QUALITY CONTROL IN A COLONIAL SCHOOL SETTING: HOW IT WORKED AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE

NORRELL A. LONDON
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

ABSTRACT

This paper recognizes that quality control was a significant concern in the colonial state. The understanding was that if goals of colonialism were to be accomplished then education, a major apparatus for promoting state objectives, had to be carefully monitored. As a consequence, in colonial Trinidad and Tobago schools were systematically visited and carefully evaluated at least once per year by Inspectors appointed by the State. A major objective of the visit was quality control, defined detection and exposure of defective work.

This article uses historical records as contained in log books to examine what the quality controls in colonial elementary schools in Trinidad and Tobago revealed. How and why the controls identified related to State objectives for education and schooling in the colony are of primary concern. The exercise reveals that defects were indeed found in several areas of school work, and that malfunctioning was a threat to political, social and economic stability of the colonial state. An important remark is the similarity between quality controls found in colonial schools in Trinidad and Tobago and those found in schools in the modern state. The observation leads to some speculation as to how the two, though similar in many respects, differ.

INTRODUCTION

The notion of quality has become an important feature in delivery of educational services in the 1990s. In the United Kingdom quality concerns have been evidenced through promotion of certain standards laid down in the British Institute's BS 5750, known internationally as IS 9000. With respect to developing countries on the other hand, the Jomtien Declaration of 1990 has echoed the call for "improved quality" of education for all, through an expanded vision and renewed commitment to education. Some major concerns about quality, that is to say, have surfaced in recent years, evidence of a desire to improve educational standards in contemporary and future institutions of learning.

The recent concerns have been expressed in the wake of what some commentators have referred to as "the quality movement" in education.

The campaign is one in which notions of quality, as devised and used in industry, are increasingly seen to be applicable and useful in education and schooling. Interest in establishment and maintenance of standards in education is, however, not new. All educational institutions, contends Hardstaff (1993), have always operated on the basis of some notion of quality, and this has been the case even if the term might not have been consciously used. Quality concerns in educational endeavours were paramount, for example, during the colonial era in developing societies, the understanding being that certain educational standards had to be maintained (or denied) if the political, social and economic goals of the colonial state had to be achieved.

The current quality movement in education makes the case for borrowing certain concepts from the world of industry, and applying them directly in the schooling process. This paper is concerned, however, with only one of these concepts, quality control, defined as "detection of defective work" (Freeman, 1993). The main purpose of the exercise is to examine how and why the notion of quality control was applied in attempts to educate the masses in the territory, Trinidad and Tobago, during the colonial era. A British colony from 1889, Trinidad and Tobago acceded to political independence in 1962 and then to Republican status in 1976.

Using documentary evidence, the study is a micro-analytical investigation of quality control in the elementary school system in Trinidad and Tobago during the years 1938-1953. Data have been drawn essentially from school logs, and an explanation of the nature and housestyle of the log book is offered in order to substantiate the usefulness of this source as a primary and reliable data base for qualitative research in education and schooling. One elementary school only is investigated over the fifteen year period (1938-1953). The findings are however used to generalize about quality control in education and schooling under the system of colonial rule in Trinidad and Tobago and elsewhere.

The paper proceeds in six stages. An historical sketch of relevant aspects of educational administration in Trinidad and Tobago is followed by discussion of the rationale for colonial education. The concepts of quality and quality control are then reviewed, and the quality control mechanism used during the given time period is explained. Some examples of sub-standard work exposed during the schooling process are presented, and the paper concludes with an

interpretation of why controls identified were of interest to the colonial state.

BACKGROUND

After abolition of slavery in 1834 the Negro Education Grant was established by the British Crown to service education in its West Indian colonies. Observers have remarked that the grant was woefully inadequate (Gordon, 1963), but from an administrative point of view the gesture is significant in that it precipitated moves towards state control in the educational affairs of the colonies concerned, Trinidad and Tobago being one of these. Shift from the former slave society to the emerging colonial one was also accompanied by a major shift in responsibility for education of the masses, almost all black. Responsibility, previously in the hands of individuals and organized groups, was now placed within the metropolitan (British) political power structure. A Governor, appointed by the Colonial Office "at home," was now in charge of local administration and he had to pay heed to the quality of education for the masses required by the colonial state.

