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A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System in Trinidad and Tobago

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PREFACE

This monograph is one of the products of a Primary Teacher Education Research Project conducted by the School of Education, The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine, as part of a much larger project organized by the Centre for International Education (CIE), University of Sussex Institute of Education, United Kingdom. The Sussex initiative, the Multi-Site Teacher Education Research (MUSTER) Project, involved research work in five countries--Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, and Trinidad and Tobago. The project was funded by the British Department for International Development (DFID).

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATEC	Agricultural Teacher Education Centre
CAP	Continuous Assessment Programme
CEE	Common Entrance Examination
CIE	Centre for International Education
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
DFID	Department for International Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECIAF	Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry
GCE	General Certificate of Education
MUSTER	Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project
NCSE	National Certificate of Secondary Education
NEC	National Examinations Council
OJT	On-the-Job Training
PET	Preparation for Effective Teaching
SEA	Secondary Entrance Assessment
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SOCS	School of Continuing Studies
TTUTA	Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association
UWI	The University of the West Indies

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CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Education System

1.1. Introduction

Trinidad and Tobago is a twin-island republic, situated at the southern end of the chain of islands in the Caribbean, with a population of approximately 1.3 million. It gained independence from Britain in 1962 and acquired republican status in 1976, but remains a Commonwealth country.

The education system in Trinidad and Tobago, like in other British Commonwealth countries, has evolved from a colonial past. The colonial government's involvement in education began in the post-slavery era and marked the opening up of education to the freed classes. Hitherto, education was provided only for the children of the landowners by private teachers and denominational schools established by various Christian groups. A dual system of government schools and church schools assisted financially by government (known as “assisted” schools) has persisted to the present time. It is within this context that the primary teacher education enterprise is examined.

1.2. Structure of the Education System

Within Trinidad and Tobago's education system, the following types of schools can be identified: (a) government schools, which are fully owned and operated by the state; these include primary, junior secondary, composite, senior secondary/comprehensive, and traditional government secondary schools; (b) government-assisted schools, which are managed by a private body (usually a religious denomination) but given financial assistance by the state; these include primary and secondary schools; (c) private schools, which are maintained and operated by private bodies without any assistance from the state; and (d) special schools, which are designed for educating handicapped children, and which provide education mainly at the primary level.

Educational provision within this system is as follows:

1. early childhood care and education (ECCE) for the 3-4 age cohort;
2. universal primary education for the 5-11 age cohort. This includes two years of infant classes for children aged 5 and 6, and five years of primary schooling (five Standard levels) for the 7-11 age cohort;
3. post-primary education (two years) for children not gaining access to a secondary school;
4. secondary education for the 12-18 age cohort. This is a complex sector, with educational provision in different types of secondary schools, namely:
    - three-year junior secondary schools (Forms 1-3) for the 12-14 age cohort;
    - two-year senior secondary/senior comprehensive schools (Forms 4 and 5) for the 15-16

age cohort;

- four-year senior secondary/senior comprehensive schools (Forms 4 and 5; Lower and Upper Sixth Forms) for the 15-18 age cohort;
- five-year composite (government), government secondary, government-assisted secondary, and private secondary schools (Forms 1-5) for the 12-16 age cohort;
- seven-year government and government-assisted schools (Forms 1-6) for the12-18 age cohort.

5. Higher education for the 19+ age group.

At the primary level, there are 476 public schools--135 government schools and 341 assisted schools--10 special schools, 54 registered private primary schools, and 20 post-primary centres.

The schools at the secondary level can be further classified in terms of their programme offerings. The Traditional Sector schools--five- and seven-year schools, both government and government-assisted--offer mainly an academic-type programme. This programme is essentially designed to prepare graduates for further education or for employment at the clerical level. The New Sector schools, which are all government schools, emerged during the 1970s and 1980s as a result of the government's efforts to expand the secondary school intake and broaden the curriculum. The New Sector consists mainly of a two-tiered system incorporating the three-year junior secondary schools, with transitions into the two-year or four-year senior secondary/senior comprehensive schools. It also encompasses the five-year composite schools. Schools in this sector offer courses in both academic and technical/vocational subjects.

At the time of writing, there were 101 secondary schools comprising 49 Traditional Sector schools (19 government and 30 assisted) and 52 New Sector schools, disaggregated as follows: 19 senior secondary/senior comprehensive, 24 junior secondary, and 9 composite schools. The schools are either full-day schools--generally 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., or shift schools (20 of the 24 junior secondary)--7:20 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. In 1994/95, there were 13 registered private secondary schools.

The system is characterized by a series of selection points at which progression to the next level is controlled.

1.3. Selection

Primary education up to age 12 was made compulsory and free in 1961 and, in the 1970s, access to secondary education was expanded from 22% to 70% of the 11+ age group. Until 2000, education beyond the primary level was not universal, and students were required to sit selection examinations at the end of a cycle of education for selection for publicly subsidized places at the next level.

At the end of primary education, Standard 5 students sat the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) for placement in Form 1 of a secondary school and for tracking, either in the Traditional Sector (considered as the better quality schools), or in the junior secondary or composite schools

in the New Sector. This was a very competitive examination, since most students wished to secure a place in the Traditional Sector schools, but the number of such places was severely limited. Those who failed the CEE twice could enter the post-primary grades of the primary school or post-primary centres for a maximum of two years, attend private secondary schools, or drop out of the system. Students who opted to enter the post-primary grades could take the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Examination. If they passed the SLC, they could be placed in Form 2 of a secondary school. If they failed twice, their formal education in public schools was terminated, but they had the options of non-formal vocational education at youth camps or youth centres, apprenticeship, or attendance at private schools.

With the establishment of universal secondary education in 2001, the CEE has been replaced by the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) Examination, the results of which will determine whether students are placed in schools of their choice or at the discretion of the Ministry of Education. It is intended that this examination will be complemented by a Continuous Assessment Programme (CAP), which is yet to be fully implemented. Because the new system is still in its infancy, it is not yet clear what changes will take place in the progression of students through the system.

At the secondary level, the 14+ Examination at the end of Form 3 was originally intended to screen junior secondary students for places in Form 4 in the New Sector schools. Although it is still administered to junior secondary students, it does not appear to serve any discernible purpose, since these students are assigned to the senior secondary/senior comprehensive schools before their 14+ examination results are available. Students in the composite schools and the Traditional Sector schools do not write the 14+ examination.

The regional Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Examinations (General and Basic Proficiency Levels), administered at the end of Form 5, certify the completion of five years of secondary schooling and select students for Form 6, where they pursue pre-university studies. Some Form 5 students also take the Cambridge General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level (O Level) Examination. The National Examinations Council (NEC) Examination, also administered at the end of Form 5, screens students in the vocational craft track for admission to Technical Institutes. The Cambridge GCE Advanced Level (A Level) Examination is administered at the end of the Upper Sixth Form year for selection for university places.

The Ministry of Education is currently examining the feasibility of having a national assessment system that would certify the completion of five years of secondary schooling, and allow for the award of a secondary school completion certificate--the National Certificate of Secondary Education (NCSE). This new system is intended to embody continuous assessment features, and highlight achievement in personal development and in the aesthetics, in addition to achievement in the academic and technical/vocational areas. The proposal is that success at the CXC examinations would contribute credits toward the award of the NCSE.

1.4. Enrolment

1.4.1. Primary schools

In 1994, there were 191,640 students enrolled in government and government-assisted primary schools, which represented a decrease of 3,401 from a total of 195,041 in 1993 (Table 1). Table 1 also indicates that more than 13,000 students remained in the post-primary classes in the primary sector in 1993 and 1994, which was an increase over the numbers in the previous years. This increase can be linked with the expansion of the post-primary programme through the setting up of the post-primary centres.

In 1992/93, there were 6,144 students enrolled in private primary schools.

The pattern of enrolment in public primary schools, by gender, is reflected in Table 2. For the period 1989/90 to 1993/94, the number of male students enrolled at the primary level outnumbered the females.

The average student-teacher ratio in government and government-assisted primary schools ranges from 25:1 to 28:1, with rare extremes of 20:1 and 38:1. By contrast, the ratio in private primary schools is 18:1.

1.4.2. Secondary schools

There was a steady increase in the number of students enrolled at public secondary schools over the period 1990 to 1994 (Table 3). In the 1994/95 academic year, there were 101,960 students enrolled at public secondary schools, which represented a marginal increase of 853 over the total of 101,107 in 1993/94. A high proportion of these students was accommodated in the New Sector schools. In 1994/95, the enrolment was distributed between the school types as follows: junior secondary schools - 35.1%; senior secondary/comprehensive - 23.5%; government-assisted secondary - 19.0%; government secondary - 14.7%; and composite - 7.7%.

In 1992/93, there were 2,181 students enrolled in private secondary schools.

The growth in public secondary school enrolment, by gender, is reflected in Table 4. The trend shows that female students outnumber their male counterparts at the secondary level, contrary to what obtains at the primary level, and at the point of transition into the secondary level (described later).

The average student-teacher ratio for public secondary schools is 20:1, with junior secondary schools showing the highest ratio of 27:1. The ratios for the other types of secondary schools are: 15:1 for senior comprehensive; 20:1 for composite; 17:1 for government secondary, and 20:1 for government-assisted secondary schools. The ratio for private secondary schools is 19:1.

1.4.3. Transition rates

From the introduction of free secondary education in 1961, transition from primary to secondary school was determined by performance in the CEE, an examination originally intended as a selection examination to identify those pupils most likely to succeed at secondary education in its traditional form. Despite widespread dissatisfaction with this examination and its negative effects on teaching and learning at the primary level, it was used to perform this function until 2000. Over 95% of Standard 5 students took the CEE to enter secondary school, however, only a portion of those students was guaranteed a place. The average transition rates from primary to secondary schools declined from 69.6% in 1991 to 64.6% in 1993. There was a reversal of this trend in 1994 (Table 5). In certain regional districts and in Tobago, capacity and transition rates have fallen well below the national average (ranging from 38% to 63.1%).

Table 5 also shows that, although larger numbers of females than males were entered for the CEE for the period 1991-1993, approximately equal numbers of males and females were placed in the secondary sector. This was a deliberate government policy to keep the numbers of females and males equal at the start of secondary schooling. There seems to have been a shift in policy in 1994 with more females than males entering the secondary sector.

