation makes for a better teacher all the way around. It is indeed a key component in the profession. (P02)

When seeking to determine the impact or relationship between teacher performance evaluation and personal growth and professional development, it was very important during the interview process to establish what personal growth and professional development meant for the participants. One of the major follow-up questions within the interviews was for participants to share what was the actual evidence of their personal growth and professional development as a teacher based on their previous evaluations. When asked if they believed that the teacher
performance evaluation process helped in their growth and development, one participant responded:

Yes I did. (Long pause). Based on what they told me I knew it had to improve on some areas. They also encouraged me to do my degree and I applied and got through and also work on teaching better in mathematics which I was weak. I worked hard at being a better teacher of mathematics. (P04)

There were changes in relation to teaching styles, one participant shared:

My first evaluation taught me that my teaching style was teacher-focused. I was the only one doing the work. Evaluation allowed me to find another way or to ensure that students were engaged, and that students were actually doing the work. I learned about the discovery method. It boosts my confidence to know that I am doing what I am doing and what I am doing it right. (P02)

There were two more participants who actually shared the same experience of being teacher-centered and evaluation helped them to see this and offered other avenues. One stated:

Yes, my problem when I started was I did a lot of the work for the students and based on my feedback and monitoring I had to change this. (P07)

Another participant shared that she made a career change due to feedback from her evaluation. She expressed that from her many evaluations and the results, it made sense to her to return to school to pursue higher level studies. It made her want to get into teacher training, look at other methodologies and how to excite my students. She was doing well and her evaluators advised her to take her skills to a higher level where she could influence others. She decided to begin higher level studies on a part time basis. She would use this to work at the teacher preparation level so she could share her best practices. She shared:

Yes, after a while it made sense to me to come out of the classroom and influence at a higher level. It made me want to get into teacher training. It made me look at other methodologies and how to excite my students. (P03)
Another participant indicated that she actually resigned based on her feedback and went off to do studies and returned to the same school where she was rehired. Others expressed that they were encouraged to pursue a first degree, which is now the minimum standard for teacher qualification in Jamaican. Feedback has made many teachers better. One participant shared that her feedback was difficult to receive, but she was happy as today she is better for it. She expressed:

Yes, from the feedback I got, although it was a very difficult, I made the decision to do some extra lessons and university courses. To further my education is very costly. This is the same for many teachers and I wanted to go to University to upgrade long ago but could not afford it. I am happy I made that decision. I know I am a better teacher today. (P14)

Participants also had the opportunity for growth through self-reflection. Often time feedback through evaluation allows the teacher to walk away with a greater sense of reflection. Growth and development cannot be forced and teachers must decide that they want to be better at what they do and how they do what they do. One participant confessed that she was not doing her best and after her evaluation and based on the feedback she got, she “repented” and did better. She expressed to me with great emotions:

My kids did not do well in the national exam (GSAT). I felt bad about it and I made up for it and spend more time with them. (P09)

Feedback was a rough and a bitter pill to swallow for some of the participants. But those who took the advice from the evaluation grew. This is especially important in areas where there are not many ministry sponsored opportunities for teachers. Most teachers in Jamaica have to fund their studies. While there are opportunities for paid study leave, they are limited. Many teachers just cannot fund the opportunities that they would love to pursue. This is why there is a greater need for school based professional development opportunities that are directly linked to teacher performance evaluation.
Professional development refers to all the activities teachers use to enhance professional career growth. These may include personal development, continuing education, in-service education, as well as curriculum writing, peer collaboration, study groups, peer coaching and mentoring. Professional development goes far beyond the idea of training with the implication for learning skills and goes on to include formal and informal means of helping teachers not only learn new skills but also develop new insights into pedagogy and their own personal day to day experience. All participants were in agreement that evaluation should indeed influence and foster personal growth and professional development. One participant noted:

Absolutely! In the end the teacher improves and the students benefits. You may also end up getting better resources or a better allocation to enable you to do better, as you know resources are grossly inadequate. It did allow me to see where I am and what I need to do to be a better teacher. I started to write lesson plans more often. I also ensured that my activities in my lesson were better suited for my students. (P01)

Other participants talked about their own informal professional development opportunities that they had in the past from having principals and vice principals they considered to be good instructional leaders. That feedback they received, though informal, was effective and relevant and often times led to improvement in their practice. One participant shared:

I don’t know much about the new teacher performance evaluation system, but years ago when I just started teaching I had a principal who evaluated us every term, she evaluated us on everything, and every area of my life, from that she would critique it, she looked how we talked, our appearance and everything. Looking back, I realize that she knew me, she knew my strengths and weakness and each time she evaluated she picked up things and she would even send me to workshops and it also helped me to add areas to my teaching life. I was put to steer committees and I learned a lot of skills. So professionally and individually I became a more rounded person. I leant a lot from her those days. (P13)

Evaluation can make the teaching and learning relationship a better one. It was duly noted that teacher professional development was paired with the evaluation process and the Professional Development Unit would work where the need for training was identified. It was
noted that during the year teachers would be provided with “coaching, counseling, correction, and training as necessary.” (Ministry of Education, Youth & Culture, 2004) One participant summed up the core aim and purpose of such a process:

I think overall teachers must realize that life is a series of evaluations. To maximize who we are and what we become we have to have ongoing evaluation. We have to do this consistently. If we really take evaluation seriously, we will have our records so precise, since evaluation does give us a series of records, and these records will make our school strong. Evaluation from everyone, students even. It is a powerful tool, if we use it well it can make a big difference. (P13)

Another major area of learning and professional growth for participants was having the access and opportunity to collaborate with evaluators and peers. Teaching on a whole can be a very isolated job. General opportunities for collaboration are therefore important, not just during evaluation but at all times.

It was evident that most participants felt that they were adequately provided with opportunities to collaborate with their evaluator. They felt that their evaluators, both administrators and peer evaluators, were accessible and that they have the skills and knowledge needed to share with them. Collaboration for them was feedback also and the sharing of ideas. One participant noted:

It can happen every day. I speak to my VP on a daily basis. It is constant feedback. And I love it! (P04)

This was indeed one of the most positive elements experienced by the majority of the participants. Another participant noted that the high frequency and expert knowledge she received from her ability to gain feedback through collaboration:

Anytime at all. They are very much accessible and approachable. Even the principal comes around and offers help with Science. She is an expert in that field and she finds time. (P11)
Others shared that they were able to collaborate with the supervisors (evaluators) on a weekly basis. One shared of having a set hour every week for formal planning with the head of department. This process for her was an opportunity to learn and gain additional lesson planning ideas. It was also a time for her to share and get the much needed feedback. They would plan lessons together, evaluate the previous week and discuss assessment strategies. She added:

In my school it is very good. Most times the senior teacher marks the lesson plan of those teachers that will be apprised. We have also planning session. In that way you can get to give feedback and do even mock teaching sessions to improve the situation. We learn a lot from these senior teachers who been doing this for a long times. Some of them have really great ideas. (P08)

This was also a space where they had opportunities to share individual best practices. It is for this reason that many teachers’ fears and anxiety disappears or wanes, because they feel that level of collaboration even during the evaluation process, where often times a peer teacher is also a part of the evaluation team. One participant described his opportunities to collaborate as amazing. He was very joyful as he expressed the level of collaboration and support he would get from his evaluator. He added:

It is amazing. I can go to him anytime. Anytime at all! Anything I need or anything I want the HOD is there. He makes a lot of effort to support. He is very accessible, very easy to talk to and definitely a team player. (P15)

Additionally, others listed other school-based structured opportunities which were intended to facilitate collaboration. They felt they were being afforded the support they needed from their evaluators at the start of the year and at other times.

There was however a small portion of the participants who recognized the value of collaboration, but had negative experiences with collaboration or had no opportunity to do so. One other participant very disappointingly shared that his evaluation was done during the
holidays so he neither had opportunity for feedback or collaboration. He said: “This is not done. My evaluation was done during the holidays.” (P01)

There were still a percentage of school administrators who are “performing the evaluation act.” These administrators would not visit the classroom or engage in collaborative sessions or constructive feedback to secure the desired or intended growth and development. Participants who were at these schools were disappointed about the lack of collaborative opportunities. One participant was clearly angry and frustrated, as he explained what is happening at his school:

I could almost say nil. There are some opportunities but it is low low and others here don’t have the opportunity at all. It also depends of those who manage; they have their style of doing things. (P10)

Another participant describes his “opportunity for collaboration” as being left on her own to do her own thing. She said that her principal felt like she had certain qualities they deemed effective and so they left her on her own. There was not many opportunities for her to grow and do new things. She felt like she was not a great teacher, but compared to others in the school, she felt that she was good. Being this “good” in her principal’s eye, she was left alone to do her own thing. She clearly knew that being left on her own, which meant lost opportunities for collaboration and feedback. She spoke of having to go to other colleagues who taught at neighbouring school to share ideas. She said:

You are left on your own to do your thing. If they find that you display certain qualities that they deem effective then they leave you alone. You are given a certain level of autonomy, but very little help and opportunities to learn from them. (P08)

Summary
This chapter looks at accountability and development as supporting teacher’s role. It documents the findings as they relate to research question number four: How does the current teacher
performance evaluation support their work? The chapter began with teachers’ perception of how accountability in the teacher performance process has supported their work and development as teachers. They shared their arguments of the relevance of potentially using students’ achievement as a part of a teacher’s performance evaluation. There are strong sentiments on the part of participants for both sides of the argument. However, there was a general agreement that if student achievement was to be used then a number of internal and external factors must be considered. The arguments relating to teacher professional development and personal growth were then discussed, highlighting the value and benefits that can be achieved in the formative process of evaluation. The chapter also discusses the importance and value of approaching teacher performance evaluation in a collaborative and collegial environment. This has added valued to teachers as it provides opportunities for growth through constant feedback. This contributes to trust building as teachers engage in what can be a very controversial process.
Chapter nine: Discussion, conclusions and considerations

Introduction

Jamaica had no official system of teacher performance evaluation before 2004. This is no longer the case. Today, in 2013 teacher performance evaluation is carried out in most schools and most teachers understand the process. Issues about teacher quality, teacher evaluation and teacher classroom performance regularly appear in the media. Stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education (MOE), Jamaica Teachers’ Association (JTA), Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE), universities, teacher training colleges and parent teachers associations are engaged more in talks about accountability and teacher development in the light of teacher performance evaluation. Participants in this study demonstrated various levels of understanding of the teacher performance evaluation process and the actual evaluation cycle. Participants did not experience the process in the same way and raised a number of issues and problems with the process.