Very significant in the new form of governance is the fact that direct budgeting for, and expenditure on, local education fell to the colony in question. In Trinidad and Tobago the new arrangement led to a system of state accountability in which Inspectors were appointed to monitor and report on content as well as standards achieved in school work. The Inspectorate, therefore was part of the mechanism put in place by colonial administration with some definite and specific objectives in mind, quality control being paramount. During the time period (1938-1953) covered by this study a well developed Inspectorate system was in place in Trinidad and Tobago, designed essentially to control and report upon standards of schooling at the elementary level.

Quality control by school Inspectors was an on-going affair. There was however an pre-Annual Inspection (A.I.) of each school in which a thorough, indepth assessment of the institution was made. The A.I. was conducted by the Inspector on a day set aside for evaluation, and in Trinidad and Tobago the exercise has been credited with being the single, most important, administrative event in the life of the school. Curriculum, school organization, record keeping, school discipline and condition of physical facilities were the focus of inspection and based upon these criteria schools were rated as "Good," "Fair" or "Poor." Both the Inspectorate and the A.I. have however disappeared from the

educational scene in Trinidad and Tobago. Since political independence in 1962 a Supervisory system has been installed, with some new and different objectives for education and schooling in the new nation.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Colonial education, whether in Trinidad and Tobago or elsewhere did not occur in a vacuum. It was purposive, designed specifically for furtherance of the goals of colonialism, driven by political and other objectives. Some clarification of the approach is offered by Altbach and Kelly:

Schools which emerge in colonies reflect the power and the educational needs of the colonizers. While the educational systems that were established served some of the needs of the indigenous population . . . schools were primarily designed to serve the needs of the colonizers. The aspirations of the colonized were for the most part ignored. Colonial administrators, when they took interest in education at all were concerned with training literate clerks who could staff the lower ranks of the civil service (1978, 2.)

An important line of reasoning is here implied. If the objectives of colonial schooling were to be achieved, then paramountcy of concern had to be given to the quality of what transpired in the schools themselves. The "right" type of schooling had to be promoted -- one which would inculcate in the colonized the moral infrastructure of values and beliefs considered necessary to underpin such a society. Bacchus (1986) explains that an educational programme based on such principles had at least three basic dimensions. Its purpose in the West Indies was to educate the masses so that they might accept as "given" their place and that of others within the existing social order, to guarantee that the colonized would continue as labourers on the sugar estates, and to assist the masses to accept the ruling groups as "having an inherent right to maintain their positions of dominance because they were culturally and even intellectually superior" (Bacchus, 1986, p. 21).

Colonial education was also promoted to co-opt a few individuals into the "higher" echelons of society. This objective was particularly evident towards the closing days of colonial rule and had a strong political motive. The idea was to "appease the masses who were beginning to be restless and less willing to accept the social order

which restricted social and economic opportunities mainly to the upper-class groups, as was seen in the number of civil disturbances" (Bacchus, n.d., p. 371). In consequence, the decision was to open up some opportunities to a few "able" persons as school teachers and junior clerks in the Public Service. This is one of the contexts in which ability to speak and write "correct" English became an important objective of schools. So too was ability to perform basic arithmetical calculations.

Promotion of colonial education was also to legitimate the colonial state. In the colonial era the source of legitimacy was the "act of conquest." This was the case particularly in the West Indies where any threat to the authority of the State was contained through physical and military force. But the State could no longer depend upon physical force alone, especially with dismantling of the legal structure which supported slavery and gave it legitimacy. The State during the post-slavery, colonial era therefore had to seek moral support from the population, and education was to play an important role in engendering such support. Legitimacy of the State, that is to say, was not to develop out of democratic reforms towards mass participation in the political decision-making process. On the contrary, it was to emerge from support mustered through a process of education and schooling.