1.4.4. Repetition and dropout

Ministry of Education statistics indicate that in 1994/95, 484 students dropped out of the primary school system, representing 0.2% of the total enrolment in public primary schools. More male (263) than female (221) students dropped out of school. The Standard 5 class accounted for 131 or 27.1% of the total dropouts. More students tended to repeat in Standard 5 than in any other class. The total retention rate for Standard 5 was 30.8%, with female students showing a higher rate (17.4%) than their male counterparts (13.4%). This high retention rate in Standard 5 may be attributable to the large number of students who voluntarily repeated the CEE.

1.5. Teachers

In Trinidad and Tobago, primary school teachers are generally secondary school graduates who may or may not have been trained at a teachers' college. Table 6 shows data on the number of teachers employed in public primary schools in the academic year 1996/97, by classification and gender. Of the 7,311 teachers employed at this level, 5,665 (77.5%) were trained teachers. From a gender perspective, although the ratio of the total number of female teachers to male teachers is 2.8:1, the ratio of female to male vice-principals is only 1.7:1, and that of female principals to male principals is lower yet at 1.1:1. The gender composition of the administration of primary schools does not, therefore, adequately reflect the gender composition of the teaching staff, with female administrators being under-represented.

There is no major difference in the qualifications of primary school teachers, or in the distribution of trained primary school teachers, between assisted and government schools.

In 1992/93, there were 329 teachers in private primary schools.

At the secondary level, there are differences in teachers' qualifications among different types of schools. Secondary schools generally have a mix of teachers: some are university graduates with a degree in a certain subject specialty (known as graduate teachers), who may or may not have received pedagogical training; some hold diplomas and certificates from non-university, tertiary institutions, with or without pedagogical training; and others are secondary school graduates who may or may not have been trained in a teachers' college (known as non-graduate teachers).

Table 7 shows that, for 1994/95, 3,148 of the 4,995 secondary school teachers (63.0%) held university degrees, whereas only 2,557 of them (51.2%) were professionally trained (the term "trained" here refers to successful completion of a programme at a teachers' college, or the post-graduate Diploma in Education or its equivalent at a university). The junior secondary schools had the lowest percentage of graduate teachers (601 out of 1,303, or 46.1%), whereas the older, government-assisted schools had the highest percentage of teachers who were university graduates (767 out of 931, or 82.4%). On the other hand, junior secondary schools had the highest percentage of trained teachers (911 out of 1,303, or 69.9%).

These patterns are due to the ways in which teachers were recruited into the different types of secondary schools in the past. Many junior secondary teachers were once trained primary school teachers who upgraded their academic qualifications through short courses, and gained employment in the higher-paying secondary sector. Some, but not all, went on to acquire university degrees. On the other hand, in the government-assisted secondary schools (and the government secondary schools), the main criterion for employment as a teacher is often the possession of a university degree. Many teachers enter these schools without professional training, and only some take advantage of the opportunity to acquire such training through the post-graduate, in-service Diploma in Education programme at The University of the West Indies (UWI).

The data in Table 7 also indicate that the ratio of female, secondary school teachers to male, secondary school teachers in 1994/95 was 2810:2185, or 1.3:1. In nearly all school types, female teachers were in the majority. Data on the gender distribution among the school administrators at the secondary level were not readily available for analysis.

In 1992/93, there were 128 teachers in private secondary schools.

1.6. Governance and Control

Governance of public schools is either fully or partially controlled by the state. Government schools are totally funded by the state. Government-assisted schools are owned by religious denominations, financially aided by the government, and administered jointly by the Ministry of Education and the respective denominational church boards. The government pays salaries and personnel benefits of all teachers in government and government-assisted schools; and 75% capital costs for government-assisted primary schools, 66.7% for government-assisted secondary

schools, and 100% for government schools. Private schools are run by private bodies, generally for profit, and receive no government subsidies.

This pattern of financing can be explained by the history of educational development in the country. Before Independence in 1962, religious groups (the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Hindus, and Muslims) were active providers of primary and secondary education. They operated schools through their respective denominational boards and charged tuition fees at secondary level, except to students on government scholarships. These schools received government grants for recurrent costs that covered more than 90% of their actual cost and, when the government so decided, a share of capital costs. A pre-Independence agreement between the government and these denominational boards in 1961, known as the Concordat, assured the latter their ownership and right of direct control and management of all denominational primary and secondary schools. The government undertook to pay teachers' salaries, other recurrent cost, and part of the capital cost of denominational schools. In 1993, the government, government-assisted, and private schools, respectively, enrolled 30%, 67%, and 3% of students in primary schools and 77%, 18%, and 5% in secondary schools.

CHAPTER 2
Historical Overview of the Development of the Teacher Education System

2.1. The Early Beginnings

The development of teacher education in Trinidad and Tobago is closely linked to the development of the education system and, more specifically, to the development of primary education. Before the emancipation of the slaves in 1834, education was provided only to children of the free classes, and this usually involved the use of private tutors at personal expense. After that date, however, the educational system, with its provisions for teacher education, was constantly examined by key figures seeking to establish a broader system of education.

The first efforts at teacher education and training in Trinidad took place in January 1823 when six to eight young men were selected for training to man the first National School established by the Cabildo in Port of Spain. However, it was after the abolition of slavery that the first sustained efforts at teacher education took place. The British government directed that compulsory Christian education be given to the children of the ex-slaves, under a scheme financed by a grant of 25,000 pounds from the British treasury called the Negro Education Grant. Trinidad, with over 22,000 emancipated slaves, received 800 pounds from this grant, to which was added another sum provided by the Mico Charity Fund. Mico Charity Schools were established in Trinidad, Guyana, The Bahamas, and St. Lucia in 1837. The first batch of teachers for the Trinidad schools was recruited in England. In addition, Mico Training Institutes were opened in Jamaica, Antigua, and Trinidad. They were called High or Normal Schools and their function was to train local teachers, effectively making them the first teacher training institutions in the region. Unfortunately, all Mico schools in Trinidad were closed in 1841 when the British government discontinued the Negro Education Grant. However, the Mico Training Colleges in Jamaica and Antigua continued to operate and, between 1840 and 1851, Trinidad obtained its supply of trained teachers mainly from the Mico Training College in Antigua.

2.2. New Proposals for Teacher Education and Training in Trinidad - 1851

Systematic consideration of education in Trinidad began in 1851, when Lord Harris, then Governor of Trinidad, saw the need for a system of primary education. He outlined a system of free secular education, involving the establishment of ward schools. This system included plans for a training school for teachers, intended to give secular instruction without direct religious or doctrinal teaching, and a Model School close to the Training College, to provide necessary teaching practice for the student teachers. In January 1852, the Government Normal School was established in Port of Spain, primarily for educating teachers for the ward schools. Two model schools were also founded, which were attached to the Normal School for practice in the art of teaching. The Normal School entrance examination consisted of a written test but the standard of

education required of applicants appeared modest.

The Lord Harris system, with its underlying principle of secularism, met with opposition from the Roman Catholics, but the opinion of the other religious denominations appeared to have been divided. In 1869, as opposition to Harris' system became more widespread, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London appointed Patrick J. Keenan, who was Inspector of Schools in Ireland, to make a full inquiry into the state of education in Trinidad and to make recommendations.

2.3. The Keenan Report, 1869

Keenan found that students at the Normal School were also Assistant Masters at the Model School, for which they were paid a salary. Each day, except Wednesday, the student teachers were fully engaged in teaching at the Model School. Only on Wednesdays, therefore, were they really students at the Normal School. The students appeared to be badly selected and of low academic quality, with quite humble qualifications. Teaching at the Normal School was unsystematic, and pedagogy as a subject was neglected.

Keenan severely criticized the system and made numerous recommendations, many of which were diametrically opposed to the system developed from Harris' proposals. Among Keenan's recommendations were that: 1) management of each ward school be vested in the clergymen of the same religion as the majority of the pupils; 2) the Government Training College be abolished; and 3) a system of monitors be instituted for providing highly qualified teachers.

2.3.1. The pupil teacher system

As a result of Keenan's recommendation to abolish the Normal School, the monitorial or pupil teacher system was introduced in Trinidad in 1870. Under this system, as applied in Trinidad, superior graduating students from the primary school who were interested in teaching were recruited to the profession. They then served as apprentices to good qualified teachers, assisting in teaching small groups and studying during after-school hours. They were generally called “monitors” during the first year, and after passing the first examination they were called “pupil teachers.” In the following years, they wrote competitive examinations in subjects normally taught in the primary school, but at a progressively more advanced level, together with elementary educational theory. At the end of approximately five years, they were deemed qualified to enter a teacher training college.

2.3.2. The education of the pupil teacher

The 1918 *Code of Elementary Education* made provisions for the employment and education of pupil teachers. Essentially, the *Code* attempted to provide some sort of external secondary education for the untrained teacher, which was to be conducted by head teachers and inspected by government. However, the time allotted for such instruction was only about five hours a week, expected to take place before or after school hours and on Saturday mornings.

The *Code* also outlined the paths to be taken in order to obtain a Teachers' Certificate. Pupil teachers wrote a series of annual examinations for a period of four to five years, after which they were allowed to write Part I of a Preliminary Examination. After this, they were recruited to a training college where, after the first year, they were allowed to write Part II of the Preliminary Examination. On completion of the resident training college course, they wrote the final Certificate Examination.

The Mayhew-Marriott Commission, 1931-32, found serious weaknesses in the pupil teacher system. In many cases, the student teachers were working with master teachers of questionable proficiency, thus receiving very little guidance in the art of teaching.

The heavy reliance of the educational system on the pupil teachers was reflected in the fact that, in 1938, over 15% of the pupils who had completed the highest class in primary schools became pupil teachers and, in 1943, pupil teachers constituted nearly one third of the teaching staff of primary schools in Trinidad. Although the various commissions examining the quality of education in the British West Indies identified many weaknesses associated with the education of pupil teachers, little or nothing was done to strengthen the system.

In 1944, Sir Frank Stockdale, the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, recommended the expansion of the pupil teacher system. The Government decided to implement a recommendation of the Moyne Commission (1938-39) relating to the appointment of supervising teachers for the training of pupil teachers. In 1946, two such supervisors were appointed to systematize the training of the young teachers who were studying for government examinations, and who had previously been instructed by head teachers. The supervisors prepared schemes of work and notes for the guidance of the pupil teachers, and also arranged for centres of instruction in various geographical areas for Saturday morning class.