The aim of this study was to understand teachers’ perception of the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation system. The data was collected through interviews with fifteen participants from across the country. I analysed and discussed the data using a combination of predetermined themes and emerging themes. The current focus of education systems in many countries including Jamaica is on teacher growth, accountability and student achievement. Increasingly there are more and more studies on the factors that can and will contribute to these concepts. “One way to monitor the improvement of classroom teachers’ work is through teacher evaluation.” (McClure, 2008, p.149)

The process of evaluation introduces a number of ways to determine teacher development, professional growth, student’s achievement, school wide progress and accountability. Evaluators and teachers have choices about how the classroom instruction and
their total performance are viewed and analysed. Time invested in teacher evaluation improvement is time well spent as teachers engage in developmental strategies and make better choices about their teaching and learning situation.

In 2004 the Jamaican Ministry of Education introduced the first official teacher performance policy for all schools and this research was to get teachers’ perceptions’ about this new document and process. Having an official teacher performance evaluation document for the Jamaican education system points to a successful change process from the inconsistent nature of the teacher performance evaluation before 2004, to a now standardized process. These changes are indeed necessary to continue to improve the educational product and encourage teacher growth and development. Doerr (2012) states:

Change occurs within the educational system in order to meet the needs of our children and our communities. With the passage of several educational reforms laws, education is constantly changing to hold local schools more accountable for meeting state standards of learning, administrators and teachers need new ways to teach, assess, and evaluated learning in our educational system. By developing a through teacher evaluation tool, both administrators and teachers can use a variety of ideas and suggestions sustain effective teaching. (p.186)

The research set out to examine the perceptions of Jamaican trained public school teachers on the evaluation process. In the past, teachers have had many concerns about teacher performance evaluation, which they saw as being very judgemental. In a number of instances, there no standard practices; the process was left to school leaders’ own interpretation and discretion. Evaluations generally did not include planning, pre-conference or classroom observation or feedback. There was an obvious need for standardization and uniformity of the many aspects of the total evaluation process. The literature review covered a number of areas of teacher evaluation. It examined the many definitions of teacher performance evaluation, the
purpose and importance of conducting teacher performance evaluation, a description of the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation process and a description of the evaluation cycle.

Chapters five to eight described and discussed the results of my data analysis. The chapters examined various themes under the lens of the four research questions that guided the study. The data was also extended to discuss the major concepts within each of the four research questions. Some of the predetermined and emerging themes were easily identified through the interview and data analysis process; others needed higher degrees of interrogation.

In this chapter I will engage in a discussion of the major findings/issues concerning the teacher performance evaluation process as highlighted by several participants. I will be looking at these issues and their direct link to the four research questions.

**Research Question 1: How do teachers understand teacher performance evaluation?**
Participants had various levels of understanding of the definition and purpose of teacher performance evaluation. It was clear that not all teachers experienced the complementary nature of the formative and summative processes within their individual schools as intent by the Ministry of Education.

**Research Question 2: How is teacher performance evaluation carried out in Jamaican schools from a teacher’s perspective?**
I will discuss the teacher performance evaluation cycle (planning, monitoring, observation and feedback) and a number of issues surrounding the cycle. All four sections will be addressed since this forms the main core of the teacher performance evaluation experience. There will also be a discussion on the evaluation team – selection process, practice, expertise and training.
Research Question 3: What problems or issues do Jamaican teachers see in the current teacher performance evaluation?

Nine (9) major problems and issues in the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation were identified by participants based on their individual experiences and perceptions. For the purpose of the discussion I will highlight four (4) of these which had the most impact on participants: underperforming or incompetent teachers, subjectivity of the evaluation team, unannounced evaluations, and lack of other data sources.

Research Question 4: How does the current teacher performance evaluation support their work?

I will focus the discussion in this section around teacher performance evaluation as a means of teacher growth and development. This discussion will highlight the undercurrents of trust and collegiality and the benefits that can be achieved in the formative process of evaluation by approaching teacher performance evaluation in a collaborative and collegial environment.

How do teachers understand teacher performance evaluation?

Participants in this study noted the importance of standardization and uniformity in the process. They had one standard evaluation instrument and so many believe that the process should also be standardized for all the schools. Researchers (Nolan and Hoover 2004, Stronge 1997, Danielson 2001) acknowledge the importance of consistency. According to Nolan and Hoover (2004):

The standards that drive classroom observation for the purpose of teacher evaluation should be the same for all teachers. In keeping with due process rights and contractual agreements, all teachers in the same job category must be evaluated using the same criteria. (p.32)
Many participants held similar views to other proponents of standards. “Standards make an enormous contribution to most aspects of our lives – although very often, that contribution is invisible. It is when there is an absence of standards that their importance is brought home.” (International Organization for Standards, 2004). One of the major desired outcomes of the Jamaican teacher performance evaluation program is nationalization and standardization. In other studies, the importance of standardization was seen as to ensure fairness and reduce subjectivity. The Ministry of Education’s intent is to have the teacher performance evaluation process carried out at all schools in the same way. This idea is further reinforced as the process allows all completed evaluation paperwork to be filed with the ministry, becoming a part of a teacher’s permanent record. This information will remain available even if the teacher chooses to move to another school. Such level of accountability is matched with an equal amount of uniformity and understanding from school to school.

The study revealed that not all participants were being given both formative and summative evaluations. It was the intent of the ministry that teachers experienced the complimentary nature of the teacher performance evaluation. The formative process relates to the uses and purposes of professional development and the summative process relates to the use of purposes of accountability. Many participants noted that their present experience with the teacher performance evaluation process was only in a summative way. Some only received one evaluation at the end of the school year and were never provided with any means to grow from a formative evaluation. This practice forms part of the issues and concerns of teachers. Valentine (1992) emphasizes that:

Although such systems appear to be diminishing in use, some school districts continue to use only summative processes to meet state or local evaluation mandates. The summative-only system, which typically involves conducting a classroom observation and then preparing an evaluation report, is the quick and simple way to accomplish
evaluation in the traditional sense. But such strategies are antiquated and accomplish little more than creating climates of mistrust among teachers, principals, and school district leadership. (p. 127)

What has become clear to many teachers and stakeholders engaging in the evaluation process are that evaluation is defined by its purposes and uses. Many participants in the research also agreed to the complimentary nature of teacher performance evaluation, while a few felt that it could not serve both purposes. In support of this notion, Andrews (2004) reporting on the work of Barber (1990) posits that evaluation systems are inherently neither formative nor summative. He says that it depends upon how the data obtained is used. If the process never deals with judgments, salary, status, tenure, or working conditions, the system is considered formative. If evaluations are used for any of the above purposes, then it is considered a summative process. Licata and Andrews (1990) argued that both processes should not be used in the same program:

Theorists who insist on dual systems are not dealing with the reality that those who work in the trenches and administer such evaluation systems are working toward formative evaluation outcomes. Having dual systems ignores the fact that formative attempts may, indeed, end in summative decisions that have to be made. Such evaluation outcomes are part of a continuum rather than separate system (p.48)

Additionally, there are other researchers who claim that they be used in complementary ways and in fact that they should never be separated within an evaluation. James H. Stronge is one such researcher who is conducting extensive research on the topic. He believes that both processes should be used. Stronge (1997) declares:

They should never be confused – though they can and, in our view, must support each other ... Alternative language frequently used is evaluation for improvement, in the case of formative evaluation, and accountability, in the case of summative evaluation ...serve both improvement and accountability purposes at both the individual and school levels. (p.174)
As stated before, what was clear from the literature was that the definition of teacher performance evaluation was heavily dependent on use and each use could be classified under formative or summative, thus making that particular teacher performance evaluation process by nature either formative, summative or a combination of both. Participants within the study also defined the process by its uses. Barber (1990) in his contribution to the literature makes this clear:

Teacher evaluation systems are not inherently formative or summative. How the data are used determines if an evaluation system is summative or formative. If the data generated by the system are given back to teachers for their use in improvement of their teaching techniques or styles, and never used to make judgments about them by one who can alter placement, salary, status, tenure, or working conditions, then the system is formative. If the data generated by the system are used in any way to make judgments about placement, status, salary, or conditions, then the system is summative. (p.217)

The Jamaican teacher performance evaluation process would benefit from the process being used for both professional development and accountability purposes, since as a small country, it is important that it examine the best use of all resources, and in many cases, the best use of limited resources. The literature on teacher evaluation underlines a number of different purposes of teacher performance evaluation that can be demonstrated through different evaluation systems.

Teacher performance evaluation is one of those processes within the school that can speak directly to teacher quality and accountability. The Ministry of Education document stressed the importance of accountability (summative evaluation processes) and teacher growth and development (formative evaluation processes) working at both ends of the continuum to ensure effectiveness, teacher improvement, student achievement and school-wide effectiveness.
Teachers were at various levels with their understanding of the intended purpose and importance of the evaluation process. As previously mentioned, in most cases the purpose of teacher performance evaluation is closely linked to the practice and the intent of the particular school board, ministry or institution. Evaluation over the years has seen a broad range of purposes and effects, both intended and unintended. Therefore, it is useful in a study of this nature to clarify and classify the intended purpose of the established evaluation system and also investigate if those intended purposes are the same as perceived by teachers.

The participants’ interpretations are based on educational level and exposure, years of practical experience in the classroom, their initial teacher preparation program, participation with work-based evaluation systems and their own research and investigation. Some were new to the field and new to the concept of teacher performance evaluation. Their knowledge was based on
information given to them by school administrators or information heard through informal conversations among teachers. Some acquired knowledge dating back to their days as a student attending teacher training college where it was mentioned within professional development courses. One participant noted that he attended an information seminar hosted by the Ministry of Education at his teacher training college during his final practicum professional development series. Others had garnered some knowledge and exposure to the concept based on their repeated experiences with the process as both evaluator and evaluatee.