Another significant objective of colonial education was the grooming and preparation of what is often described as a "comprador" elite class (Shaeffer, 1992). The idea was to prepare and to perpetuate a class of local individuals having tastes, social deportment, manners and dress codes compatible with those of the colonizer even long after decolonization. In British West Indian colonies the objective was to create what some critics have referred to as an "Afrosaxon" class (Campbell, 1973). The spirit and intent of what the colonial state had in mind has been spelled out in a comment by Lord Macaulay in reference to India. He explained that "we [the British] must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern -- a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect (Trevelyan, 1876)." The colonial objective to form a comprador elite class from among the masses led to some specific educational objectives. The knowledge, skills and attitudes taught in local schools were very academic, and they were for the most part ineffectual and irrelevant as regards socio-economic improvements in the local society.

LOG BOOKS AS SOURCES OF DATA

The school log, known in education circles in Trinidad and Tobago as "the log book," made its appearance in schools in the British West Indies when colonial administrators assumed responsibility for education. Previously, education was in the hands of missionary and philanthropic agencies, but centralization of management and desire for greater accountability in utilization of state resources led to adoption of the log book as part of the new educational administration machinery. The log book was also an important accompaniment in the decision to appoint school Inspectors whose main duty was to monitor instructional strategies and curriculum content.

The purpose of the new Inspectorate, that is to say, was to keep an eye on the quality of school work, and the two-part device (Inspector and log book) went hand in hand. The strategy found favour in the British West Indies with influential groups who at the time had two serious concerns: the direction which local education should take, and standards that should consequently be maintained in schools. The argument put forward was that "co-ordination of education under the control of the State was a positive step, since it could undermine the efforts of some of the missionary bodies to direct educational development in such a way that might lead to an empowerment of the masses and a confrontation with the authoritarian state" (Bacchus, n.d., p. 374).

The log book was therefore a significant presence in those elementary schools in Trinidad and Tobago making direct use of state funds. In it were logged significant events relating to management and administration of the respective school, instructional issues included. Entries were made by authorized personnel only, in particular the Head Teacher or his designate and by the Inspector or other senior personnel from the State Department of Education. Examination of the log book used in this study revealed that entries were made frequently, at least three times per week and in some cases every day, Monday to Friday. Staffing arrangements, disciplinary matters and notations relating to facilities and supplies were entered. The Report of the Annual Inspection conducted for each school by the Inspector was, however, a major highlight.

Log books were of a standard size (about 18" long x 10" wide x 1" thick), issued by the central Department of Education. Format and house style of entries, including the language of reporting, are very similar from year to year (and from book to book) and because the

length and substance of entries were similar, the time taken to complete a given book was approximately the same -- about fifteen years. Each entry was complete with date and signature. Log books, in particular those of the colonial period, provide inestimable data on the history of education and schooling in Trinidad and Tobago during the pre-independence era. Their usefulness is enhanced by the fact that they constitute the only repository of systematic, organized, day-to-day commentary on what transpired in schools and classrooms locally, and at the level of practice. The log books in question, therefore, comprise the only source of what might be referred to as the "black box" of in-school administration in colonial Trinidad and Tobago. In them are immortalized data unmatched in consistency and detail.

The priceless value of the colonial log book as a data source in educational research is recognized further when it is understood that although the act of "logging" has continued in the Trinidad and Tobago school system, the nature and substance of entries have changed. Data on academic standards achieved by schools, for example, no longer appear and this feature has reinforced the importance of surviving books as essential sources of valuable data. The colonial log books of Trinidad and Tobago are an artefactual expression of colonial thinking and administrative culture in local education and schooling.

Unfortunately, log books in Trinidad and Tobago are not secured upon completion, logistical problems relating to their storage and retrieval being the major reason. The book used in this study was salvaged from among some abandoned items at the school in question, and contains entries covering the period 1938-1953. Detailed reports of the Annual Inspection conducted by the Inspector and approved by the Director of Education are included. A major characteristic of each report is insistence upon "what was wrong" about the school. Highlighting of defective work, that is to say, was a significant feature of reporting.