By 1948, there were 18 of these centres at various points in the island, serving a total of 1,401 pupil teachers and monitors. Special teachers were employed to teach the various subjects, and the students were encouraged to prepare for the Cambridge School Certificate as well as for the pupil teachers' examinations. Head teachers continued to be responsible for training pupil teachers in their schools during the day, and before or after school hours.

The Revised Ordinances of 1951-53 established a set of regulations to ensure that each pupil teacher was being trained. Despite these arrangements, however, the pupil teacher group steadily diminished, with 324 in 1951, 167 in 1952, 110 in 1953, and 89 in 1954.

The Maurice Committee recommended that no further appointment of pupil teachers be made after 1959, which the Cabinet amended to 1961. However, recruitment of pupil teachers was actually allowed up to 1963. The last Teachers' Provisional Certificate examination was held in August 1968, marking the end of the monitorial or pupil teacher system recommended by Patrick Keenan.

2.4. Establishing Training Colleges

Despite the existence of the monitorial system, qualified teachers were in short supply and excellence in teaching was not readily apparent. Improving the quality of the teacher, therefore, became a matter of grave concern, the solution to which appeared to lie in improving the quality of teacher training. Therefore, when the Ordinance relating to Elementary Education was passed in 1890, provisions were made for establishing additional training colleges, both government and denominational.

The possibility of government aid established by this ordinance encouraged the Canadian Presbyterian Church of Trinidad to found Naparima Training College, a residential college for men in its Mission schools, in 1894, in San Fernando. The first female teachers were admitted in 1916. In 1895, the Roman Catholic Church established a non-residential training college for women only in Port of Spain, followed in 1902 by a similar college for men, also in Port of Spain.

By 1902, therefore, there were four training colleges in existence--Government Training College (1851), Naparima Training College (1894), the Catholic Women's Training College (1895), and the Catholic Men's Training College (1902). In 1914, the total number of students was 41--25 resident and 16 non-resident. This was the same number of students found by the Education Commission of 1914-16.

2.4.1. Education Commission, 1914-16

The Commission found that students were practically instructed by only one person, namely, the principal of the particular institution. This was regarded as a serious disadvantage, which was deemed responsible for the low standards attained by the students.

The Commission saw the need for a central institution for the training of teachers for the island, but did not advocate its establishment because of religious differences. However, the Acting Inspector of Schools did not hesitate to recommend the establishment of a Central Training College. This recommendation was echoed in 1921 by an International Conference of West Indian Territories and by the Mayhew-Marriott Commission of 1931-32, which called for the establishment of a Central Training Institute in Trinidad to serve the Eastern Caribbean. As a result of these recommendations, the Government purchased a site at Five Rivers, Arouca, for a proposed Central Training College. The Carnegie Foundation of New York made a grant of $60,000 towards the cost of this college.

In 1945, more extensive grounds were secured at the Centeno Estate for the erection of the proposed college, and in the following year the main buildings were erected. Eventually, it was considered that this scheme was beyond the island's financial resources, and it was reluctantly abandoned in 1947. It was subsequently converted into the Eastern Caribbean Farm Institute.

2.4.2. Problem of untrained teachers

Despite all its efforts, Trinidad appeared unable to provide adequate facilities for training all its teachers. As a result, a large number were in active teaching for many years before gaining entry to a training college, and many were simply unable to attain entry.

The government, therefore, amended the Code of Regulations making it possible to grant the full Teachers' Certificate to certain untrained teachers following success in a practical teaching test. Such teachers had to have been on the maximum salary for at least three years, and had to be able to show that they had been unable to gain admission to a training college through no fault of their own. This, in effect, meant that the government granted a full teachers' diploma to many untrained teachers without the benefit of further academic or professional studies.

The problem of providing an adequate number of trained teachers continued to pose a challenge. In 1951, untrained teachers constituted 48% of the teaching force, rising to 55% (2,104) in 1954. This number increased steadily from year to year until, in 1961, there were 3,221 untrained teachers.

The Maurice Committee of 1959 expressed alarm at the growing percentage of untrained teachers already in the profession, and sought to correct this imbalance through a recommendation for an Emergency Training Course. The Committee's recommendations were immediately accepted by the government, and a one-year non-residential Emergency Training Course was inaugurated in January 1958.

2.4.3. Emergency Training Course

The primary objective of this scheme was to reduce the backlog of untrained teachers, and to bring the annual output nearer the annual rates of demand. During the five-year period (1958-62) that the course was offered, the student body varied widely with respect to age and qualifications. In 1958, there were 150 students, of whom 117 were women and 33 were men. All but 11 of the women were married. Their ages ranged from the mid-twenties to the fifties, and roughly one third of the group had a School Certificate or Higher School Certificate of Cambridge University, while the remainder held a Teachers' Provisional Certificate. By 1962, however, most of the students were in their twenties or early thirties, and some two thirds had come from the secondary schools. There was also a more equal distribution of the sexes. In 1963, this one-year course was replaced by a two-year course of study.

2.4.4. Pre-service training

The Maurice Committee also recommended the construction of a central college to accommodate a roll of 300 students. This recommendation was echoed by the Missen Report of 1954 that recommended the establishment of a Central Training College for Trinidad and Tobago. This resulted in the construction of Mausica Teachers' College on a 65-acre site about 17 miles from Port of Spain. In September 1963, the college was formally opened with an enrolment of 110

students, three of whom were from Grenada.

Mausica was intended to be different from the existing colleges. It offered pre-service training to secondary school graduates who became full-time teachers only after graduation. Persons between 18 and 25 years were accepted if they possessed five O Level passes or its equivalent. They were required to sit an entrance examination, and only those gaining 66% or more at the examination went on to be interviewed by a panel.

2.5. Recruitment to Training College

In the period between 1851 and 1869, nearly all training college candidates had been employed in some other occupation. It was found that of the seven in residence at the Government Normal School in 1868, four had been overseers in sugar estates; one had been a teacher in a private school; another a tailor; and the last a shoemaker.

After 1870, the training college recruited from the pupil teacher system almost exclusively. The candidates' formal education consisted of a primary school education. Any secondary education acquired came largely from the candidates' own efforts, aided by occasional instruction from a primary school teacher.

In 1922, H. H. Hancock, the first Director of Education, initiated a system of teaching bursaries which gave male and female monitors in primary schools three years of free secondary education on the basis of a competitive examination, after which they entered training college. This method, however, accounted for only a small number of candidates. In 1945, the Primary School Leaving Certificate was instituted and used to select some recruits for teaching bursaries to secondary schools.

During the period 1946-66, there were two channels of entry into the profession and into training college:

- persons holding a Primary School Leaving Certificate were eligible for appointment as pupil teachers. Thereafter, they took Part I and, later, Part II of the Teachers' Lower Certificate. At a later stage, they took the Provisional Certificate which qualified them for entrance to a training college.

- secondary school graduates holding a Grade III Cambridge School Certificate were required to write the Teachers' Provisional Certificate and pass, in order to become eligible for entry into a training college. Candidates with a Grade II or I, or Higher School Certificate were automatically eligible, but usually taught for a few years before being admitted, because of limited space at the training colleges.

Students in both streams were usually full-time teachers for many years before receiving formal systematic training. Then when they entered the training college, they received considerable financial assistance from the government.

2.6. The Training College Curriculum

At first, a two-year course was offered. The curriculum was the same at all the training colleges, except that the denominational colleges included religious instruction. In the early years, the syllabus appeared to be highly unsatisfactory and did not seem to produce the type of teachers needed.

In 1928, a three-year course was introduced in the training colleges as one way of increasing the general secondary education of entrants. The two-year course continued alongside it. In 1937, a new syllabus was introduced, which provided for a special one-year course for certificated, but untrained, teachers. This syllabus was used until 1950, after which a new one was introduced consisting of two parts: Compulsory and Optional. Later years saw the emergence of a curriculum suited to the needs of the local community, as evidenced by the inclusion of West Indian Literature and West Indian History.

A new syllabus was introduced in 1970, but there was no change in the basic design of the colleges' curriculum after 1970.

2.7. Governance of the Training Colleges

In the early years, the Board of Education was the controlling agency for the government, so that the Government Normal School or Training College was under the direct jurisdiction of the Board. The principal and members of the teaching staff were appointed by the Board of Education.

Under the regulations of the dual system, the assisted schools retained ownership and overall control of their institutions while receiving government aid. It therefore meant that the Presbyterian Church was the governing agency for Naparima Training College, with the responsibility for appointing a principal and the teaching staff. The same arrangement applied to the Roman Catholic training colleges.

However, all appointments by the churches were subject to final approval by the Board of Education, and all appointees were required to meet the educational and professional standards designated by the Board. Thus, principals and teachers of church training colleges were subjected to the same requirements as their counterparts at the Government Training College. The colleges continued to be governed in essentially the same way throughout the development of teacher education.

2.8. Later Developments, 1956-1981

The elimination of the backlog of untrained teaches in the primary school was considered as one of the most important developments in teacher training between 1956 and 1981. This was accomplished through the centralization and concentration of teacher training facilities in two

large government colleges. Another important development was the raising of the academic standards of large numbers of untrained teachers, partly through the demand for higher entry. Instead of entering with the minimum of a Teachers' Provisional Certificate, mostly acquired by way of the pupil teachers' examinations, all pre-service candidates had to achieve five O Level passes at least, including English, before admission.

In addition to the higher entry qualification, there was a change from the dominant pre-1962 pattern of in-service training to a new model of predominantly pre-service training, plus some in-service training (1963-1975). However, there was a return to complete in-service training in the period 1975-1981.

This period also saw the inauguration of an in-service Diploma in Education for university graduate teachers, based at UWI, and the development of technical/vocational teacher education at John S. Donaldson Technical Institute in 1979. The Faculty of Education, UWI, also provided supervisory service over the teachers' college examinations and teaching practice. Other notable attempts to improve teacher education in this period included: (a) the granting of two government scholarships annually, tenable at the University College of the West Indies, Mona and the UK, to student teachers based on their performances at the Final Teachers' Examination, provided they already had university entrance qualifications; (b) institution of the two-year Bachelor of Education programme at UWI, Mona, for the benefit of senior teachers and teacher educators; (c) the granting of leave to individual teachers and teacher educators to pursue academic and professional university studies in the USA, Canada, and Britain; and (d) cross-college moderation of practical examinations, including practical teaching.