Participants understood and appreciated the value of a national process such as the Jamaican Ministry of Education, teacher performance evaluation, being standardized. Participants also had varied understanding of teacher performance evaluation, all of which was based on their lived experiences, professional exposure, academic qualification and the purpose for which teacher performance evaluation was presently being used at their individual schools. They agreed and subscribed to the complementary nature of formative and summative evaluation. Therefore it was clear that they desired more uniformity, since they all did not the formative and summative nature of the process. They agreed that this would afford them a better guarantee of accountability and personal growth.
How is teacher performance evaluation carried out in Jamaican schools from a teacher’s perspective?

Figure 4: A Traditional Teacher Evaluation Cycle

Participants experienced the stages of the teacher performance evaluation cycle in different ways. Though the model is that of a cycle, it is not necessarily carried out in the same order each time. Most participants understood each step in the process and that it contributed to the overall process. However a number of them confessed to not experiencing all the steps as prescribed by the ministry.

Planning occurs at various levels of the teaching and learning process. The first level is at the ministry, where polices are developed. These policies are planned and used to direct instructional activities within schools. One such policy is that of teacher performance evaluation. The next level of planning is that of school-wide planning. Most schools have their strategic plan/action plan for the year. School-wide planning is strategic and links all teachers and their
individual plan to the overall goals of the school. Teachers are expected to streamline their individual class plans so that it works as a natural flow from that of the school’s strategic plan/action plan. It involves not just an individual teacher’s class but takes into consideration the alignment with the school and ministry policies. Participants felt that this level of streamlining was indeed an important part of the process to be fostered and properly developed. If this is done then it can lead to a greater level of collaboration within schools as there would be more participative planning and collective vision around issues and concerns. Nolan and Hoover (2011) delineate:

Another important consideration in goal setting is to ensure that individual teachers are moving in the same direction as the school’s vision and mission. We recommend that self-directed growth goals be connected to the standards of professional practice identified by the district; to the district’s strategic planning goals; or to the grade-level, departmental, or building goals. Making such a connection empowers teachers to meet their learning needs and, at the same time, to move in the direction of the district’s priorities. Ideally, then, the self-directed option blends individual improvement goals with organizational development. (p.145)

Planning for evaluation also takes the form of a pre-conference. This is where the teacher meets with the evaluator(s) and they collaborate on what will occur in the evaluation process. This collaborative opportunity sets the stage for collegiality in the school and also allows the evaluation to be done in a non-threatening way. It allows the teacher to understand the expectations, enhances trusts, and fosters teacher growth and development, as the teacher becomes aware of the expectations and seeks to find ways to gain mastery and proficiency.

Other studies and researchers in the field also share that this is a step often neglected due to time constraint. Many participants in the study revealed not having a pre-observation planning conference. Wragg (1994) states that preparation and planning are often given particular prominence and supervisors of students, or heads and senior teachers, will scrutinize some of the
artifacts connected with preparation, like work schemes, lesson plans, and the extent to which assessment and monitoring of pupils’ work and progress have taken place not only after a lesson, but before it. It is a widely held assumption that pre-planning is an important part of successful teaching, and sometimes teachers can be judged more on the artifacts than the lessons (p.57)

Monitoring can be considered as a regular checking of those data sources that are used directly for the purpose of collecting information about a process. Ideally, monitoring is systematic and purposeful. Participants felt that the use of multiple data sources captured more of what was happening in their classrooms, other than the mere and infrequent classroom observations. Duke and Stiggins (1986) support the use of multiple elements in the monitoring process:

The performance data gathered in any particular evaluation can vary as a result of the source of information and the manner in which it is collected. For example, evidence of teacher performance can be derived from observations of the teacher’s classroom performance, examination of classroom and school records (e.g., lesson plans), and examination of student achievement (p.28)

There are many proponents who still agree with lesson planning being the most significant form of monitoring of teachers’ work. There is a great emphasis on lesson planning. Researchers warn that often the lesson plan is given even more importance than the actual lesson delivery.

Most participants agreed that lesson planning and classroom observation should not be the only sources of data for the evaluation process. They wanted to ensure that their evaluators knew of their competence in other areas that may not be captured by the lesson plan and the classroom observation. Participants wanted the use of multiple data sources to gather information and this desire is not new as observed in other studies. McGreal (1983) in his work on teacher performance evaluation suggested that in order to obtain information that reflects this more
comprehensive view of teaching, artifact collection can be an alternative or additional source of data. He noted that these should not be limited to lesson plans but include everything from commercial textbooks, workbooks, and supplementary texts to learning kits, maps, audiovisual aids, films, dittoed material, study guides, question sheets, worksheets, problem sets, quizzes, and tests.

Not all participants reported that they had an official classroom observation. The frequency of official classroom observations also varied from participant to participant. Some were observed once for the academic year, while others had as much as three formal observations for the academic year. This kind of infrequency and lack of attention to the evaluative process as prescribed by the ministry impacted how participants viewed the process, the value and usefulness they saw in the process and the credit and relevance they attributed to their administrators. Participants valued this step in the process and could not see how their teaching would otherwise be valued without being observed. Observation has been known to be the most widely used means of collecting data about a teacher’s performance. Classroom observation can be seen as the heart of the teacher performance evaluation process. There is a strong belief in the process and what it can yield for both evaluator and evaluatee. Stronge (1997) explains:

Classroom observations are conducted on the premise that seeing a teacher in action is the best way to gather data for judging that teacher’s effectiveness. Classroom visits, although typically narrow in scope, are important in that they allow evaluators to assess classroom climate, observe teacher-student interactions, observe instruction directly, and see classroom functioning as no other strategy can. (p.131)

Participants asserted that classroom observation played a major role in the entire process and it is through observation that one will most likely determine the level of performance of individual teachers, whether it be a formal observation or informal observation. Observation is at
the heart of the instructional level of the complete teacher evaluation process. Montgomery (1999) posits that:

Observation in its specialized sense is not a set of comments or thoughts of a person looking at a lesson. Observation is the act or practice of noting and recording facts and events as they happen. Psychology has borrowed the term ‘naturalistic observation’ from comparative studies in which biologists observed animals in their natural habitats to learn about their habits and behaviours. In sociology the term used is ‘ethnography’ derived from social anthropological studies. (p.31)

The nature of the “participation” on the part of the observer depends on his/her level of comfort with the process, style of observation and training in the area. Wragg (1994) postulates:

Some observers are members of the school, often teachers in it. There are differences between what is in the literature on classroom observation are called participant and non-participant observers. Insiders can sometimes find it difficult to detach themselves from their own prior knowledge, beliefs, commitments and prejudices about a place they know very well and have seen every day for years. On the other hand they often understand the significance of events that might elude strangers. (p.14)

Participants noted however that a challenging area of observation is being able to select what is to be observed. This is again where there idea of an evaluation team was valued as different team members could focus on different part of the process. No one person can observe and record and rate everything in each setting. Wragg (1994) states that one of the problems faced by both experienced and inexperienced classroom observers is the matter of deciding what should be the focus of attention. So much happens in classrooms that any task or event, even apparently simple ones, could be the subject of pages of notes and hours of discussion. (p.4)

A final issue that participants had with the observation process was the different or inconsistent nature of the observation based on the evaluation team. Some observations were conducted in very non-obstructive ways and others conducted with various levels of observer participation. Participants though enjoying a continuum of the various levels of evaluator engagement, favoured the team engaging the students in various levels of participation such as
examining notebooks and asking questions of the students. This added to the data source and would give a better picture of the lesson and the teacher’s performance.

Another issue concerning observation was the anxiety experienced by many participants during unannounced evaluations. This issue is highlighted here but will be discussed further in the chapter as a problem associated with the evaluation process.

Of all the elements of the teacher performance evaluation cycle, feedback is clearly considered by participants to be the most important element and the one they look forward to most. After the lesson it is normal for teachers to meet with one of the committee members to go through the observation. If the cycle is followed as proposed in many teacher performance evaluation policies, then teachers should receive feedback after evaluation. This can help in teacher effectiveness, improving weak areas, aid underperforming teachers and also for the teacher to know where he/she falls within the school’s expected level of professional excellence. This kind of feedback focuses on learning and growing. Valentine (1992) states:

Each should teach and each should learn. For effective learning to occur, the level of thinking must rise above superficial analysis of teaching behaviours. The focus of the conversation must continually return to the impact of the lesson on the students. (pg. 93 - 94)

This should also lead to affirmation of teachers with good practices. Evaluation is not just to find the weak teachers, but it also identifies the strong teachers; the master teachers. It is to foster growth and development of all teachers, helping them to find ways to improve their practice and the overall teaching and learning process. It is also a good opportunity for administrators to share best practices among teachers. Discussions with participants showed that not getting feedback after evaluation has either made them very anxious or influence them to view the process as mere paper work and having no use or real professional benefits.
Feedback should not only be done at the end of the cycle (summative) but should be used throughout the cycle at various times, with formal and informal classroom visits. Feedback should be used during the opportunities of collaboration and collegiality. It is ongoing and progressive and sees to the individual needs of teachers. Stronge (2006) shares that evaluating performance should include periodic feedback through formative assessment. By providing feedback throughout the evaluation cycle, the teacher is supported in his/her ongoing efforts to fulfill performance expectations and is able to identify areas of performance that need attention while there is still time to improve. This offers both evaluator and evaluatee an awareness of the mutual commitment to the teacher development, student achievement and school-wide development. Stronge (1997) states:

The most successful evaluation conference is a dialogue between principal and teacher, not a monologue by the principal. That dialogue, in fact, should contain much more teacher talk than principal talk. This conference is a more structured component of an ongoing supervisory system that approximates the coaching function, with regular, immediate, and specific feedback. Both principal and teacher must spend time reviewing and reflecting on the previous evaluation period in order to maximize the time spent in conferencing. (pgs. 265 – 266)

The participants enjoyed and felt appreciated when feedback was engaged with collegiality and trust. Through this, they felt as though they grew. Quality collaborative feedback lessened the fear and anxiety that came with the process and build trust. They liked when feedback was focused on sharing information rather than on giving advice – this fostered collaboration and they received the feedback in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Feedback, like so many other elements, of the teacher performance evaluation process, is a skill that can be developed through training and process protocol measures. Marshall (2009) declares:

There is one problem with peer observations: the “culture of nice.” It’s hard for teachers to give critical comments to people they eat lunch with every day. Colleagues may say
they want honest feedback but turn chilly when they get it, which hurts relationships that are important to a congenial workplace. Training and clear protocols are needed to make peer observations effective. (p.85)

Feedback depends a lot on context, knowledge and expertise of the evaluator and the level of interest that is placed on the teacher performance evaluation within the school. In one study conducted by Duke and Stiggins (1986) one participant’s description of their feedback as formal, superficial, contained no suggestions for change, was provided only once, related to criteria that may have had little relevance to the teacher, and was delivered by a person insensitive to the fact that the teacher might anxiously await the results of the evaluation even though it was positive and not threatening. (p.40)

Anderson (2004) and Peterson (1995) discussed this same issue in their work. They noted that feedback, as a part of the evaluation system, does not occur for the majority of the teachers. Peterson found feedback for improving practice for teachers was only happening for a small minority of the teachers. He went on to say that the feedback teachers receive should be clear, specific, continuous, rich, and hold suggestions for change and growth. It should also be delivered in a sensitive and persuasive manner.