QUALITY AND ITS CONTROL

The recent quality movement provides some opportunity to examine the concept of quality, and to consider how an understanding of the term might benefit educational endeavours. In this regard, Sallis (1993) contends that the concept is "slippery," while others such as Hardstaffe (1994) and Bagnell (1994) argue that it is "problematical." In consequence, they maintain that the concept of quality should be subjected to careful analysis, particularly when used in an educational context.

Despite challenges which an understanding of the term presents, quality has been defined as "fitness for use" (Lessigner, 1975.) "Customer-satisfaction" has also been used (Hardstaffe, 1994). The concept ought not to be seen as absolute, but might be understood as the means by which a given service (in this case education) is judged to be "up to standard." Implied in the concept, therefore, is an understanding of what education ought to accomplish, and how. Education, the concept suggests, must do what it has set out to do, and accomplishments are weighed against certain goals which may be either stated or implied. This is the context in which Sallis (1993) defines quality as "fit for purpose," the definition used by the British Standards Institute, and adopted in this paper.

In light of this position quality is understandably a relative concept. It is relative in the sense that embedded in the term is an understanding that the service offered must "measure up" to a set of that pre-determined standards. Quality is also relative because the above customer satisfaction, itself a variable concept, is central (Cuttance, 1994). The former of these two claims focuses upon the provider of the educational service in question, and for this reason has sometimes been referred to as "the producer" dimension of quality. The understanding here is that education exhibits quality so long as it consistently meets up to its provider's claim for the service. This is the view of "quality in fact" (Sallis, 1993).

The latter position on the other hand contrasts sharply with the above quality-in-fact orientation of the concept, and points to what observers have referred to as "quality in perception" (Moreland and Horsburgh, 1992). Commentators who hold this latter view argue that quality "is in the eyes of the beholder," and contend that such a definition is "powerful" and "important," one which institutions ignore only at their own peril (Lillis, 1988). In other words it is the customer, they claim, who in the final analysis makes the judgment on quality.

In the context quality control is essentially the task of inspecting for, identifying, exposing and rejecting defective work (Freeman, 1993). The derivative concept was first used by Henri Fayol in 1916 and checking, comparing and verifying to make sure that standards are met and kept are some of the central activities (Lessinger, 1976). More recently Sallis has explained that:

Quality control . . . involves the detection and elimination of components or final products which are not up to standard. It is an after-the-event process concerned with detecting and rejecting defective items. As a method of ensuring quality it may involve a considerable amount of waste . . . Quality control is usually carried out by quality professionals known as quality controllers or inspectors. Inspection and testing are the most common methods of quality control, and are widely used in education to determine whether standards are being met (1993, p. 261.)

Some further explanation is offered by English. He contends that quality control:

is the systematic means by which at designated and appropriate intervals a determination can be made if the system or the curriculum is accomplishing the desired results and outcomes. These means include the possibility of programmatic adjustments so that when the results are obtained, there is minimum discrepancy between the desired outcomes and the actual outcomes . . . Quality control therefore operates within the parameters of purpose (1978, p. 10.)

An extended but justifiable argument is that quality control is a function and responsibility of management. Used in this way, the term allows for a particular view of the school -- as a place where a valid series of learner outcomes can be formulated and translated into measurable results. But in order to accomplish these objectives, onus on the teacher is required. He or she is expected to have some knowledge about the effective use of instructional methods to achieve declared objectives. Effectiveness in the context is determined by student demonstration through performance that prescribed objectives have been met. In the absence of these requirements what transpires in schools might be deemed irrelevant and ineffective, in the sense that school work is judged to have fallen short of those purposes for which the schooling enterprise was established.

A final comment about quality control is the relationship which the process has with "feedback." The understanding is that those persons whose duty it is to deliver the given service (as in the case of education) or to manufacture a given product (as in the case of industry) need to know when, where and why standards are not "up to par." The objective is to minimize discrepancy between actual and desired results but even so, some incongruence is likely to appear

"because the process of selection, observation and decision making [as part of the quality control mechanism] is filled with error possibilities of initial perception, process and subsequent adjustments based upon feedback" (English, 1978, p. 25).