2.9. The Consolidation of Teacher Training

In 1956, there was one government training college and three denominational training colleges, with a total output of about 300 trained teachers annually. After the period of Emergency training that ended in 1962, the next major attempt to increase the supply of trained teachers came with the establishment of Mausica Teachers' College, a residential college for young male and female teachers between 18 and 25 years. It became the largest training college with an output of about 110 students per year, which was further increased in the late 1960s to meet the challenge of preparing teachers for the junior secondary schools. This coexistence of pre-service training with in-service training at all the colleges increased both the number of young trained teachers and the number of male teachers.

Later on, a decision was taken to close all denominational colleges getting government aid, as well as the Government Training College and the Port of Spain Emergency College, and to concentrate and economize on teacher training facilities by having two other government colleges in addition to Mausica, one in the North and another in the South. Eventually, this proposal was abandoned in favour of a strategy that called for the establishment of two new government colleges, each larger than Mausica, and the closure of Mausica. It has been surmised that the ideal of pre-service training at Mausica had apparently not worked as well as anticipated. The award of seniority and higher remuneration to young inexperienced Mausica graduates had

sparked resentment and complaints from older untrained teachers with long service. It was also felt that doubts had developed about the commitment to teaching and the overall quality of these young teachers, some of whom had gone to Mausica directly from secondary schools.

The establishment of the two new government colleges, Corinth Teachers' College and Valsayn Teachers' College, in the 1970s, marked a return to the old formula of in-service training, aimed at accelerating the clearing of the backlog of untrained teachers. The system is still in operation.

The Christian churches did not mount a public campaign to save Naparima Training College or the Roman Catholic Women's College, since both the Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Church admitted that they constituted an onerous financial burden. As far as denominational teacher education was concerned, only the Caribbean Union College, run by the Seventh-day Adventists and not normally assisted by the government, retained a small teacher training unit, which had been set up in 1960. From the 1970s, the Caribbean Union College began to expand its teacher training activities to offer a B.A. in Education in association with Andrews University, USA.

CHAPTER 3

Overview of the Teacher Education System

3.1. Structure of the Teacher Education System

Training programmes for teachers at all levels of the educational system are offered at specialized institutions in Trinidad and Tobago. Within recent years, the growing demand for early childhood education teachers has resulted in programmes being offered by the Servol Regional Training and Resource Centre, a non-governmental organization, and the School of Continuing Studies (SOCS) and the School of Education, UWI, St. Augustine. Training for teachers at the primary level is conducted primarily at the two government teachers' colleges: Valsayn Teachers' College and Corinth Teachers' College, as well as at the School of Education, UWI, and the privately operated Caribbean Union College. Although the course of teacher training offered at the teachers' colleges is designed to equip the students for practice at the primary level, some students, especially those who have specialized in the areas of the creative arts, are allowed to teach at the lower levels of the secondary school system.

Training for teachers at the secondary level is conducted at the School of Education, UWI. A specialized programme for teachers of agricultural science is offered at the Agricultural Teacher Education Centre (ATEC) of the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (ECIAF). In addition, technical teacher training is offered at the John S. Donaldson Technical Institute. Almost all the initial teacher training is in-service.

In recent times, an on-the-job training (OJT) programme, which provides pre-service training for recruited primary school assistant teachers for one year, has been introduced.

3.2. Entry Requirements for the Teaching Service at the Primary Level

According to a Ministry of Education circular of February 2, 1985, applicants for entry into the teaching service are expected to have at least a secondary level education, with the attainment of a satisfactory level of achievement in five subjects at the GCE O Level and/or CXC examinations. Further, these five subjects must include English language, mathematics, and a science subject. It is not part of the requirement that these five subjects be obtained at any one sitting of these examinations. It is therefore possible to qualify for entry into the service by accumulating these subjects over an extended period of time. These requirements amount to some small advance on what obtained prior to 1985. It was possible, then, to gain entry into the teaching service with a combination of any five, sometimes less, subjects. In 1985, for example, only 51% of trainees at teachers' colleges had secured a pass in mathematics, and 62% had secured a pass in a science subject.

3.3. On-the-Job Training

In 1993, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the National Training Board, introduced its On-the-Job Training: Pre-Service Teacher Training Programme (hereafter referred to as the OJT programme). The rationale of this programme was to provide CXC and A Level graduates with employment and training, with a view, in the long term, to enabling the Ministry to identify trainees with good potential for becoming teachers. It is not very clear from the documents available what the indicators of "good potential" are.

The OJT programme, extending over a period of about one year, provides instruction in the Foundations of Education, the Teaching of Reading, and the Teaching of Mathematics in an induction phase. This is followed by placement in schools with mentor teachers. During this second phase, opportunities are provided for teaching experiences in all departments of the primary school. Throughout the period following the induction phase, trainees are also required to attend Saturday classes which are designed to meet the on-going needs of the trainees as they function in the three departments of the schools. A Vacation School, organized by the SOCS, UWI, during the July-August vacation, provides experiences in the aesthetic areas for trainees. It is envisaged that, in the near future, all candidates for entry into the teaching service would be sourced fully from graduates of this programme.

Five OJT programmes have been completed to date and a sixth is in progress. However, no in-depth system has been put in place for evaluating the effectiveness of these programmes throughout the planned phases. The only statement forthcoming with respect to the programmes' quality and effectiveness is that principals are "very satisfied" with new appointees into the teaching service who had benefitted from the OJT programme.

3.4. Teachers' Colleges

3.4.1. Entry conditions and requirements

Students, on entry to a teachers' college, would have usually had two to three years of teaching experience in a primary school or, as in the case of a small number of students, in a secondary school. Students are selected by the Board of Teacher Training on the basis of seniority in the teaching service, and sent to the colleges on scholarship. This seniority is determined by length of continuous service in the teaching service. They are required to sign a contract on initial entry, and after their two-year tenure at college, they must serve the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for at least two additional years. Student teachers are employees of the Ministry of Education, which has final authority in almost all matters.

3.4.2. The curriculum

The colleges offer a full-time two-year course of study that lasts 39 weeks each year, and coincides with the academic year at the primary and secondary levels, beginning in early

September and ending in early July. It does not coincide with the university year. All courses at the colleges must be approved by the Board of Teacher Training. All courses are subject to continuous assessment, both formal and informal, and courses that follow a prescribed syllabus are assessed by a final external examination. On successful completion of the training programme, with passes in all the subjects taken at the final examination, the Teacher's Diploma of the Ministry of Education is awarded.

3.4.3. Enrolment

Table 8 provides data on enrolment, by gender, in teacher training colleges during the period 1990/91 - 1994/95. There was a steady increase in the number of students enrolled in these institutions over the period shown. The Corinth Teachers' College, which had been closed, was reopened to cope with the increasing numbers to be trained. Typically, the number of female students far exceeds the number of male students.

3.4.4. Achievement levels

During the period 1988-1994, 1,021 primary school teachers were trained in Trinidad and Tobago. Of the 458 candidates for the Teachers' Diploma in 1994/95, 330 (72.1%) were successful, of whom 111 were male and 219 female. Table 9 provides data on the examination results in teachers' colleges for the period 1990/91 - 1994/95. It is evident that several candidates were unsuccessful in these examinations each year. There exists a system of referrals through which candidates can improve their standing and, ultimately, be awarded the Teachers' Diploma.

3.5. School of Education, UWI, St. Augustine

Teacher education programmes at the School of Education are available to teachers at different levels in the educational system, with different levels of qualification, and at different stages of their teaching careers. There are four major programmes offered: 1). Certificate in Education (Cert. Ed.), 2) Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), 3) Diploma in Education (Dip.Ed.), and 4) Higher degree programmes.

3.5.1. The Certificate in Education (Cert. Ed.)

The School of Education offers a range of programmes leading to the Cert. Ed., although all the programmes are not offered every year. They include: Early Childhood Education, The Teaching of Mathematics, The Teaching of Science, Educational Administration, Materials Production, The Art and Science of Coaching, The Teaching of Social Studies, The Teaching of Language Arts, and The Teaching of Integrated Arts. The certificate programmes, all of which are evening programmes, are designed to meet the needs of pre-school and primary school teachers.

Entry qualifications

Candidates for admission to the certificate programmes must be qualified and certified teachers,

with five years of satisfactory teaching experience, who have successfully completed a course of study in an approved institution of teacher education, and who show evidence of special interest in the relevant discipline. Typically, such candidates would be graduates of the teachers' training colleges.

The curriculum

The programme of study extends over at least one academic year, and includes:

- foundation studies, embodying aspects of philosophy of education, psychology of education, and sociology of education;
- studies in the particular field for which the certificate is to be awarded;
- the practice of education and/or the submission of a study based on field work

Students attend classes three or four evenings a week, two hours each time, for 30 weeks. The supervision of practical teaching and practical assessments is carried out in the teachers' schools by staff of the School of Education. Written assignments, project reports, and examinations are the methods of assessment used.

Enrolment

Enrolment in the certificate programmes increased from 53 in 1993/94 to 102 in 1996/97, when there were 35 male and 67 female students. The option in Educational Administration attracts the largest number of male candidates. Data on student enrolment in the certificate programmes during the period 1993/94 - 1996/97 are provided in Table 10.

3.5.2. The Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)

The B.Ed. degree is a professional qualification that is normally intended for practising primary school teachers. A B.Ed. degree in Educational Administration is offered to primary school principals, vice-principals, and senior teachers.

Entry qualifications

Candidates for the B.Ed. are required to be trained teachers, who satisfy the matriculation requirements of the university and possess a satisfactory level of professional experience. Applicants are normally required to take an entrance examination, but those holding a UWI Certificate in Education, or an equivalent qualification from an approved university, may gain exemption from the examination. Holders of the Teachers' Diploma as their highest level of educational attainment enter the programme via the one-year (part-time) Cert. Ed. route. Holders of the Cert. Ed. with high standing may enter at Level II and complete their credits for the award of the bachelor's degree in two years.