Evaluation team selection (where a team was used) was another area that was experienced differently by many participants. There were many variations in how the evaluation team was selected at each school. Less than half of the participants experienced the evaluation team as designed and intended by the ministry and in some schools, teachers were still being evaluated by only the principal. Participants wanted evaluation team members who were credible, trustworthy, patient, knowledgeable, flexible, familiar, expert, qualified, and fair. Participants also cared about the qualification and expertise of the evaluation team. They insisted that training was lacking and were not sure if many of their evaluators were qualified.
The use of multiple evaluators is a good consideration in the evaluation process. This not only facilitates collaboration, but lessens the anxiety which comes with evaluation knowing that a team mate is on the panel, lessens the cases of subjectivity, fosters professional growth since often times the person selected by the evaluatee is a teacher in the same subject area of grade level who knows the content and can give feedback that is directly related to content area. Having a regular teacher who, hopefully, is in the same department or grade level with the teacher being evaluated is a good practice and this will help the process. Andrews (2004) posits:

The quality of the institution depends to a large extent upon the effectiveness of the evaluators and how well they carry out their roles in the evaluation process. Well-prepared administrative individuals are necessary to conduct in-class observations and evaluation of the other aspects of a teacher’s work (p. 101)

Nolan and Hoover (2004) state that given the complexity of their work environment, teachers benefit tremendously from having a skilled colleague’s help make sense of what is happening in the classroom and the impact it is having on individual learners. That colleague can act as another set of eyes and ears to capture classroom events and then talk with the teacher about them. (p.29). This practice is advised, encouraged and supported by many researchers in the field. Wilson (1988) states:

Multiple assessors are required for appraisal as for other forms of teacher assessment. They should be drawn from different constituencies so that the person being appraised is viewed from a number of different perspectives. An ideal arrangement would be a team of three persons – one from the subject’s own school, one from a neighbouring school, and one from the advisory service or a training institution. While some of the evidence collecting tasks may be delegated to a single member of the team, the observational aspects would need to be viewed by all. (p.101)

Participants wanted to know that their evaluators were qualified and they could benefit from their experience and expertise. The feedback that they would offer would be grounded in sound pedagogy, behavioural theories and proven best practices. The teacher performance
evaluation team members are persons who would have the social, academic, personnel and technical skills needed to not only conduct a proper classroom observation, but more importantly, to offer effective feedback. Evaluator expertise is essential to the process. Teachers want to know that those who are performing such tasks and gathering and recording such information are keen and capable. They will provide and influence information that will be used to provide advice on their professional growth and personal development and make decisions of accountability and personnel, that they possess the professional and ethical attributes for the task. The evaluators themselves want to know that the teachers trust their judgment and feedback and this is based on their perception of their knowledge, skills, professionalism and ethics.

Another aspect of the evaluation team that was highlighted by participants was training. Teachers could not readily say if their evaluation team had received training for the task. They were split on the qualifications and capabilities of the evaluation team. Training in evaluation is key and necessary. Stronge (1997) shares:

A point to remember is that assessors gain insight into the system as well as drift away from the intent of the evaluation instrument and procedures over time as they implement the evaluation process. Therefore, professional development must be ongoing and consistent throughout the use of the evaluation system, and monitoring the implementation of the teacher evaluation process is a major factor in maintaining the quality of the system. Large districts require a cadre of specialists to develop new assessors and update previously certified evaluators. (p.295)

Not every teacher can be an evaluator and people need to have a “trained eye” for classroom observations. Like any other professional body, the teaching profession has its own technical vocabulary. Rating scales provides a language which teachers can use when thinking about and monitoring their own performance. This language and the meanings must be interpreted correctly by evaluators. Medley et al (1984) postulate:

The supervisors’ ability to function effectively in this process depends on his fluency in this language, that is, knowledge of the system. The supervisor or other administrator
responsible for improving instruction must therefore acquire a good working knowledge of any observation system he proposes to use for teacher evaluation. Such a working knowledge is available only to someone well enough trained in the system to be competent to function as a trained classroom observer. (p.127)

In a past study done in the Bahamas on teacher evaluation, Campbell (2004) expressed that a majority of the teachers who participated in the study stated that they did not believe that the person who evaluated them was trained in evaluation and was also not qualified to evaluate them. It was even more eye-opening as in the same research the majority of the evaluators considered themselves unqualified to do the task of an evaluator. While the most effective administrators can be used as mentors for the other supervisors, training still plays a major role, as even the mentors will need to have some additional training. Participants therefore believed that training for evaluators needed to be at the forefront for consideration for program development.

Participants’ experiences of the teacher performance evaluation cycle varied along a continuum of full engagement of all four processes to a clear lack of engagement. Classroom observation, though in its varied forms, was the most common process experienced by participants and planning was considered the most lacking. Lesson planning was the most commonly used means of monitoring while participants of the impact of lack or inadequate feedback as the most important elements of the process that was missing for them. One of the major areas of appreciation in the Jamaican Ministry of Education, teacher performance evaluation was the use of multiple evaluators. Participants felt that this provided better feedback and also lesson the cases of subjectivity. Fear and anxiety of the evaluation process was lessened when performed in an atmosphere of collaboration, collegiality and trust.
What problems or issues do Jamaican teachers see in the current teacher performance evaluation?

Many of the problems and issues as cited by participants are not unique to the Jamaican context. A review of many studies conducted in North America has revealed most of the same issues and concerns have been means of disputations in numerous teacher performance evaluation systems. Participants identified a number of issue and problems as discussed in chapter seven. I will however highlight five (5) of these:

1. Lack of consequences for underperforming, failing or incompetent teachers.
2. Lack of objectivity on the part of evaluators and evaluator bias.
3. Unannounced evaluations.
4. Anxiety and fear that comes with evaluation.
5. Lack of other forms of evaluations.

Lack of consequence for underperforming, failing or incompetent teachers.

Underperforming teachers or incompetent teachers can be defined as those who have intentionally or unintentionally failed to perform the duties and professional responsibilities of the teaching job in a minimally acceptable manner as defined by a set governing body.

Participants felt that nothing was being done to these teachers and after the teacher performance evaluation process they would return year after year with no visible change to their practice. Our education system of course is hampered by such practice and this in turn will impact student achievement and school-wide effectiveness. In a study conducted to define the incompetent teacher, incompetence appeared to mean persistent failure in one or more of the following as listed by Wilson (1988):

- Failure to maintain discipline;
- Failure to treat students properly;
- Failure to impart subject matter effectively;
- Failure to accept teaching advice from superiors;
- Failure to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter being taught;
- Failure to produce the intended or desired results in the classroom. (p.98)

It was necessary to define and paint a clear picture of actions that have been recognized and accepted as evidence of incompetence. Because this is such a touchy subject and one with even legal ramifications, it is important that administrators and teachers both have clear defining actions to relate. In a review of court cases, Anderson (2004) in his research reported his findings of a list of actions that the courts have used as proof of incompetence:

1. Deficiencies of knowledge of subject matter;
2. Poor teaching methods;
3. Disorganized teaching or work habits;
4. Inability to maintain discipline or use of excessive force or other inappropriate methods;
5. Inability to motivate students;
6. Inflexibility or lack of adaptability
7. Uncooperativeness;
8. Permitting or requiring vulgarities on the part of students;
9. Causing low morale;
10. Poor communication;
11. Poor attitude;
12. Violation of rules;
13. Mishandling of funds;
14. Low student achievement;
15. Unsatisfactory ratings;
16. Poor record keeping;
17. Arbitrary grading; and
18. Lack of self-control. (p.219)

Under these conditions, evaluation becomes a meaningless ritual, and inept or mediocre teachers continue in the profession, despite low ratings on their annual evaluation. The Minister of Education Ronald Thwaites recently echoed the call for underperforming teachers to pack their bags and go.