DEFECTIVE SCHOOL WORK

If quality is to be controlled, in other words if defective school work is to be identified, then a system of inspection to reveal defects must be in place. Inspection, that is to say, goes hand in hand with quality control and under the colonial system of education found in Trinidad and Tobago, featured prominently in elementary schools. The main objective was to identify and draw attention to those aspects of schooling that were sub-standard, but Inspectors also used the occasion to accord credit to those features of school work that were considered complimentary.

Some examples of what the Inspector of Schools found to be defective (with occasional suggestions for remediation and/or reasons for default) are provided from the log book (1938-1953) examined:

- Language study, grammar and written composition were weak throughout. The schemes evidently did not receive sufficient attention. More intensive work is needed (1941).¹
- Mechanical reading was weak in Std. v.² In the Junior Division enunciation and pronunciation were faulty (1939).
- Handwriting was generally untidy. Spacing and size of letters were faulty (1950).
- Arithmetic was weak in every class with the single exception of Std. V. All aspects of the subject seemed to have suffered from careless teaching (1939).
- The quality of work declined considerably during the year under review. The major weakness reflects very discreditably on the Assistant Teacher in charge. It is very characteristic that when disharmony steps into a school efficiency steps out. This evidently was the root cause of the falling-off this year (1945).
- The work of Stds. IV-VII bore little or no evidence of systematic teaching of the rudiments of English.
- Pupils began their learners in the traditional roundabout fashion (1953).

- The standards were very weak in Arithmetic. Standard VI-VII which represent the finished products of the school scored zero, and Std. V barely reached 10%. Attention was called last year to the marked weakness in this subject. It is deplorable that there is no improvement after a year's practice (1946).
- Pupils need more practice in oral work, conversation, narration, description in order to check the influence of their home speech. A literary group is desirable (1948).
- Enough attention is not given to the school garden . . . a school garden giving pupils the right attitude towards gardening and also indicating proper methods of intensive cultivation, manuring, rotation of crops and garden accounting - can be of incalculable influence on the future life of students (1943).
- In the lower classes "h" aspirate was frequently omitted and the sound "h" was mispronounced. The word "other" was pronounced "udder," "think" was pronounced "tink" etc. (1949).
- A determined effort should be made to counteract the harmful influence of speech in the home and street on the "English of the school." Perhaps educational outings and contact with children who speak better would tend to minimize the evil (1939).
- Discipline was poor: noisy working, bad manners, slow response to commands and unpunctuality were noticeable weaknesses (1942).
- The speech of the children in the Infant Department is very bad, and intense work in speech training, particularly pronunciation and expression should be undertaken (1951).
- Poems were known but not recited in a manner to reflect pupils' comprehension. Fewer poems may be attempted but these should be taught to make pupils enjoy their literary heritage. Pupils should understand and feel what they say, catch the spirit of the text and appreciate the beauty of ideas and impression made available to them (1940).
- Arithmetic was depressingly weak. Written work lacked arrangement and clarity of statement. Std. IV-V did not show any regard for order in aligning statement and working. Working was scattered everywhere. Tables were not well known. Unless Tables are known that students can answer automatically, they will hardly derive much help in calculating rapidly and accurately (1952).

- Nearly all pupils lacked fluency in reading. Their reading consequently lacked the delight that was expected. Pupils for the most part read single words instead of reading in phrases. Pronunciation needed attention. Pupils called "he" "ee" and "his" "is." Pupils of Std. I had very little idea what they read. Std. I was very weak. Very much remains to be done before the pupils could be fit for promotion (1938).
- Music took the form of voice training. An attempt should be made to teach pupils some of the simple but moving masterpieces of music. Once taught, these may be rehearsed so that each pupil on leaving school will know a reasonably large number of songs that the world would ever sing (1953).
- Recitation was marred by lack of understanding of what was learned. Full discussion of the spirit or atmosphere of poems learned, the purpose which inspired its composition, and appreciation of the literary graces embodied in the poems should precede memorization of the text. Pupils did not appear to get much (if any) enjoyment from the subject (1938).

