

## ABSTRACT

# **A History of the Secondary Schools' Drama Association and its Role as an Institution for the Development of Drama in Trinidad and Tobago**

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The Secondary Schools' Drama Association was established in 1965 and since then has created opportunities for students to showcase their talents at its annual Festival. This thesis "A History of the Secondary Schools' Drama Association and its Role as an Institution for the Development of Drama in Trinidad and Tobago" will examine the growth of this voluntary organization over its forty-year history and assess the impact it may have had as an agent for change, within a post-colonial context, in the way drama and theatre are perceived in the schools and in the wider community. It will scrutinize the organization's management framework and seek to make recommendations that could create a Caribbean model from which other schools' festival organizations throughout the Caribbean may formulate and design their own associations. It may even serve as a model for the organizers of state and regional festivals to replicate since the SSDA in Trinidad and Tobago has been at the forefront of organizing successful Caribbean Schools' Drama Festivals over the past twelve years.

The majority of the information gathered for documentation and analysis was obtained from primary sources: interviews, newspaper articles, magazines, brochures. Some of the supportive information was taken from books.

The advocacy of the SSDA, as one of many groups concerned with the elevation of the arts on the schools' curriculum, has resulted in the formalization of Theatre Arts as an examinable subject on the curriculum of schools in Trinidad and Tobago and the award of Drama scholarships to students. Its advocacy has also gained recognition for school's theatre in the wider society and a greater respect for the work of the Association.

The results of the findings are significant. The formalization of theatre and drama in the nation's schools has brought to an end another phase in the history of the Drama Association. The results clearly demonstrate that the SSDA must continue to advocate for recognition of the discipline in schools as well as continue to modify its structure to accommodate the changes in the system. It needs to expand its operations further to include larger communities and organizations as it seeks greater justification of its mandate.

**Keywords:** Secondary Schools Drama Association, Festival, Caribbean, Curriculum, Formalization, Scholarship.