Jamaica’s tough-talking Education Minister Ronald Thwaites has urged non-performing public school teachers to leave the education system. Thwaites fired off the strident edict during a Gleaner Editors’ Forum on education at the company’s North Street, Kingston,
offices last week. “The teacher who are not turning up for classes, who are turning up but not going to class, the teachers who are not preparing for class, they must pack their bags and go”. The education minister also suggested that if shirking educators are not willing to clean out their desks and head for the exits, an escalation of existing accountability measures being carried out by the ministry will purge the public education system of poor-performing teachers. “I believe that with the strengthening of the regimen of accountability for our teachers, you are going to find an improvement in the quality, and, frankly, a winnowing of the chaff,” said Thwaites. (Gleaner, June 24, 2012)

Of course one would imagine the resentment of many teachers to the minister’s comments. The Jamaica Teachers’ Association president, Paul Adams, called for broader accountability, school improvement plans, and training opportunities and for teachers to take greater responsibility for students learning. The Jamaica Teachers’ Association (JTA) recently announced that it would not oppose any thrust to purge the system of underperforming teachers; however, such actions must be within 1980 education regulation code. The JTA noted:

Paul Adams, President of the JTA, told our news team that the professional body would not oppose the dismissal of any teacher as long as it is done within the parameters outlined in the Education Regulations, 1980. “The code of regulation, section 55, outlines the conditions under which a teacher may be removed or face disciplinary action, he said. Section 55 of the regulations states that a teacher in a public educational institution may be removed or face disciplinary action taken against him or her for improper conduct while in school, neglect of duty, inefficiency, irregular attendance, persistence lateness, lack of discipline, and such other conducts as may amount to professional misconduct. (The Gleaner, June 24, 2012)

Participants noted however that the teacher performance evaluation process does have the right parameters in place so that underperforming teachers can be terminated if they refuse remediation, and therefore it is important that school administrators be more vigilant and accountable themselves. Andrews ( 2004) states, “ To improve, the teacher must be able to admit that his or her teaching may be less than perfect and can be improved through the changes that are outlined in the formative evaluation process.” (p.139)
Lack of Objectivity on the Part of evaluators and evaluator bias. Participants had concerns with the level of subjectivity that was allowed when using an evaluation team. Their concerns were indeed legitimate as evaluation systems, although a rating scale must depend on the evaluator’s interpretation of that scale. One evaluator’s rating of a 4 may be another one’s rating of a 2 based on their level of education, qualification, expertise and bias. Medley et al (1984) share a scenario of three observers (evaluators) in the same classroom watching the same dynamics:

All three observe in the same classroom at the same time to rate the teacher’s overall competence. During the observation one of the pupils gets up, crosses the room to get a book, and returns to his seat. The first rater perceives this as a violation of classroom order; the second sees it as an example of responsibly independent behaviour; the third disregards it as irrelevant. Later in putting together what he has seen in preparation for rating the teacher, the first rater weights the behaviour positively, the second weights it negatively and the third give it no weight at all. Finally, each rater compares his composite picture of the classroom with his own standard and records a rating of the teacher’s general competence. (p.43)

A review of related literature does support the notion that teacher performance evaluation allows for a high level of subjectivity. An evaluator’s interpretations during a classroom visit will be based on any number of things. Factors such as respect for the teacher, teacher likability, evaluator’s knowledge and exposure to the content being covered, interpersonal relationship between evaluator and evaluatee, and purpose of classroom visit, can influence a rating and the level of subjectivity involved. Bacharach, Conley and Shedd (1990) denote:

The third principle involves acknowledging the subjective nature of teaching in the teacher-evaluation process. The source of such subjectivity should be readily acknowledged: it is difficult to achieve an objective system of evaluation in education because teaching is not simply the technical application of a set of clearly defined procedures for clear and predictable problems. Rather, teaching involves the exercise of judgment in the selection of alternative solutions in inherently uncertain situations. (p.142)
Participants shared that they often times felt that they were being evaluated not on what was happening in their classroom, but rather based on what is happening in other rooms which might work for that group of learners yet not for their particular group. A typical example is on an evaluation sheet it might require a teacher to use technology, what if technology did not serve a purpose that day? Would a comment be made on the evaluation sheet that technology was not used or would there be an explanation as to why technology was not needed and would conferencing with the evaluator and evaluatee clear misconceptions? The ministry’s document however, has established a clear code of conduct for evaluators and if adhered to will alleviate the levels of stress and apprehension felt by teachers in relation to bias. In many instances I noted that there was not a lack of process, there was just a lack of adhering to that process.

**Unannounced evaluations.** The practice of unannounced evaluation does carry a myriad of responses. All participants except one noted that they were given notice of their evaluation. This notice of evaluation was communicated by varied methods. Teachers were informed at staff meetings, through emails, word of mouth, and through school events planning calendar. Only one participant made mention of unannounced evaluation. However, a number of participants did mention informal classroom visits and walk throughs, which were all unannounced. This heightened their anxiety and fear of the process. Andrews (2004) expounds:

*The practice of unannounced classroom visits elicits many different responses from faculty and administrators. It has been my philosophy and practice over the years that evaluation of faculty should start with the assumption that faculty will come prepared to teach during every class period. With this expectation communicated to all faculty in any given school or community college, an evaluator should, therefore, feel free to observe classroom instruction at any time. A scheduled visit may be appropriate when a faculty member is trying a new method of teaching or is involved in the early stages of a remediation process.* (p.110)

**Anxiety and fear that comes with evaluation.** Teachers ought to trust the system to work, at least in most cases. The Jamaican system, this being a new system, should be given a
period to be implemented and monitored for usefulness and effectiveness. This new process has been around now for over eight (8) years and should be reviewed. Participants also felt the same way and thought the process needed an evaluation itself to determine its usefulness and effectiveness in light of the dual purpose of teacher development and accountability. That being said, the system of evaluation being used must ensure that there is trust, professionalism and respect for the process by the teachers. If the participants believed that the teacher performance evaluation system works, then the fear and anxiety that come with such a system can be lessened. This is why the issues of trust and collaboration were discussed at length. Trust and collaboration enables and cultivates an environment of respect for the process and thus eliminating high levels of anxiety and fear. The fear and anxiety comes from their own experiences. McGreal (1983) states:

Why does teacher evaluation remain an extraordinary controversial and disruptive influence within local school settings? In most instances the difficulties arise not with the concept or the general purposes, but from the way evaluation is carried out. Actual evaluation is most often directed by the requirements of the evaluation system. And herein lies trouble, because in many cases the system is the problem. (p.vii)

Lack of other forms of evaluation. There are many other ways to ensure that fear of teacher performance evaluation which is experienced by many teachers is lessened. In addition to trust, collaboration, collegiality, and the used of multiple evaluators, having multiple data sources can also widen the opportunities for teachers to demonstrate their accountability and growth and in turn lesson the anxiety of such a process.

Lesson planning and the actual classroom observation were the two main data sources used in the evaluation process. Participants felt that other data sources could be introduced. There are many other schools districts in North America and other areas also seen the need for other data sources such as teacher portfolio, student evaluation, staff logs, teacher journals, and
student evaluation, that can capture more than just the classroom dynamics. McGreal (1983) shares:

Most districts with evaluation systems have made a conscious effort to use additional sources of data in collecting information about classroom performance. While observation has been the dominant method of collecting formal data about teaching, there are other data gathering methods that can be helpful, if not essential, to the establishment of an effective instructional improvement effort. Teaching and learning are complex acts that occur in many forms and contexts. To be studied in as full a manner as possible, teaching needs to be looked at in a variety of ways. (p. 125)

These other sources would capture other parts of their everyday practice. There are very strong arguments for the use of multiple sources of data collection. Peterson (1995) states:

Teachers should have the option to assemble other kinds of data than those listed and described above. This provides teachers the opportunity to document and have taken into account unique contributions and creative endeavors, or to adjust to unusual teaching assignments or circumstances. The burden in evaluation is on the teacher to present information that shows that a unique data source is pertinent to his or her situation, to make claims for educational need and quality, and then to document the accomplishments. (pg. 80-81)

Participants suggested three main data sources that could be used in the future - self-evaluation, student evaluation and the use of portfolio. Self-evaluation from my own experience as an evaluator is very useful. Teachers are often more critical of themselves than their evaluators. I have found through my years of conducting evaluation that normally a teacher will give his/herself a lower rating on a particular task than I would have given. Student evaluation would give the participants another perspective on their performance. This time it would be from the very students with which they spent most of their days. A number of participants felt that this would be a good way of informing them on how they were doing. Participants also liked the idea of using a portfolio as another data source. Bird (1990) and Stronge (1997) back the use and value of the portfolio as a structured documentary history of a carefully selected set of coached or mentored accomplishments, substantiated by samples of student work, and fully realized only
through reflective writing, deliberation, and serious conversation. In a portfolio, the content is structured with evidence of both teacher and student work, guided by sound professional standards and expectations.

 Participants all that their individual issue and concerns with how they had experienced the teacher performance evaluation process. However, there were five (5) issues that were every common among the majority of the participants. These were namely, a lack of consequences for underperforming, failing or incompetent teachers, a lack of objectivity on the part of evaluators and evaluator bias, unannounced evaluations, the anxiety and fear that comes with evaluation and a lack of other forms of evaluations. Participants felt that nothing was being done to teachers who were considered underperforming as they would return year after year with no visible change to their practice. Participants had concerns with the level of subjectivity, but as mentioned before, they appreciated that this would possible be lessen by the use of multiple evaluators. Unannounced evaluations, formal or informal would increase the level of anxiety experienced by participants. Most wanted to be informed of their upcoming evaluation so that they could be prepared. Lesson planning and classroom observation were the two methods used for data collection and monitoring during the process. Participants wanted to see other data sources included to widen the scope of what could be captured and recorded as data for their evaluation.

How does the current teacher performance evaluation support their work?

One of the ways in which participants felt that teacher performance evaluation could support their work was in the area of accountability. Participants had major issues as previously noted with the fact that there were no real consequences for teachers who were non-performing.
They felt that the accountability issues within the process needed to be addressed and taken way more seriously. They were even critical of themselves and their own shortcomings and the fact that they believed that they would not be terminated based on non-performance. Based on participants’ experiences and my own experience, it was clear that there were issues of accountability that the process needed to address. On the other side of the many developmental outcomes of a formative teacher performance evaluation process, were also the many accountability outcomes of the summative process. These included such outcomes as, promotion, transfer, remediation and termination. Tucker and Stronge (2005) set the following argument for what they saw as a natural extension of the educational agenda. They argued with many participants that using the student achievement should be seen as an automatic or natural occurrence:

Given the central role that teachers have always played in successful schools, connecting teacher performance and student performance is a natural extension of the educational reform agenda. “The purpose of teaching is learning, and the purpose of schooling is to ensure that each new generation of students accumulates the knowledge and skills needed to meet the social, political, and economic demands of adulthood.” Thus, for many, it seems long overdue to ensure that student learning gains are taken into account in the design and implementation of teacher assessment systems. (p.14)

Participants felt that the demands of accountability had aided in their development as a teacher and supported their practice. They knew or imagined the benefits of being accountable or working in a school where teacher performance evaluation and accountability was treated seriously. Strong and Tucker (2000) also shed some light on this part of the conversation:

Teacher effectiveness has been found by researchers to have the greatest influence on student academic progress compared to an array of other possible factors, including previous achievement level, class size, poverty, and race. Student progress (gains over the previous year), not student achievement level (based on national norms), reflects the true effects of schooling and is best predicted by teacher effectiveness. (p 9)
They linked their own accountability to student achievement. Of course, this was an area considered to be most controversial among participants. They knew that they should be held accountable in some way for their students’ achievement, but was not sure in what measure, using what means and who would be in charge of the determination.