ANALYSIS

A central argument of this paper is that colonial education was established in the interest of the colonial state, and that school work became defective when it did not appear to promote that interest. An integral part of the educational process in Trinidad and Tobago, the Annual Inspection functioned as a sounding device to identify sub-standard work. It was used to detect what went wrong and where. Its purpose therefore was to discover if the system was operating to plan. Not only were several defects identified, but attempts were also made to unveil trends and patterns in sub-standard school work. The data also reveal that accompanying some of the exposures of defective work were concerns about quality assurance. Suggestions and/or directions for remediation, that is to say, were sometimes offered.

The data support the observation that promotion of the welfare of the "mother country" was an objective of colonial education. Promotion was evidenced, for example, in certain educational requirements which would facilitate colonial intention to co-opt a few locals into the lower echelons of the Public Service. Because co-optation as low-level functionaries was a major goal, capability to speak and write -acceptable" English had to become a necessity for the chosen few and the school, the training ground so to speak, had to "do it right."

Inspectors were therefore careful to expose (in brute, harsh and direct terms) when and where students were having problems such as those relating to written and spoken English. It had to be pointed out, for example, that the "h" aspirate was being mispronounced, as were the words "other" and "think." Individuals who could not write or speak correct English were not usable in the Public Service as structured, even though they might have other skills to offer. Defects, therefore, had to be exposed and brought to the attention of administrators.

The concern with "speaking properly" has another dimension. The claim to mispronunciation, and by implication, the desire to have words pronounced "properly," is part of the process of psychological conditioning in recruitment to the comprador elite class mentioned above. The diagnosis goes beyond lexical concerns, and was in fact politically grounded. Exposure of mispronunciation (and moves to correct the problem) was a stratagem to psychologize the colonized and to re-orient their social tastes, values and habits towards acceptance of "preferred" canons of speaking and behaviour that would hopefully be firmly entrenched long after dismantling of the colonial regime. In Trinidad and Tobago such efforts at conditioning met with some degree of success, and the observation has sometimes been made that certain locals had become "more English than the Englishman" (Campbell, 1973).

Grooming through education to appropriate the values and behaviour patterns of the colonizer had some far-reaching and deleterious effects on development efforts during the postcolonial era. Now more than three decades into political independence, Trinidad and Tobago (as most ex-colonies) has had little success with drives to indigenize its social and other institutions. Many "buy-local" and "go-local" campaigns have come and gone but preference for the foreign over the local -- in dress, food or even expertise -- still predominates. The orientation points to the relative success which some of the quality control measures, together with the corrective actions which may have been suggested, have enjoyed to the benefit of the colonizer.

Another observation concerns legitimacy of the State. There was criticism by the Inspector that "singing took the form of voice training." To correct the situation direction was given that "some of the simple but moving masterpieces of music" (obviously all ex-patriate) should be sung. The rationale offered was that upon leaving school children would possess "a large number of songs that the world will ever sing." The Inspector's criticism, together with his directive, is significant in that it implies a certain line of reasoning. Remarkable is

the understanding that the songs were not to emerge from the lived experience of students (or of teachers for that matter), but were to be imposed from above, approved by state managers. The procedure here is akin to what some commentators have referred to as "steering at a distance" (Kickert, 1991), a concept used to describe the level of detachment with which stakeholders might indirectly intervene to shape outcomes of schooling. The songs recommended (and by implication those rejected) were part of the policy to lend some degree of legitimacy to the colonial state in having both students and teachers believe that the only songs worthy of singing (now and throughout their lives) were those handed down by the long arm of colonialism. Even the training of students' own voices was criticized as being unacceptable.