The curriculum

The programme of study comprises:

1) the Foundations of Education and Educational Theory, embodying aspects of the philosophy of education, psychology of education, sociology of education, curriculum theory, planning and practice, research methods in education, classroom testing and evaluation, education and social development, educational administration, and language and communication in education;
2) academic courses from the Faculties of Humanities and Education, Natural Sciences and Agriculture, and/or Social Sciences, which are in line with students' professional specialization;
3) a professional specialization such as Educational Administration, Teacher Education, Primary Education, or the Teaching of Secondary Subjects.

The programme normally extends over a minimum of 4 semesters and a maximum of 10 semesters of full-time study, and over a minimum of 10 semesters and a maximum of 14 semesters for part-time study. At the St. Augustine campus of UWI, the programme is offered on a full-time basis. Each year, students are required to earn a specified number of credits. Assessment is by means of a combination of university examinations at the end of each semester, written assignments, practical assessment of teaching competence, and assessment of students' reports of field research projects.

Enrolment

Table 10 shows that the number of students enrolled in the B.Ed. programme is variable. This number is highly dependent on the number of scholarships awarded by the government for full-time study on the programme, since primary school teachers find it difficult to source the necessary funds to pay for full-time studies themselves. In 1996/97, there were 37 students registered in the programme, with the very unusual situation of more male students than female students registered.

3.5.3. Diploma in Education (Dip. Ed.)

The Dip. Ed. programme provides professional training, viewed as initial training, for teachers who hold university degrees and who are teaching at the secondary level. It is organized as an in-service programme.

Entry qualifications

Candidates for the Dip. Ed. must be graduates of an approved university or the holder of a diploma or certificate deemed to be equivalent to a first degree of an approved university.

The curriculum

The programme of study consists of:

1) School Practice
2) Curriculum Studies in an academic subject area
3) Foundations of Education, embodying aspects such as the psychology of education, principles and philosophy of education, sociology of education, language in education, and the application of the foundations to educational issues in Trinidad and Tobago and other countries
4) Project in the Theory of Education.

The programme normally lasts for one calendar year. The student, who must be working full-time in an educational institution in Trinidad and Tobago, does supervised practice (normally 20 weeks) during the calendar year, and attends the university during the vacation and in term time. Assessment is by means of a combination of university examinations, written assignments, and practical assessment of teaching competence.

Enrolment

There has been a steady increase in enrolment in the diploma programme each year, resulting in enrolment increasing from 85 in 1993/94 to 144 in 1996/97. Data on student enrolment in the diploma programme during the period 1993/94 - 1996/97 are provided in Table 10.

3.5.4. Higher degree programmes

The higher degree programmes are intended to develop a cadre of professionals capable of addressing the research, developmental, administrative, supervisory, and instructional needs of the education sector of the region. The School offers the Master of Education (M.Ed.), the Master of Arts in Education (M.A. (Ed.)), the Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.), and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programmes.

Entry qualifications

M.Ed.

Candidates for registration for this qualification are required to have either: (a) a bachelor's degree of UWI and the Diploma in Education or an approved Certificate of Education; or (b) a bachelor's degree of an approved university and an approved Diploma or Certificate in Education.

M.A. (Ed.)

Candidates for registration for this qualification must be qualified under the General University Regulations for the master's degree, and must hold one of: (a) a bachelor's degree and the

Diploma in Education of UWI or an acceptable equivalent; (b) the B.Ed. or equivalent qualification; (c) a bachelor's degree with acceptable courses in Education; or (d) an acceptable bachelor's degree and a Teacher's College Certificate.

M.Phil.

Candidates for registration for this qualification must be the holder of an Upper Second or First Class undergraduate degree.

Ph.D.

Candidates for admission to the Ph.D. are normally required to first register for the M.Phil. Applicants for direct admission are required to submit, in writing, a detailed proposal of the research to be undertaken. Applicants who write satisfactory proposals are admitted as candidates for the Ph.D.

The curriculum

M.Ed.

The programme of work for the M.Ed. is in two parts: Part I consists of not less than 300 hours of course work and Part II is a project report of 18,000 words. Candidates may be registered either full-time or part-time. Part-time candidates are required to complete Part I over two academic years and a long vacation period, and Part II nine months after completing Part I. Full-time candidates are required to complete Part I in one academic year. In the 1997/98 academic year, the project report requirement was replaced by a project proposal only.

M.A. (Ed.)

The programme of work for the M.A. (Ed.), which is undertaken over a minimum of six terms, is in two parts: Part I consists of five selected courses and Part II is a dissertation.

M.Phil.

Candidates are required to follow prescribed courses before undertaking research in the chosen area.

Courses for higher degrees are assessed by a combination of course work and examinations.

Enrolment

Enrolment for higher degrees showed an appreciable improvement from 80 in 1993/94 to 131 in 1996/97, when there were 95 female and 36 male students. Data on student enrolment in the higher degree programmes during the period 1993/94 - 1996/97 are also provided in Table 10.

3.5.5. Achievement levels

There was a steady increase in the number of graduates of the various programmes of the School of Education over the years, except in the bachelor's programme where the intake of students is determined by the number of scholarships awarded by the government. The first batch of graduates of the B.Ed. programme numbered 34 in 1993/94, but this declined to 9 and 6 respectively in 1994/95 and 1995/96. There was a significant increase to 25 graduates in 1996/97, in which year there were also 80 graduates of the certificate programmes, 128 of the diploma programmes, and 4 of the higher degree programmes. The number of graduates in both the certificate and diploma programmes has increased steadily over the years, while the number of graduates with higher degrees has remained relatively small (Table 11).

3.5.6. Governance

The School of Education and the School of Humanities, together, constitute the Faculty of Humanities and Education of the St. Augustine Campus of UWI. The UWI is an autonomous regional institution supported by, and serving, 14 different countries in the West Indies. The governing structure of the university comprises a University Council, representing the interests of the contributing governments, and a series of University and Campus Boards and Committees that make and implement policies for the conduct of university affairs. Proposals for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes have to be approved by the respective campus Academic Boards and the Boards for Undergraduate and Graduate Studies before they can be implemented, thus ensuring quality control.

3.5.7. Administrative arrangements

All teacher education programmes offered by the School of Education are recognized by the Ministry of Education. For the in-service Dip. Ed. programme, the Ministry releases teachers who have been selected for admission by the School, with the approval of the Ministry. On admission, the Ministry permits the student teachers to attend classes for one full day each week. The Ministry requests principals to arrange for a reduced workload for the teachers pursuing the Dip. Ed., where this is feasible.

3.6. Teacher Educators

3.6.1. Teachers' colleges

In 1995, there were 38 teacher educators in teachers' colleges in Trinidad and Tobago, of whom 17 were male and 21 female. All members of staff had professional qualifications, and there were 22 with postgraduate degrees, of whom 9 were male and 13 female.

3.6.2. School of Education

At the time of writing, the School of Education was staffed by a complement of 18 full-time members of academic staff, supplemented by part-time staff. Of the full-time members of staff, 8 were male and 10 were female. None of the female members of staff occupied positions above that of Lecturer. There were 11 members of staff with doctoral degrees and 7 with masters' degrees. Almost all members of staff were formerly classroom teachers. There were 3 members of staff with more than 20 years experience at the School; 3 with between 15 and 20 years; and 3 with between 10 and 15 years. Of the less-experienced members of staff, 3 had between 5 and 10 years of service at the School, while 6 had 2 years of service. Table 12 shows the distribution of academic staff at the School of Education during the period 1992/93 - 1996/97, by status and gender.

3.7. Supply and Demand for Teachers

3.7.1. Enrolment projections

Primary level

Based on the Preliminary 1990 Census data, it was projected that enrolment in primary schools in the year 2,000 would be 171,062 and 162,569 in the year 2005 (Table 13). It was projected that about 796 additional teachers would be required to meet the projected enrolment by the year 2000.

Secondary level

Based on the Preliminary 1990 Census data, it was projected that enrolment in secondary schools in the year 2000 would be 111,707 and 101,342 in the year 2005 (Table 13).

CHAPTER 4

Preliminary Analysis of Teacher Education Curricula

4.1. Outline of the Teacher Education Curriculum

In the two state-owned colleges--Valsayn Teachers' College and Corinth Teachers' College--an official, common curriculum document is followed, but there are variations in practice. Little documentary information could be found on the curriculum of the Caribbean Union College, a Seventh-day Adventist institution.

At the state teachers' colleges, the programme of study is designed for two years. The curriculum is organized and delivered along lines strongly reminiscent of a secondary school, that is, the day consists of seven, 45-minute periods with a 15-minute mid-morning break and a lunch hour. There are no free periods during the day. Staff and students are expected to register their presence on campus; students must do this twice daily, before 8:30 a.m. and before 12:45 p.m. Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. and finish at 3:00 p.m. The college year is prescribed by the Ministry of Education and coincides with the academic year for all public primary and secondary schools.

The courses offered at the training colleges have all been approved by the Board of Teacher Training. They have been designed by persons identified by the Board, who may or may not be lecturers at the colleges. The curriculum is broadly differentiated into (a) academic studies and (b) teaching practice. Both areas are examined through continuous assessment and a final examination. Course lecturers are allowed to make some input into the final examinations, but the final form of these examinations is determined by persons external to the colleges, who have been appointed by the Board of Teacher Training as external examiners.

4.1.1. Academic studies

A basic, compulsory core consists of education or professional studies and subject specialties that are pursued over the two years:

Education/Professional Studies

Psychology and Sociology of Education (Education I)

The units in Part A include: An introduction to the sociology of education; The family; The socio-economic context of education in Trinidad and Tobago; and Gender and education. The units in Part B include: Psychology of education; Theories of human development; Cognitive development; Knowing and understanding all the complex facets of the young learners' personality; Behavioural and social learning theories of development; Motivating students to

learn; and Providing for individual differences among students. This is timetabled for 120 hours.

Principles and Practice of Education (Education II)

The units in this module are: The education system of Trinidad and Tobago; The teacher and the education system; Curriculum and instruction; Teaching students with exceptionalities; and Measurement and evaluation. This is timetabled for 120 hours.

Preparation for Effective Teaching (Education III)

The units in this module are: Teaching and learning; Instructional planning; Lesson planning; The classroom environment; Methods of teaching; and Use of learning resources. This is timetabled for 120 hours and 12 weeks of teaching practice.