The ministry documents established clearly that one of the main uses of the process is to encourage and ensure growth and development. The document encourages “continual professional growth.” Wilson (1988) offers a definition of teacher performance evaluation, clearly with the intention of professional development and growth at the forefront:

A continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development and career planning, and to help ensure that the in-service training and deployment of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual teachers and the schools’. It relates to induction of probationers, access to in-service training, career management, guidance, counselling and training for teachers experiencing performance difficulty, and reference writing in connection with staff appointments. (p.99)

Teachers invest in their own growth as well as the school and governing bodies making that investment clear. Teacher evaluation, as previously discussed, is one of those vehicles that can prove to be effective in driving professional growth and personal development. That is why it is important to establish the opportunities and avenues through which a teacher can grow from the evaluation process. Nolan and Hoover (2011) expound:

All professionals can choose how to grow, but they cannot choose not to grow. Thus, one important question that a high-quality teacher evaluation system should pose is: What evidence suggests that the teacher is a lifelong learner who seeks to enhance his or her teaching ability? For purposes of teacher evaluation, teachers can be asked to document their own professional growth over time. Learning can take many forms including enrollment in graduate courses; attendance at workshops, conferences and inservices; participation in supervision activities such as peer coaching, action research and collegial development groups; service on district curriculum and school improvement committees; and participation in professional educational organizations. (p.74)
Participants agreed on the value and relatedness of teacher performance evaluation and teacher growth and development. They identified evaluation as having the ability that leads to professional growth and development. However, not all participants reported that their evaluation had aided them in their own professional development, and a few were undecided. The very nature of evaluation, with feedback being one of the most important elements, lends itself to a teacher’s development.

Professional development refers to activities to enhance professional career growth. These may include personal development, continuing education, in-service education, as well as curriculum writing, peer collaboration, study groups, peer coaching and mentoring. Professional development can take many forms in the teacher performance evaluation process; from a simple conversation of sharing best practices to something as elaborate as a written plan for remediation. It can start with something in school such as coaching and mentoring to something outside the walls of the school as teacher preparation courses in both content and pedagogy being conducted through a college or university. It can start with something very collaborative and with face to face interaction as “lunch and learn” held among teachers, to other levels of collaboration aided by the use of technology, such as wiki, blogs and professional websites.

It was clear from the many responses that these participants took the feedback very seriously and made changes to their lives, instructional techniques and classroom management styles. Danielson and McGreal (2000) state:

Teachers are professionals; they are practitioners of a complex craft. Teachers tend to know where their areas of strength and relative weakness lie and are keen to bring all areas of their practice to higher levels. If provided with a safe and respectful environment, most teachers will choose to concentrate their efforts at professional growth in those areas in which they have the greatest need. (p.25)
The Jamaican teacher performance evaluation process links evaluation with professional development. “Teachers who are identified as needing professional training should be referred to the Professional Development Unit of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture so that suitable training activities and intervention strategies can be developed to address these needs.” (NTPEP 2005)

Teacher evaluation can result in the development of both the skills and career prospects of their individual teachers and lead to improvement in school. In short, the aim of teacher evaluation is not just about accountability but also development. A process with that much power and promise can have a procedure that is standard and be used in accordance with some established practices. In this way the evaluation of teachers for professional development could substantially augment the professionalism of teachers in the decades ahead. In return the center of the system can expect to see a cargo of reforms and educational changes delivered. The evaluation of teachers can allow them to be constantly growing and establish themselves as true nation builders that will aid in the understanding of the complexities of our society and changing world. It has the possibility to maintain the strong teachers and help to establish the underperforming ones.

Participants were very clear that the two main aims of teacher performance evaluation as established by the Jamaican, Ministry of Education, teacher evaluation process, accountability and professional growth were able to support their work and development as teachers if properly followed through. They expressed that issues of accountability were not being clearly demonstrated as many failing teachers continued without remedy or termination. They however were clear on the many opportunities they personally gained for growth and development,
especially during the formative process. This of course was due in large part of the type of leadership they had and their own motivation for learning based on the feedback they received.

**Suggested Areas for Change and Development**

The first suggestion for change and development, I would recommend would be a programme review. This programme was established in 2004 and now in its 8th year should be reviewed so that recommendations can be made at the policy level. The following are the other specific suggestions:

**Training.** There is a general lack of knowledge and an honest disappointment from participants in regards to the training they received about the teacher performance evaluation process. Therefore, there is need for structured and specialized training directed at the different groups:

**School Administrators.** School Administrators will need to receive additional specialized training in the many areas of teacher performance evaluation. Training is first needed in fostering pride, value and ownership in the evaluation process. Administrators are essential in setting the mood/tone for evaluation and fostering a culture of performance, development and accountability. Extensive training is needed in conducting pre and post observation conferences, giving feedback, ways of conducting classroom observations and documentation and how to use data to drive professional development. This training should also be offered to principals and potential principals as a certificate course.

**Classroom Teachers.** Classroom teachers need workshops in understanding the purpose and benefits of teacher performance evaluation. They also need to have clear understanding of
the process so that they themselves are clear on the expectations of both themselves and the administrators.

**Teacher Trainees.** Teacher performance evaluation needs to be included in the curriculum of all accredited initial teacher preparation programs. They need to understand what will be expected and fully understand the process. I would also recommend that the same form be used by teacher training colleges and schools of education within universities for their own evaluation of final year teacher candidates. This will not just offer a high level of transition, but cultivate more respect for the process and the document.

**Standardization Monitoring.** The teacher performance evaluation programme process should be evaluated at the school level to ensure accountability on the part of administrators and also ensure that the schools are not deviating from the standardized process. This can be done by the Ministry of Education establishing a teacher performance evaluation helpdesk/ support desk where both administrators and teachers can have available a subject matter expert to answer their questions and concerns and also report where the process is not being conducted properly within their school. In order to decrease the high level of dependency and over-use of lesson planning, the Ministry of Education should recommend/introduce other standardized forms of monitoring. The use of teacher portfolio for senior/more experienced teachers is suggested.

**Utilization of Evaluation Data.** Evaluation data should be compiled at the Ministry level and be used to guide policies within teaching and learning and professional development Units. Data can provide information of the lowest scoring areas of teachers in particular grade level, subject areas or geographical areas. It can provide information on the number of teachers needing remediation and the number of teachers receiving remediation. This data can also be
used to create remediation programs. It can also be used to identify training needs for administrators and other evaluators.

**Students Input/Student Evaluation.** It is recommended that the Ministry develops a simple “smile sheet” to be used for student evaluation of their teachers at the end of each term. The tabulated results can be used as another input within the teacher evaluation documentation and help to guide teachers’ reflective practice. This is suggested for students between grades 4 – 12.

**Structured Remediation Plan.** The remediation process can be done at the school level and at the ministry level.

**School Based Remediation Plan.** Each principal as the chief instructional supervisor must have a proper plan developed wherever a teacher’s overall rating is “Area of Concern” or Unsatisfactory”. This plan should be well documented to include the areas of focus, remediation methods, remediation team and date for review. Principals are able to offer individual teacher development at the school level through mentoring/partnering, regional partnership, reflective journaling, portfolio, modeling, coaching, and professional development sessions/days.

**Ministry Level Remediation Plan.** The Ministry of Education can offer remediation through regional and national level professional development courses. Teachers should also be encouraged to pursue additional qualification certificate courses that can be taken through the Ministry of Education, teacher training colleges, schools of education and other recognized/established professional learning communities/bodies such as the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JTBE) and the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA). The Ministry of Education should also mandate teachers with the lowest level of rating to attend a mandatory summer development program before they are allowed back in the classroom for the new school
year. These courses can be offered both face to face and online. The principal can recommend those teachers to select developmental courses from a set menu of courses that are specifically geared towards all the areas of concerns within the teacher’s scope of performance.

**Scope**

I cautioned the reader against making any generalized comments about the process of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica. The study draws on the lived experiences of Jamaican teachers in public schools; however it is important to recognize that this information was gathered from a small sample of fifteen participants. The data collection was limited to face to face interview with these participants, and captured their personal reaction and perceptions of the teacher performance evaluation in Jamaican public schools.

Had I used a larger sample of teachers I would have further grouped them in sub-sets based on their age, years of teaching in the school system, educational qualification, gender, school type and position in school (regular classroom teachers, master teachers and head of departments). I believe that having the opportunity to compare perceptions of sub groups would possibly add additional levels and deeper layers of interpretations. I could have explored in depth issues associated with age, length of service, teaching experience, type of school, qualifications and length of exposure to the concept and practice of teacher performance evaluation.

The study is also limited to the perceptions of classroom teachers. No principals or other school administrators (evaluators) were interviewed in the process to provide other layers or elements to the discussion. The study also draws the competencies of principals and other school administrators (evaluators) into question. It does however remind us that the teachers were asked to focus on their own experiences and respond from their own perspectives.
Considerations for Future Research

This study’s purpose was to acquire a basic understanding of the workings and intricacies of teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica as seen by teachers. Many themes emerged and were examined, yet there are many more relationships and intricacies within the teacher performance evaluation process that are yet to be addressed. There is need for much more work and discussions on the issues related to teacher performance evaluation in Jamaica. Future discussions and examination would require the involvement of many other stakeholders within the education system, such as official ministry of education policy makers, principals, teacher training colleges and students. There are also major issues such as performance pay, the impact of rural vs. urban teacher performance experiences, implications for teacher licensure and credentialing the management of the evaluation process by principals and teacher evaluation impact on teacher effectiveness that needs to be examined and would require another independent research work.

The list of possibilities is not exhaustive. This study has created a starting point for many other researches. This study examined what is happening and other studies can take this further to examine what can happen. It is also important that future research include other voices: The Jamaica Teachers’ Association, The Joint Board of Teacher Education, The Ministry of Education, The Teaching Council, representations from teacher training colleges and universities offering teacher preparation programs, faculties of education offering educational policy and school leadership programs, school boards and students.