The Inspector's observation regarding singing is instructive in some other ways. The criticism underscores the colonizer's assumption that the expatriate world -- white, male and Eurocentric -- was the only one worthy of being experienced. Others, and in particular that of the colonized, did not count and were illegitimate. The issue is redolent of a comment by Freire (1970) that the colonial experience engenders for the colonized a "culture of silence." It is an experience in which the colonizer successfully attempts to prevent the masses from understanding their position in both time and space, and hence from maintaining contact with their own past. The directive to sing the songs indicated is part of the alienation and legitimation objective central to colonialism.

The above problem involving songs and singing is an issue with which Trinidad and Tobago has struggled for many years. Calypso and soca, the two indigenous musical art forms, have been adversely affected for several generations. Children have been taught to refer to these as "wild" songs in relation to the more "cultured" songs "that the world would ever sing." Similar denials were also found in Jamaica where reggae emerged. The issue is far-reaching, and in relation to Trinidad and Tobago encompassed not only the songs themselves but also related musical instruments (for example the steel pan) on which the tunes were played. Acceptance of these two indigenous and related expressions of culture (the song and the instrument) was hampered for some time. Singing as a school subject was until very recently limited to rendition of expatriate lyrics only. Worse yet was acceptance by many among the local masses that this situation was unchangeable. They had come to internalize colonial thinking that their own cultural artefacts were sub-standard.

Inspectors also had some concerns about the general level of proficiency achieved in school. Several criticisms pointed to "the general quality of work" which had declined considerably during a given time period. Some comments were also specific to the various class groupings: Post-primary, Primary and Infants. It was pointed out, for example, that "the work of Std. IV-VII (Post-primary Division) "bore little or no evidence of systematic teaching of the rudiments of English." And again, "The standards were very weak in Arithmetic." It might be argued that defects such as these ought to, and will be, revealed in any good system of education. However if, as indicated above, an objective of colonial education was to enhance human resources for the purpose of increasing colonial production, then attention to defects such as these has other implications.

The criticisms point to the concept of human capital development, which some commentators refer to as a theory of "the productive capacity of the individual in the development process" (Fagerlind and Saha, 1983, p. 18). The focus here is upon improvement of the human work force, and the argument is that low standards of student performance were antagonistic to colonial objectives for an efficient and effective labour force at the base of the society. A good, all-round education, as Schultz puts it, "is highly instrumental and even necessary" (1961, p. 15). It therefore became a premium under colonial rule in Trinidad and Tobago.

The quality control mechanism that was in place was also careful to identify areas of weakness believed to be a threat to colonial objectives for docility and subservience among the masses. It was pointed out, for example, that "discipline was poor," and that "bad manners, slow response to commands, and unpunctuality were noticeable weaknesses." The qualities here criticized have a strong psychological underpinning, and were promoted in the schools in both tacit and overt ways, the objective being emergence of a pliable, subservient and co-operative society. "Regard for order" even became a crucial instructional objective, and indication that this was not being achieved was of concern to colonial school administrators.

CONCLUSION

Colonial administrators in Trinidad and Tobago attempted to control quality in the school system because of a notion of what schools could do and how they could function. In this connection it has been argued that a major characteristic of schools is that they function

dialectically. They may reproduce as well as produce (Willis, 1977). Schools, that is to say, may "deliver the goods" as planned but while the process is in operation another, often subtle, counter-hegemonic process is often spawned. Students, in other words, may come to reject completely what they were taught or even learned. They may re-interpret both the process and content of schooling and "graduate" as "products" quite different from what their teachers and administrators had in mind. The school, that is to say, is a site for conflict.

This was indeed the case in colonial schools in Trinidad and Tobago, in which a heavy hand of quality control was imposed by the State using school Inspectors as agents. For generations the elementary school (providing the only formal education which the masses could receive) did in fact produce the kind of society which the colonial state had in mind -- docile, mannerly, respectful. But some "radicals" also emerged. A new breed of "cognitive elites" and thought leaders sprang up among the black masses, re-assessed many of the notions of quality that had been imposed, and began to propagate ideas for a new social order. Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago and the new crop of political leaders in the West Indies in the 1960s might be considered in this category. The transformation reminds us of the comment by Sir Fred Clarke (1948) that schools indeed produce not only "clones" but "deviants" as well. And this is the case despite the tight controls on quality.