Subject specialties

The subject specialties and their timetabled contact hours (in brackets) are as follows:

language education (111)	reading (105 1/2)
literary studies (86)	mathematics (150)
social studies (90)	integrated science (105)
family life education (90)	agricultural science (36)

physical education and health education (not stated)

Unlike the other subjects that extend over a period of two years, family life education and agricultural science are one-year courses.

There is also a basic, optional core consisting of music (60 hrs.), art and craft (60 hrs.), dance (18 hrs.), and drama (19 1/2 hrs.). The college decides which two subjects will constitute the options in a given year, and students must select one of the options offered. This optional subject is assessed internally, by continuous means, and externally, at the end of the first year, by a final examination.

Finally, there is an elective core. Electives are courses offered by the colleges in which student teachers may choose to specialize. The level is usually above that of the basic core. The number and types of courses offered here are a function of the availability and expertise of resource personnel at any given time. Students select one of the electives to be done over the two-year period. At present, the offerings are as follows: art, agricultural science, craft, drama, early childhood education, educational technology, geography, home economics, integrated science, literature, mathematics, music, national heritage, physical education, psychology, sociology, measurement and evaluation, and special education. Some electives require the submission of a research report on a special area of study for the completion of the course.

Enrolment in the basic compulsory core, the basic optional core, and the elective core results in

students pursuing 14 subjects at any one time. In most of the subject specialties, the syllabus is pitched at the CXC level. This, therefore, involves the coverage of a considerable body of content, especially if the student has not had a previous foundation in the area, for example, agricultural science.

The intake of students in any one year at Valsayn may be in the vicinity of 300, and 200 at Corinth. Lectures are the predominant mode of delivery of the curriculum in view of the large numbers of students and a chronic shortage of resources. Students are organized into about four or five large groups for lectures in the education courses and subject specialties. These lectures occur simultaneously, for example, Education I is timetabled for all groups at the same time, so it is delivered by four different lecturers to the four large groups of students. Alternatively, some lecturers may be specialists in certain areas. They would therefore need to repeat the same lecture four times to the different groups, who would be otherwise occupied in the interim. Elective sessions, however, are kept to a maximum of 14 persons.

4.1.2. Teaching practice

This is structured differently at the two colleges. At Valsayn, the student engages in three block periods of teaching practice in a primary school. The block periods are arranged in three-week (2^{nd} term), four-week (4^{th} term), and five-week (6^{th} term) sessions, to give a total of 12 weeks of teaching practice in primary schools. At both colleges, a weekly session of 1.5 hours is given to Preparation for Effective Teaching (PET), also known as Education III, designed specifically to prepare student teachers for their field experience.

At Corinth, the first-year students engage in teaching practice in the first term for one half-day each week, and this is arranged so that there is opportunity for joint preparation and observation of each other. In the second term, they are teamed in pairs to prepare units and for teaching practice. There is no teaching practice in Term 3. Terms 4 and 6 are arranged in block practices as at Valsayn. Thus, the 12-week period of practice is computed differently at the two colleges.

At both colleges, every subject lecturer is also responsible for pedagogy in his/her subject area. The thinking here is that the PET sessions are of a general nature but, for each subject, the student will need to know specific methods, techniques, or ways of operating that may not be applicable in an introductory course on teaching. There may be some merit in this but the practice has strayed far from the original rationale. The pedagogy sessions for the different subjects explore the theories of learning in a similar way to that of their education courses, so there is major overlap. Secondly, because the lecturers operate in an insular fashion they each advocate a different type of lesson plan, in which the same kind of activity is often given a different name. This practice was rectified at Corinth, which now uses a common unit and lesson plan format, but it still continues at Valsayn.

The 12-week period in the field and preparation for it are referred to as “internal teaching practice.” The principals of the colleges invite school principals to accept student teachers in their schools, and to assign them to classes with trained cooperating teachers who can assist in

the development of the student teachers' practical teaching skills. The staff members jointly decide how many lessons are to be prepared and written per day, per class, and per subject area. At the college, student teachers prepare units and notes of lessons based on information gathered from class teachers on preliminary visits to practice schools.

Valsayn students are expected to work individually in preparing their lesson plans from the very beginning. They can consult their various subject lecturers for help in producing unit and lesson plans, but preparation for practice and practice are done without group or peer collaboration.

The regulations and stipulations governing teaching practice are the same for both colleges. Each student teacher who goes out on Block Practice must have a Teaching Practice Folder which should contain all units with lesson plans, sequenced and correctly dated, appropriate for the class to which he or she has been assigned. These folders must be readily available to the cooperating teacher, principal of the primary school, and the college tutor. In addition, all student teachers are required to keep a log in which a record of progress is kept. Lessons taught are to be checked off. If a planned lesson is not taught, it should be carefully noted and an explanation included in the Teaching Practice Folder. This is to be brought to the attention of the tutors on their periodic visits.

A class list is prepared for the year group on Teaching Practice, and college tutors are assigned to individual schools for clinical supervision of the student teachers. Each lecturer is assigned to two schools where there may be six student teachers to be supervised. Members of staff decide among themselves in what ways they will visit schools and interface with their students. Students are monitored at least once weekly, and heard in a minimum of five subject areas (lessons) for assessment.

A potential problem occurs in the fact that if there are three Block Practices, an individual student can receive three different tutors over the two years. Given the large numbers of students to be monitored, it is relatively easy for a student to use someone else's lesson plan that was awarded star rating, without being detected. From all reports, this has been, and continues to be, an endemic practice. Another problem concerns the willingness of the cooperating teacher to cooperate and help the student teacher. Often, the former views this as a “relaxed” part of the school year.

The organization of the curriculum into teaching practice sessions and lectures for Year 1 and Year 2 students can be quite complex, resulting in heavy workloads for staff members. For example, at Valsayn, there is no Block Teaching Practice in primary schools in the first term for the first-year group of students. However, this period constitutes Term 4 for the second-year students who are engaged in their Second Block of practice in the field, in addition to lectures in the college. This term is about 15 weeks long, and staff members are required to be both in the field monitoring their students in schools, and delivering their lectures at the college.

In Term 2, the first-year students experience their first Block Teaching Practice of about three to four weeks. This term extends from January to March/April and lasts for about 13 weeks. The

second-year students, now in their fifth term at the college, do not have Block Practice. They are engaged in Teaching Practice sessions and lectures at the college, and preparation for their pre-final examinations (internal assessment) which take place from February onwards.

In Term 3 (April to July), there is no Block Teaching Practice for the first-year students. This is the examination term and first-year students are required to sit final examinations in agriculture, family life education, and optional subjects. In addition, they sit semi-final examinations in courses in education and subject specialties that extend over the two years. For the second-year students, this is their final term, constituting their Final Block Practice, three weeks of which are devoted to Teaching Practice examinations--both by internal and external assessors. The Final Examination in Teaching Practice is usually held during May every year. In June, these second-year students also sit their final examinations in all their subject specialties and education courses. There is virtually no lecturing being done in this term.

Corinth Teachers' College has experimented with different arrangements and formats in the past, especially concerning teaching practice. As was mentioned earlier, they defer individual teaching practice until the students are in the second year. In the first year, students work as a group in Term 1 and in pairs in Term 2. While Valsayn has a fairly rigid schedule of alternate terms for teaching practice for the different year groups, the innovation of working in groups in Term 1 and pairs in Term 2 at Corinth has disrupted this tidy arrangement and, sometimes, both first- and second-year students are out on practice at the same time, causing dislocation and confusion.

4.1.3. Assessment and certification

Teaching Practice is continuously assessed by college lecturers, and there is a final teaching practice which acts as the final, internal examination. Lecturers use an instrument developed by Dr. Edrick Gift, a former senior lecturer at the School of Education, UWI, for assessing students. Efforts are made to enable lecturers, student teachers, and cooperating teachers to interpret the instrument appropriately in the attempt to obtain reliable scores. Corinth Teachers' College has modified the instrument and Valsayn was expected to do so in 1998. However, the colleges make adjustments in their own ways so that there is always the issue of whether an 'A' assessed at Valsayn is an 'A' at Corinth, and vice versa.

Principals and cooperating teachers of Practice Schools are supplied with blank copies of the instrument detailing aspects of the practice, for example, punctuality at schools, and student attitudes to preparation of work and to the life of the school. These are completed and returned to the college principal and the comments are studied and kept for reference. College lecturers conduct general evaluation of student teachers' teaching, and return a mark to the principal to be kept in the college records for each student after each practice. They return a grade only in the written report to each student teacher. Grades in Practical Teaching are currently set at:

A	80% and above
B	73-79%
C	65-72%

D	60-64% (Pass - 60%)
E	59% and below - Fail

Students must be successful in Practical Teaching in order to earn their Teachers' Diploma. New contractual arrangements stipulate that student teachers will not gain continuing employment as teachers unless, and until, Practical Teaching is successfully completed. A two-year period immediately following the college course is given as the deadline by which teachers must obtain a passing grade in Practical Teaching.

The last Block Practice session, which constitutes the Final Examination, is allocated 60% of the final course mark in Practical Teaching. The preceding practices together comprise 40% of the final course mark. Staff members jointly decide how the 40% will be allocated. Course marks are then expressed out of 50 and returned to the Chief Moderator via the Supervisor of Examinations at the Ministry of Education.

The final three weeks of the Final Block Practice are reserved for the external examination in Practical Teaching. The external component of the Teaching Practice mark is arrived at through assessments made by persons appointed as external examiners by the Board of Teacher Training. They are mainly retired education personnel and a few practising principals, trained by the Chief Moderator. Two external examiners simultaneously hear two lessons per student on two separate occasions over the three-week period, and independently submit a mark based on the Gift Instrument, for each student assessed.

At the colleges, assessment is structured for all courses so that there is a mark or grade for internal and external assessment. Internal marks or grades are the result of continuous assessment, which may take the form of take-home assignments, group projects, end-of-term examinations, spot tests, essays, objective tests, individual projects, and research reports. A final course mark, which is the cumulative mark of five assessments over the two years, is submitted for each student to the Board of Teacher Training at the end of the course. Course marks for those courses that only last for one year, such as family life education and agricultural science, are derived from three assessments.

