

ABSTRACT

The paper constitutes an attempt to present the ideas that have governed the socialization process of many Jamaicans, as individuals, and within a broader context of being a member of a society, rich in historical experience. The theme "The Search for a Jamaican Identity, 1962-82" is therefore two-fold, national and personal.

The highlight of this paper is the use of a "new" research technique, "Content Analysis", as a means of supplementing the current body of Literature on Identity (Chapter 1). It will also serve to validate the trends in the historical evolution of such an identity (Chapter 2).

Content Analysis is regarded as "new" to research in history, having only been utilised since the mid 20th century. It is a scientific approach in reference to "the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication".

In this context, the technique is applied as a means of improving the quality of inferences, without relying solely on intuition and impression. Thus, sample issues of the sole surviving "national" newspaper, the Gleaner, were examined for written and pictorial evidence for the period 1962-82. The newspaper's relevance to the topic is seen in terms of its ability to portray events, opinions, attitudes and trends (Chapter 3).

By coding frequency/non-frequency of issues and attitudes, the general findings revealed a progress in the evolution of a positive attitude towards a national identity. Yet, there remains a lack of consensus concerning the critical indices of Race, Beauty and Cultural values. Moreover, these did not remain the central concerns amidst basic socio-economic struggles for survival. The attempts to find indigenous solutions do provide, however, avenue for national unity, which is the essence of the Jamaican motto, "Out of Many, One People".