A final comment about quality control in the colonial school system of Trinidad and Tobago might be raised in connection with what transpires in contemporary, modern school systems. Many of the so-called "defects" that were highlighted are issues with which present day institutions are grappling. Low numeracy and literacy scores, indiscipline leading to violence, disregard for authority etc. are some of the claims. The criticisms, that is to say, are essentially the same. But there is a difference. In the colonial setting the objective was to subjugate the will of an unfortunate and hapless majority. In today's school system on the contrary, a primary purpose for exposing defective school work and behaviour is to sensitize students towards their own empowerment, so that they may come to participate more effectively and productively in the schooling process for the betterment of their own lives and of society.

NOTES

1. Numbers at the end of each entry indicate the year in which the Inspector's remarks were made.

2. Elementary schools in colonial Trinidad and Tobago were structured as follows: a. Infant Department (Age 5-7); b. Primary Department comprising Standard I-V (Age 8-12); c. Post Primary Department comprising Standard VI-VII (Age 13-15). This structure has remained relatively unchanged in the present post-colonial period.

REFERENCES

- Altbach, P. and Kelly, G. (eds.) (1978). *Education and Colonialism*. London: Longman.
- Bacchus, M.K. (n.d.). Education as and for Legitimacy: Developments in West Indian Education Between 1846 and 1895. Unpublished Manuscript, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.
- Bacchus, M.K. (1986). *The Myth and Reality of Curriculum Planning: Insights from Educational Development of the Caribbean*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Bacchus, M.K. (1990). *Utilization, Misuse and Development of Human Resources in the Early West Indian Colonies*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Bagnall, R. (1994). Performance indicators and outcomes as measures of educational quality: a cautionary critique. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 13(1), 19-31.
- Campbell, C. (1973). The Development of Education in Trinidad 1834-1873. Ph.D. Thesis, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston, Jamaica.
- Clarke, Sir Fred (1948). *Freedom in an Educative Society*. London: University of London Press.
- Cuttance, P. (1994). Quality assurance in education systems. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 20(2), 99-112.
- English, F.W. (1978). *Quality Control in Curriculum Development*. Arlington, Virginia: American Association of School Administrators.
- Fagerlind, I. and Saha, L. (1983). *Education and National Development: A Comparative perspective*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Freeman, R. (1993). *Quality Assurance in Training and Education*. London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder.
- Gordon, S. (1963). *A Century of West Indian Education: A Source Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Hardstaff, M. (1993). [Review of Quality Assurance in Training and Education and Total Quality Management in Education]. *Educational Studies*, 19(3), 379-380.
- Kickert, W. (1991). Steering at a distance: a new paradigm of public governance in Dutch higher education. Paper for the European Consortium

- for Political Research, University of Essex. Quoted in S.J. Ball (1993) Education policy, power relations and teachers' work. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, XXXI(2), 106-121.
- Lessinger, L. (1976). Quality control and quality assurance in education. *Journal of Education Finance*, (1) Spring, 503-515.
- Lillis, K. (1988). Issues of Quality. In M. Bray and K. Lillis (eds.) *Community Financing of Education*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 75-77.
- Moreland, N. and Horsburgh, R. (1992). Auditing: a tool for institutional development. *The Vocational Aspect of Education*, 44(1), 29-42.
- Sallis, E. (1993). *Total Quality Management in Education*. London: Kogan Page.
- Schultz, T. (1961). Investment in human capital. *American Economic Review*, 51 (March),
- Shaeffer, S. (1992). Collaborating for educational change: the role of parents and the community in school improvement. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 12(3), 277-295.
- Trevelyan, G.O. (1876). *Life and Letters of Maccaulay*. London: Longmans, quoted in Roberts, I.M. (1985). *The Triumph of the West*. London: B.B.C. Publications, p. 353.
- Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs.*, New York: Columbia University Press.