External examinations are set and marked by personnel appointed by the Board of Teacher Training. For most subjects, these final examinations occur at the end of the two years. Teaching practice will have an internal mark derived through continuous assessment, an internal final examination mark and an external final examination mark. Certification is controlled by the Board of Teacher Training.

The complexity of conditions relating to assessment procedures in the teachers' colleges, especially with respect to final assessment, resulted in the need for moderation of examination marks. Moderation is a procedure used to compare and equate levels of performance in common examinations conducted across educational institutions. Its major function is to establish and maintain comparable standards among institutions offering the same subject area conducted in different settings (e.g., Valsayn, Corinth, and Caribbean Union Colleges). At these institutions,

there are differences among the students in terms of their achievement levels; there are differences among the colleges in terms of the structure and delivery of the course of instruction; there are differences among the colleges with respect to qualifications and experience of lecturers; and, as a consequence, there are differences in the means, standard deviations, and distributions of the scores obtained. There have also been differences between marks awarded by internal and external examiners in the Final Examination. Statistical techniques are now used to deal with these issues.

4.2. Review of Issues in Teacher Education Curricula

The underlying philosophy in the curricula of teacher education colleges points to the notion of the teacher as a well-informed and knowledgeable individual, capable of imparting that knowledge to the young. Our conception of an educated person is intimately bound up with how much a person knows and how well that individual can express this knowledge. It follows, then, that a teacher must be perceived to be such a person.

This poses a dilemma of sorts. The quality of the intake at the teachers' colleges in the past shows that there are many deficiencies in the knowledge base of incoming trainees. This pertains to areas of content, pedagogy, skills, and competencies. It would seem, then, that all these areas need to be targeted in such a way as to upgrade the person; the teacher. However, our conceptions of an educated person intervene. They are, for the most part, biased in favour of knowledge covered in an in-depth manner and, therefore, the teacher education curriculum gives its heaviest emphasis to the transmission of subject content. Teacher education, then, largely becomes the inculcation of a wide array of content at varying depths, interspersed only sporadically with teaching practice in schools. Pedagogical preparation thus assumes second place. These general characteristics are discernible in the teacher education programmes as follows:

4.2.1. The teaching/learning context

The lecture format used to teach teachers tacitly values the transmission and regurgitation of content. This can have an impact on how student teachers see their role in the classroom.

Students experience an overloaded curriculum. The onerous task of having to study 14 subjects, complete with many assignments and assessments at the end of every term, conspires to encourage rote learning and to pare down to the minimum what is necessary for passing the course. The curriculum is much too broad and deep to be covered adequately. One science lecturer describes the integrated science syllabus as having enough content for three years' teaching. To cope with this, a large volume of content is delivered through lectures. There is considerable overlap between the courses due, in part, to the insular way in which lecturers operate. This contributes to the general problem of overload.

There is a heavy emphasis on examinations, the conduct of which takes up as many as three weeks per term. This cuts down on the time available for instruction.

4.2.2. The teacher as practitioner

The lecture format is not only used for education courses and subject specialties, but also in PET which is concerned with preparation for practice. This means that there is probably an absence of enough instances of appropriate modelling of good teaching practices for students. In a context where students feel that they are overburdened by a great deal of work, and in the absence of good models, students may not be getting the best preparation for classroom practice.

The subject specialists' view of knowledge holds sway. The primary school curriculum is a generalist one, calling for integration of subject areas. This is hardly apparent in the subject teaching at the colleges which is done by specialists, and which ignores the plight of one who has to integrate this content for a class of children.

On the whole, the strong emphasis on content at the colleges has probably put teacher training out of focus. Students have expressed a need to understand how to translate this depth of content into some experiences that would be meaningful to a primary school child.

The heavy commitment to organizational goals is at the expense of good pedagogical practices. Corinth Teachers' College has experimented with other strategies for preparing students for practice, often disrupting the smooth running of the institution. Such innovations cannot be successfully inserted within traditional ways of organizing the curriculum. Members of staff at Valsayn College are concerned that these new strategies at Corinth will effectively mean a reduction of the stipulated 12-week practice teaching period.

The teaching practice enterprise is arranged for maximum efficiency in accommodating the large numbers of trainees. Hence, lecturers are supposed to visit two schools where there may be six students each, and see each one about five times, and still continue to teach at the college. Often, this is not possible. Student teachers complain that it is quite ironic that the most unsatisfactory aspect of their teacher training course is in the area of learning how to teach.

Students indicate that opportunities for extended feedback and post-conferencing with their tutor for the lessons that were observed are rare. Clinical supervision is done at varying depths, depending on the lecturer. In such a highly stressful atmosphere, where both the trainee and trainer seem to be overworked, the time and conditions needed for reflective practice become non-existent. What seems to be valued in teaching practice is documentation that the student went through a stipulated number of weeks of practice. It would seem that, in spite of innovations, traditional ideologies of creating a knowledgeable person predominate, and the focus is on content-oriented examinations and a supervisory, policing model of teaching practice.

It is while on teaching practice that student teachers learn that it is difficult to put much of what they were taught in college into practice. The reality in many schools is that classrooms are overcrowded and are not physically separate from others. It may be difficult to move desks around to create different teaching settings. Also, teachers may have to buy all materials

themselves for making charts and other aids, in the absence of a school vote for this purpose.

The rigours of an overloaded curriculum and an onerous teaching practice schedule can take its toll, mainly on the female teacher trainees. Many of them are in their twenties and mothers of babies and toddlers. While few ever drop out, the programme represents a great burden, and some of them resort to concentrating on finishing the programme, rather than on exploring means and ways of good practice.

4.3. Rationales for Proposed Innovations in Teacher Education Curricula

The only recommendation provided in the Government's *White Paper* on educational policy (Trinidad and Tobago. National Task Force on Education, 1994) for reform in the curriculum of the teachers' colleges concerns the reorganization of the programmes offered into modules and units. This would allow for greater flexibility in the organization and delivery of the four main components--education and subject courses, electives/options, and teaching practice. While the colleges have implemented a modular system, with units and allocated hours similar to those recommended in the *White Paper*, the desired flexibility does not seem to have been achieved, nor have the burdens felt by lecturers and student teachers in satisfying the demands of the curriculum been addressed.

The Caribbean Task Force on Education (Commonwealth of Learning, 1995) proposes more far-reaching suggestions for innovations, in view of the difficulties embedded in delivering a high-quality teacher education curriculum within present arrangements. They suggest that institutional arrangements be made that are more enabling to student teachers, namely, a shift from institution- to school-based training. They suggest that:

- student teachers should attend content/subject classes at the colleges in the vacations;
- teacher training should take place in the same context in which a teacher has to operate (the school). This would address the issue of the relevance of the curriculum and would give prominence to practice;
- a training environment should be created in schools--more teachers can be trained, and supervision and monitoring of student teachers would become a more serious undertaking than it has been hitherto;
- the heavy emphasis on didactic teaching methods, and a burdensome curriculum overloaded with content would change as lecturers would have to be involved in preparing teaching materials for distance;
- it would decrease the need for highly statistical analyses to ensure parity among institutions, largely because the emphasis on testing would be significantly reduced;
- there would be scope to upgrade all lecturers' skills, as a dichotomy has been observed between those who have come through this form of training themselves, and those coming out of the UWI diploma and degree teacher education programmes.

CHAPTER 5

The Quality and Effectiveness of Teacher Education

5.1. Assumptions Made About Trainees

From 1983 onwards, all teacher trainees were holders of secondary school qualifications of some sort (a result of the abandonment of the monitorial system in 1969). Additionally, many of these trainees possessed GCE A Level and other post-secondary qualifications. In 1984, for example, 22% of the trainees at Corinth Teachers' College had passed two to three A Level subjects; and 12% had post-secondary education in the technical/vocational areas (Rampaul, 1989). At Corinth Teachers' College in 1998, 109 of the 265 students who responded to a survey questionnaire (41.1%) indicated that they had passed at least one A Level subject. All had met the minimum requirement for entry into a training college.

The minimum requirements for entry into the Teaching Service, stipulated in the Ministry's Circular of 1985, were expected to have at least two effects. Firstly, entrants into the teaching service would be better equipped to teach the full range of subjects in the primary school syllabus, while awaiting entry into a teachers' college. Secondly, it was hoped that, with the selection of candidates with higher academic standards, less attention would need to be paid to the content areas, and more attention could be paid to professional areas in the colleges' syllabi. However, to date, little or no modifications have been made, either to the syllabus or to the structural arrangements of the training course.

It was expected that the colleges would respond to the changing circumstances regarding the quality of students entering the teachers' colleges. However, these developments have had no significant impact on the colleges' programme of work. The *Syllabus of Work* of 1970 continues to prevail, while no action has been taken on the first draft of a new *Teachers' Programme*, submitted to the Board of Teacher Training by a Working Committee in July of 1988. A pattern of indifference to curriculum development at this level has prevailed.

In the absence of formal and detailed evaluations of the programmes at the teachers' colleges, there are no clear indicators of whether or not the assumptions about student characteristics on entry to the programme are justified. Some college lecturers insist that students have knowledge bases that are deficient in certain areas (particularly science). On the other hand, some students seem to regard the programme of study as unchallenging.

5.2. Indicators of Quality and Effectiveness

If the modernization and renewal of the education system, as outlined in the strategic plan of the Ministry of Education for the period 1992-1997 (Trinidad and Tobago. Ministry of Education,

1992), are to be realized, then quality information on the effectiveness and efficiency of the existing operations, systematically obtained, is vital for all pertinent decision making.

The results of final examinations are weak indicators of quality and effectiveness. In any event, the dropout rate from teacher training programmes is virtually zero; the Ministry of Education makes provision to ensure that referred and failed students are given additional opportunities to earn the Teachers' Diploma. Job opportunities in the country are fairly limited, with the result that primary teachers who have been trained are likely to remain in the classroom. Thus, teacher attrition rates may not be good indicators. Perhaps the real indicators of the quality of the teacher preparation programme lie in what takes place in the country's classrooms following graduation from the two-year training course.