Another consideration for future research would be the use of mixed methodology or complimentary methodology. Inclusion of other methods of data collection such as questionnaire to capture a wider range of responses from a wider parameter, individual school
case studies to glean deeper understand of the elements within participants’ schools, focus groups to have participants share and contribute to an analysis of greater scrutiny and documents to review actual samples of teacher performance records.

Summary

Participants understood and appreciated the value of a national process such as the Jamaican Ministry of Education, teacher performance evaluation, being standardized. They agreed and subscribed to the complementary nature of formative and summative evaluation. Therefore it was clear that they desired more uniformity, since they all did not have the formative and summative nature of the process. They agreed that this would afford them a better guarantee of accountability and personal growth. Participants were very clear that the two main aims of teacher performance evaluation as established by the Jamaican, Ministry of Education, teacher evaluation process, accountability and professional growth were able to support their work and development as teachers if properly followed through.

Participants’ experiences of the teacher performance evaluation cycle varied along a continuum of full engagement of all four processes to a clear lack of engagement. Classroom observation, though in its varied forms, was the most common process experienced by participants and planning was considered the most lacking. Lesson planning was the most commonly used means of monitoring while participants of the impact of lack or inadequate feedback as the most important elements of the process that was missing for them. One of the major areas of appreciation in the Jamaican Ministry of Education, teacher performance evaluation was the use of multiple evaluators. Participants felt that this provided better feedback and also lesson the cases of subjectivity. Fear and anxiety of the evaluation process was lessened
when performed in an atmosphere of collaboration, collegiality and trust. Participants all that their individual issue and concerns with how they had experienced the teacher performance evaluation process. However, there were five (5) issues that were every common among the majority of the participants. These were namely, a lack of consequences for underperforming, failing or incompetent teachers, a lack of objectivity on the part of evaluators and evaluator bias, unannounced evaluations, the anxiety and fear that come with evaluation and a lack of other forms of evaluations.

**Conclusion**

Evaluation, in its early stage, will guide the teacher in the path that the school will take, give advice on what is to be done and what is considered the acceptable standard. It ensures that teachers are supervised and feedback given to promote innovation on the part of the teacher. Necessary changes would be made and feedback given in an effort to lead to better teaching practices. Evaluation should lead to better teaching. In Jamaica, in the past, we have seen where many schools have fallen into the popular old trap, where evaluation has become a paper work and bureaucratic process within the organization and teachers have not been given the chance to contribute to it for its greater good – professional advancement, student achievement and school wide effectiveness.

Evaluation takes many shapes and forms and it differs from one school to the next. This is based on the school’s administration, the maturity and professional level of the staff and the experiential background of the established teacher evaluation system. However, for this process to be effective it must have some basic features. These would include planning, continuous monitoring, pre and post observation conferences, formal observation, feedback, and plan for
teacher development. This should all be administered and conducted by trained evaluators who are not only knowledgeable about evaluation but equipped with necessary skills to make the teacher evaluation process one of substance.

The general purpose of teacher evaluation is to safeguard and improve the quality of instruction received by students, therefore it is vital that a process is provided that allows and encourages supervisors and teachers to work together to improve and enhance classroom instructional practices.

Teacher evaluation can be very unimportant if it is made to be. It can be made a bureaucratic requirement that has little or no help for the teachers, that is, collection of information that cannot be and is not used in school wide decision making and planning, or we can use it as a tool to build better teachers and in turn build better schools.

The primary purpose of evaluation is the improvement of teaching and learning. It is not to seek out the incompetent teacher. We should enter the evaluation process thinking teachers are competent; it is therefore to recognise and record that competence and to provide support to help improve the teacher’s skills. The single most important aim of this whole process is to make the teacher a better teacher and improve student achievement.
References


Hendricks, B. (1994). Improving evaluation in experiential education. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools Charleston WV. ED376998


Huling, L. & Resta, V. (2001). Teacher Mentoring as Professional Development. ERIC Clearing House on Teaching and Teacher Education. ED460125


Jamaica – education system overview. Retrieved from
http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/727/Jamaica-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html

Jamaica - history and background. Retrieved from

Jamaica – teaching profession. Retrieved from
http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/733/Jamaica-TEACHING-PROFESSION.html


230


Reinventing Educator Evaluation: Connecting professional practice with student learning. MTA Center for Education Policy and Practice. Retrieved from:

http://massteacher.org/advocating/~/media/Files/PDFs/CEPP/eval2010.pdf. (November 5, 2012)


http://saskschoolboards.ca/research/instruction/95-04.htm


Appendix A

Participant Demographic Summary

(To be placed on OISE/UT letter head)

(Date)

Dear Teacher,

I am inviting you to participate in a research project to study Teacher Performance Evaluation in Jamaican public schools. Along with this letter is a short questionnaire that asks a variety of questions that is aimed at harvesting basic demographic information. From this sample of teacher, I will be selecting fifteen (15) teachers to participate in a face to face interview. This selection will be purely based on expediency; the first fifteen who teachers who returned the completed survey and are able to confirm interview date, time and location when contacted.

Through your participation I hope to understand better the perceptions and experiences of Jamaican trained teachers in primary and secondary schools on the Ministry of Education teacher performance evaluation that was implemented in 2004.

I hope you will take the time to complete this questionnaire and return it. Your participation is voluntary. Completing and returning the questionnaire constitutes your consent. It is estimated that this questionnaire should take you between 3 – 5 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about being in this study, you may contact me at 416 389 0606 or by email at ab.campbell@utoronto.ca

Yours sincerely,
Andrew B. Campbell

Andrew B. Campbell PhD Candidate
512 Hounslow Ave
North York
Toronto, ON
M2R 1J2

Email: ab.campbell@utoronto.ca

James Ryan, Professor
Room 6-333, OISE/UT
252 Bloor St. West
Toronto, ON
M5S 1V6

Email: jryan@oise.utoronto.ca
Instructions: In each question, please check one box that best describes you.

(1) Sex.

| Male | Female |

(2) Indicate your age range

| 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60+ |

(3) What is your highest academic qualification?

| Certificate | Diploma | Associate degree | Bachelors Degree | Masters degree | Doctorate |

(4) Indicate your years of trained teacher experience.

| 0-1 year | 2-5 years | 6-10 years | 11-20 years | 20+ years |

(5) Indicate your school type/grade level.

| Infant (Pre-K – K3) | Primary Grs. 1-6 | Junior High/All Age Grs. 7-9 | Secondary/High Grs. 7-12 |

(6) How long have you been teaching at this school? __________

(7) Indicate your school’s geographical location as classified by the Ministry of Education

| Urban | Rural | Remote Rural |

(8) Were you ever evaluated before 2004?

| YES | NO |
(9) How often were you evaluated last school year (2010-2011)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Once per term (3 times for the year)</th>
<th>Two times</th>
<th>Once</th>
<th>Did not get an evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Appendix B

Interview Schedule

Research Question 1: How do teachers understand teacher performance evaluation?

1. What do you think is the purpose of teacher performance evaluation?
2. What were your first impressions of the teacher performance evaluation process?
3. Do you think this process is important for teachers? Why?
4. Do you consider the process effective? Why?
5. Do you understand the difference between formative and summative evaluation?

Research Question 2: How is teacher performance evaluation carried out in Jamaican schools from a teacher perspective?

1. How is the evaluation team selected at your school?
2. How often throughout the school year are you afforded opportunities to collaborate with your evaluators on your practice? What is the forum in which this is done?
3. Please share with me what happens during the four stages of the process.
4. How were you monitored during the school year?
5. Tell me about your last classroom observation experience.
6. How was the feedback done? Describe the setting in which feedback was given.
7. What happens at the end of the evaluation process?

Research Question 3: What problems or issues do Jamaican teachers see in the current teacher performance evaluation?

1. Do you think teacher performance evaluation should be used to make decisions about promotion, retention and dismissal? Why?
2. Please describe the nature of any evaluation process that you went through before 2004 as a public school teacher.
3. What would you consider your main problem with the present evaluation process at your school?
4. Can you share other problems, issues or concerns you have with the present evaluation process in general?
5. How important is it to you that people who do evaluations are trained to perform this task?

Research Question 4: How does the current teacher performance evaluation support their work?

1. Did you make any decision about your own personal growth and professional development that was influenced by the feedback? What were they?
2. In what ways do you think evaluation should influence your personal growth and professional development?
3. Do you think teacher performance evaluation contributes to school-wide effectiveness? In what ways?
4. Do you think student achievement should be included as an indicator in the teacher performance evaluation process? Why?
5. If I wanted to know more about this topic, who would you suggest I speak with?
Appendix C

Informed Consent Letter

(To be placed on OISE/UT letter head)

(Date)

Dear Mr./Ms. (potential participant’s name),

Thanks for showing an initial interest to participate in my research. I am a PhD student from the Theory and Policy Studies in Education Department at OISE, University of Toronto. I am currently conducting a research project, entitled Understanding the Teacher Performance Evaluation process from the perspective of Jamaican public schools teachers. The research project will involve Jamaican trained public school teachers from all over the island. The data being collected from face-to-face interviews will be used for the completion of a doctoral dissertation and for possible ensuing publications and conference presentations. The research will be conducted under the supervision of Professor James Ryan from OISE/UT.

The nature and purpose of the research is to examine how Jamaican Public School Teachers perceive the present Teacher Performance Evaluation process implemented by the Ministry of Education in 2004. I aim to explore what is being done in the process, how much of what is to be done is actually being done, and who is doing what is to be done. I want to understand teacher perceptions and to give the teachers a voice on issues concerning their own evaluation. This research will be able to fill a gap in the research literature that presently exists in the Caribbean and in particular Jamaica on teacher performance evaluation as a whole, but also in particular provide much needed feedback on the 2004 induction of a standardized performance evaluation policy. It will also aim to inform future policy and it is my desire to make the findings available to major stakeholders within the education system, in particular the Ministry of Education (MOE), the School of Education of the University of the West Indies, The Jamaican Teaching Council (JTC), National Education Inspectorate (NEI), the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JTBE) and the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA). It will also give you an opportunity to be able to share your feelings and thoughts as it relates to teacher performance evaluation in the Jamaican context. It will allow your “voices to be heard.” It presents an opportunity for reflection on your lived experiences and a further opportunity to engage in a discussion on these issues.

Each participant will receive a teacher journal worth CA$10. The value of the gift is standard cost for most journals. This gesture is a thank you for your time and participation.

The study will involve fifteen (15) participants. You are being invited to participate in this study to be carried out from February – June 2012. Should you agree to participate, your participation in this research would involve a completing a very short demographic questionnaire.
of eight (8) questions and a 45 – 75 minute face-to-face interview with open-ended questions guided by the conceptual framework developed from review of literature on teacher performance evaluation, the evaluation cycle and the importance of evaluation on the professional and personal development of teachers. During the interview, you would be asked questions about your general perceptions of teacher performance evaluation, the 2004 Ministry of Education teacher performance evaluation process and how you view the impact and influence on your work and your growth and development as a teacher. The interview date and location would be negotiated to work around your schedule and for your convenience. I would also likely ask follow-up questions for further clarification of some aspects of the interview via email, telephone or in person.

It is the intention that the interview would be audio taped and transcribed. You have the option of declining to have your interview audio taped, or at any time refuse to answer a certain question or withdraw from the interview. In cases where participants are not comfortable with their voice being tape recorded, I will seek to record the conversation on my laptop though speed typing. I may also employ the use of a short hand writer if you are more comfortable with this method. The transcribed interview script would be emailed to you in a Word document for you to add any further information or make any corrections on any misinterpretation that may result. You would be asked to email the transcripts back to me within ten days upon receiving them or you can make those additional changes verbally if you so desire. Meanwhile, you are free to ask any questions with regard to the study and you may also request to eliminate any information from the project or receive a copy of the summary of the research.

There is no anticipation of discomfort or stress to you the participant. In regards to confidentiality and anonymity, your identity will remain confidential and no information that could identify you with a specific scenario or comment will be used. All participants will be given pseudonyms. At no time will you be judged or evaluated, nor will value judgment be placed on your responses. In the case that you would like to be informed of the results of the study, your contact information will be kept separate from the data. Should you name specific institutions or work-related persons in the interview, they will be given a fictional title. The primary data will be stored under in a portable safe in a secure location in my home for five years after the completion of the study and then be destroyed. Recording and computer files will be erased and actual hard copies of transcripts will be shredded as a means of final disposal. All transcribed information will be kept on a password protected computer. Only I will have access to the raw data from transcripts.

You can refuse to answer any questions in the interview and choose to terminate at any time without any consequence e, penalty or judgement. You will be asked to also keep a copy of the consent form for your record, which I will review prior to the start of the interview. During the interview process you may inform me verbally if you wish to withdraw from the study. After the interview process you can also inform me in writing, through email, face book or LinkedIn if you wish to withdraw from the study.

I do not intend to publish this study other than in standard academic venues. The report will be shared with policy marker and major stakeholders within the education system, in particular the Ministry of Education (MOE), the School of Education of the University of the
West Indies, The Jamaican Teaching Council (JTC), National Education Inspectorate (NEI), the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JTBE) and the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA). A copy of the study will also be given to the University of the West Indies, documentation centre research library.

I would be grateful if you could participate in my research. I will also be grateful if you would grant me any further request for follow-up information during my research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Professor James Ryan. Finally, the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Boards of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study please or if you have any complaints or concerns about how you have been treated as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Ethics, ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,
Andrew B. Campbell

Andrew B. Campbell PhD Candidate
512 Hounslow Ave
North York
Toronto, ON
M2R 1J2

Email: ab.campbell@utoronto.ca

James Ryan, Professor
Room 6-333, OISE/UT
252 Bloor St. West
Toronto, ON
M5S 1V6

Email: jryan@oise.utoronto.ca
Consent Form

If you are agreeable, please read and sign the consent form below. Thank you for your participation.

I have read and understood the research study and its purpose. I also understand that:
1. I am a volunteer and can withdraw from the study at any time.
2. The information I provide will remain confidential.
3. I will receive a copy of the results upon request following the completion of the research.
4. The interview will be audio taped and the transcription records will be given pseudonym names to assure the anonymity of participants. If I do not wish to be audio taped my perceptions can be recorded though the use of speed typing or the use of a short hand writer.
5. The raw data will be stored at a secure location in a locked portable safe in my home for five years and then be destroyed.
6. A copy of the completed study will be available for consultation in the University of Toronto OISE library and also at the University of the West Indies, School of Education Documentation Library.

By signing below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in this study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions as outlined above.

______________________________                         ____________________________
Name                                           School

______________________________                                           ____________________________
Signature                                                  Date

Please sign here if you agree to have the interview audio taped: ____________________________

Please sign here if you would like your interview to be recorded though the use of speed typing and not audio tape______________________________

Please sign here if you would like a summary of the research findings upon completion to be sent to you by email: _____________

Please keep a copy for your records
Appendix D

Information Email, Facebook Note and LinkedIn Message

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Andrew Campbell and I am a PhD student from the Theory and Policy Studies in Education Department at OISE, University of Toronto. My decision to contact you as a potential participant is based on our past or pre-existing professional and/or social interaction as both of us being Jamaican teachers.

I am currently conducting a research project, entitled Understanding the Teacher Performance Evaluation process from the perspective of Jamaican public schools teachers. The research project will involve Jamaican trained public school teachers from all over the island. The data being collected from face-to-face interviews will be used for the completion of a doctoral dissertation and for possible ensuing publications and conference presentations. The research will be conducted under the supervision of Professor James Ryan from OISE/UT.

The nature and purpose of the research is to examine how Jamaican Public School Teachers perceive the present Teacher Performance Evaluation process implemented by the Ministry of Education in 2004. I aim to explore what is being done in the process, how much of what is to be done is actually being done, and who is doing what is to be done. I want to understand teacher perceptions and to give the teachers a voice on issues concerning their own evaluation. This research will be able to fill a gap in the research literature that presently exists in the Caribbean and in particular Jamaica on teacher performance evaluation as a whole, but also in particular provide much needed feedback on the 2004 induction of a standardized performance evaluation policy. It will also aim to inform future policy and it is my desire to make the findings available to major stakeholders within the education system, in particular the Ministry of Education (MOE), the School of Education of the University of the West Indies, The Jamaican Teaching Council (JTC), National Education Inspectorate (NEI), the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JTBE) and the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA). It will also give you an opportunity to be able to share your feelings and thoughts as it relates to teacher performance evaluation in the Jamaican context. It will allow your “voices to be heard.” It presents an opportunity for reflection on your lived experiences and a further opportunity to engage in a discussion on these issues.

Each participant will receive a teacher journal worth CA$10. The value of the gift is standard cost for most journals. This gesture is a thank you for your time and participation.

The study will involve fifteen (15) participants. You are being invited to participate in this study to be carried out from February – June 2012. Should you agree to participate, your participation in this research would involve a completing a very short demographic questionnaire.
of eight (8) questions and a 45 – 75 minute face-to-face interview with open-ended questions guided by the conceptual framework developed from review of literature on teacher performance evaluation, the evaluation cycle and the importance of evaluation on the professional and personal development of teachers. During the interview, you would be asked questions about your general perceptions of teacher performance evaluation, the 2004 Ministry of Education teacher performance evaluation process and how you view the impact and influence on your work and your growth and development as a teacher. The interview date and location would be negotiated to work around your schedule and for your convenience. I would also likely ask follow-up questions for further clarification of some aspects of the interview via email, telephone or in person.

The interview would be audio taped and transcribed. You have the option of declining to have your interview audio taped, or at any time refuse to answer a certain question or withdraw from the interview. In cases where participants are not comfortable with their voice being tape recorded, I will seek to record the conversation on my laptop though speed typing. I may also employ the use of a short hand writer if you are more comfortable with this method. The transcribed interview script would be emailed to you in a Word document for you to add any further information or make any corrections on any misinterpretation that may result. You would be asked to email the transcripts back to me within ten days upon receiving them or you can make those additional changes verbally if you so desire. Meanwhile, you are free to ask any questions with regard to the study and you may also request to eliminate any information from the project or receive a copy of the summary of the research.

There is no anticipation of discomfort or stress to you the participant. In regards to confidentiality and anonymity, your identity will remain confidential and no information that could identify you with a specific scenario or comment will be used. All participants will be given pseudonyms. At no time will you be judged or evaluated, nor will value judgment be placed on your responses. In the case that you would like to be informed of the results of the study, your contact information will be kept separate from the data. Should you name specific institutions or work-related persons in the interview, they will be given a fictional title. The primary data will be stored under in a portable safe in a secure location in my home for five years after the completion of the study and then be destroyed. Recording and computer files will be erased and actual hard copies of transcripts will be shredded as a means of final disposal. All transcribed information will be kept on a password protected computer. Only I will have access to the raw data from transcripts.

You can refuse to answer any questions in the interview and choose to terminate at any time without any consequence, penalty or judgement. You will be asked to also keep a copy of the consent form for your record, which I will review prior to the start of the interview. During the interview process you may inform me verbally if you wish to withdraw from the study. After the interview process you can also inform me in writing, through email, face book or LinkedIn if you wish to withdraw from the study.

I do not intend to publish this study other than in standard academic venues. The report will be shared with policy marker and major stakeholders within the education system, in particular the Ministry of Education (MOE), the School of Education of the University of the
West Indies, The Jamaican Teaching Council (JTC), National Education Inspectorate (NEI), the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JTBE) and the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA). A copy of the study will also be given to the University of the West Indies, documentation centre research library.

I would be grateful if you could participate in my research. I will also be grateful if you would grant me any further request for follow-up information during my research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Professor James Ryan. Finally, the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Boards of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study please or if you have any complaints or concerns about how you have been treated as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Ethics, ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273.

If you are interested in participating, please contact me at the address below. Furthermore, if you know of any other teachers, who would be interested in participating, please share this letter with them and have them contact me if they are interested or have any questions.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,
Andrew B. Campbell

Andrew B. Campbell PhD Candidate
512 Hounslow Ave
North York
Toronto, ON
M2R 1J2
Email: ab.campbell@utoronto.ca

James Ryan, Professor
Room 6-333, OISE/UT
252 Bloor St. West
Toronto, ON
M5S 1V6
Email: jryan@oise.utoronto.ca