As in the system of teacher preparation, there is no systematic way of determining the effectiveness of teachers' performance. There is the tendency on the part of the Ministry of Education to use the results of the CEE as measures of the level of teacher effectiveness. At best, these results might be saying something about teaching and learning in Standard 5 (11+) classes only. National tests in mathematics and language arts for Standards 1, 2, 3, and 4 have been introduced. Students' achievements are measured in relation to expected standards/norms set down by the Ministry of Education. The results are retained by the schools and, hopefully, used by teachers for diagnostic/prescriptive purposes. This, again, would have limited value as an instrument for determining quality and effectiveness of teaching. Additionally, these tests are held only once annually.

An annual confidential report on every teacher must be submitted to the Ministry of Education. In previous years, this assessment served to decide whether a teacher had qualified for salary increments. Although the practice of awarding annual increments has been discontinued, the submission of these reports is still mandatory. The general feeling of teachers, principals, and supervisors is that these reports, which are summative in nature and limited in scope, are not reliable instruments in the measure of levels of teacher performance.

School Supervisors, using checklists (not standardized), visit classrooms to determine whether teachers are completing the prescribed syllabus as is expected of them. The frequency of these visits is often low because of the heavy workload of the supervisors. This strategy, therefore, does not result in much information that can determine the quality and effectiveness of teachers' performance. There are, however, some committed principals who, with the help of their senior teachers, have been guiding and monitoring teachers' performance in the interest of school improvement. School supervisors have reported that, in some schools, principals have vouched for the responsiveness and dedication of young, trained teachers, while, in other instances, there have been numerous complaints about the quality of newly qualified teachers joining the staff.

5.3. Support System for Newly Trained Teachers

There is very little by way of support systems for incoming, newly trained teachers. So much depends on whether or not the newly appointed teacher arrives in a school with a committed principal and committed senior teachers, as described above.

Newly trained teachers (classified as Teacher I) are officially appointed by the Teaching Service Commission (in the case of the denominational schools, recommendations are made to the Teaching Service Commission by the Church Boards). While there is a policy to attempt to place these teachers as near as possible to their homes, this is overridden by whether or not vacancies exist in the teachers' home locality. Teachers are allocated to classes by the principal, and it is generally assumed that, having obtained the Teachers' Diploma, they would be automatically proficient in classroom teaching/learning operations. No system of mentoring usually exists, although new teachers are encouraged to seek assistance from the more experienced ones, as needs arise.

On being appointed, newly qualified teachers are placed on probation for two years. They are confirmed in their jobs following their satisfactory performance, as reflected in the annual confidential report. Periodically, and increasingly, teachers are exposed to seminars, workshops, and other short courses mounted by the Ministry of Education, by the teachers' union--the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA)--for its members, or by UWI. Some schools provide the occasional in-house professional day. Teachers, on their own initiative, have been seeking to improve their qualifications and enhance their professionalism by enrolling as part-time or full-time students at UWI, St. Augustine. Others opt for courses provided by the College of Preceptors of the United Kingdom.

CHAPTER 6
Teacher Identities, Attitudes and Roles

6.1. Gender Issues

The number of males enrolled in the primary schools surpasses the number of females (Table 2), but the ratios are almost equal at the secondary level (Table 4). More males that females write the secondary placement examination each year, but approximately equal numbers are placed in the secondary schools on the basis of performance in this examination (Table 5), because of a deliberate effort to keep the numbers equal. The girls continue to outperform the boys on the examination, with the net result that girls must obtain higher scores than boys in order to be placed in secondary schools of their choice.

Analysis of the distribution of teachers in the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors of the education system (Tables 6, 7, 8, and 12) reveals that the teaching work force consists largely of women, but this high ratio of females to males is not maintained in the administrative sectors of the system. Rather, there is a consistent pattern of a lower ratio of females to males in school administration than there is in the general teaching force.

Gender issues are addressed in the courses in the sociology of education at the teachers' colleges and at the School of Education. Some common issues are addressed in these courses. These include:

1) the school's role in perpetuating gender stereotyping/gender divisions;
2) gender influences in the home and school;
3) gender relations in society--the issue of male violence against women and the social ideologies which contribute to this;
4) the underachievement of male students in schools;
5) male underachievement and its link to male violence and crime in the society;
6) the changing role of women and its impact on the family structure;
7) gender inequality.

6.2. Attitudes of Teacher Trainees

A 1995 study on the attitudes to teaching of students at the Valsayn Teachers' College (Lewis-Lee Sam, 1995) is the major component of the very sparse documentation on the attitudes of teacher trainees to teaching in Trinidad and Tobago. The study revealed that there were conflicting perceptions held by teacher trainees and lecturers about the trainees' attitudes to teaching as a career. The mainly female population of teacher trainees generally professed (through self-report) positive attitudes toward teaching as a career, although many of them indicated that they would not encourage a brother to pursue such a career option. On the other

hand, the lecturers perceived that the majority of teacher trainees were not serious about teaching as a career, since (a) they approach assigned tasks in a very casual manner; (b) many of them simply want to "get through" the examinations; and (c) they do not express a positive attitude to teaching in their normal conversations. Lecturers also perceived that students were using teaching as a stepping stone to more lucrative positions.

A recent (1998) informal survey of teacher trainees at Corinth Teachers' College indicated that several students studying at that institution also expressed a positive attitude toward teaching. In response to a questionnaire item which sought to determine why trainees had chosen to become primary school teachers, 44.9% of those responding (response rate = 70%) indicated that they chose this career path because they liked teaching and/or loved children. A further 13.6% indicated that they felt that they could make a positive contribution to society through this profession.

There is no available documentation on trainees' study habits while at teachers' college, their disposition toward the production of quality work, or their perceptions of the teaching/learning enterprise at the colleges and in the classroom.

6.3. Role of Teachers

The role of the teacher (generally) is the subject of current debate. There has been a fair degree of unrest in the school system in Trinidad and Tobago in recent times, as teachers (both primary and secondary) have sought to secure better working conditions and better salaries. Many teachers complain about the poor state of the physical plant in which they work, the lack of resources for teaching, inadequate remuneration, falling levels of discipline, and so on. The government has indicated that it is unable to raise teachers' salaries to the levels that they are requesting. The result of all of this is that teacher morale is quite low in many instances. This mood is exemplified in a letter to one of the local newspapers:

> There was a time in the history of Trinidad and Tobago when a "teacher" was treated with utmost respect and dignity since teaching was a profession held in high esteem. . . . But now, you have students abusing teachers orally and physically. (*Trinidad Express*, November 14, 1995, p. 9)

Members of the public often express their views about teachers and teaching through the newspapers. There is concern that the standard of education is falling. There have also been concerns about the perceived falling standards of dress by teachers, and about the proliferation of private classes run by teachers after school hours, in order to supplement their income. On the other hand, some members of the public have expressed concern that teachers are not being treated fairly by the state. One writer to the newspapers put it this way:

> The situation which exists between the teachers and the State in our country today is one of abuse . . . the State is the abuser and the teachers are the abused. (*Trinidad Express*, October 18, 1997, p. 2)

The climate in which educational activities occur in Trinidad and Tobago is, therefore, somewhat

turbulent. Further research on teacher education in the country at this time must take these contextual variables into consideration.

CHAPTER 7

Resources for Teacher Education

7.1. Salaries of Teachers and Teacher Trainers

There is the general consensus in Trinidad and Tobago that teachers are underpaid. The relatively low salaries of teachers may be attributed (at least in part) to the fact that Trinidad and Tobago has been under IMF conditionalities since the mid-1980s. In 1986, teachers and public servants received a 10% overall cut in salaries. In 1990, there was a little improvement in salaries but, thereafter, there was no salary increase for several years. The monthly salary ranges for graduate teachers, teacher trainers, and principals of the teachers' training colleges for the period 1992-1996 were as follows:

		TT $
Graduate teachers and teacher trainers:	Minimum:	$3,731
	Maximum:	$4,588
	Longevity:	$4,701-4,941
Principals of teachers' colleges:	Minimum:	$4,592
	Maximum:	$5,532
	(TT $6.30 = US $1)	

In 1997, negotiations for improved salaries and working conditions were marked by “sick-outs” and protests by teachers. A new collective agreement was signed in 1997, covering salaries and working conditions for the period 1996-1998. Table 14 shows the salaries that were implemented as a result of this agreement, which were, on average, 4% less than those requested by TTUTA. In addition to the salaries shown, all untrained teachers were awarded a monthly allowance of $200; all trained teachers were awarded an allowance of $300; and all administrators were awarded $400. A flat cost-of-living allowance of $50 was applied to all teachers on a monthly basis.

The salary for lecturers at the teachers' training colleges is the same as that for graduate teachers (that is, teachers with a degree from an approved university) at the secondary level. This is an anomaly that is of great concern to staff at the teachers' colleges. While the Ministry of Education now demands post-graduate training as a prerequisite for teaching at the teachers' colleges, no such demand is made of potential secondary school teachers. Yet, the salaries for the two posts are the same. Since 1980, the Teacher Education Committee recommended improved remuneration for the lecturers at the training colleges, but this recommendation has never been implemented.

7.2. Expenditure on Education

Table 15 shows the percentages of the expenditure on education allocated to various sectors during the period 1993-1997. The expenditure on teacher training is relatively low. There were no major repairs or expansion works on the two state training colleges during the period. Expenditure on primary education is greater than that on secondary education because of the thrust towards improving education at the basic education level. Capital expenditure on secondary education was minimal in the last decade.

The salary bill for the two training colleges is given in Table 16. The bill consists of payment for a total of 62 lecturers on the staff of both colleges, two vice-principals, and two principals. Teachers in training are on scholarship and also receive a monthly salary. Those trainees who possessed qualifications at the CXC/GCE O Level only (Assistant Teacher II) received a salary of $2,411 per month. Those trainees who also possessed A Level qualifications (Assistant Teacher III) were paid $2,711 per month.

7.3. Student Enrolment, Per Capita Costs, and Student/Staff Ratios

There is some variation in the statistics pertaining to the number of students enrolled at the training colleges over the past few years, as issued by the different sources. The statistics from the Ministry of Education are given in Table 8. However, those obtained directly from the teachers' colleges reveal somewhat higher numbers. It is, therefore, difficult to give accurate per capita costs and student/staff ratios. It would seem, though, that per capita costs range between $20,000-$24,000 and the student/staff ratio is in the range 13.0 to 14.0.

While this student/staff ratio appears to be very attractive, the reality is somewhat different because of the way in which the curriculum is administered at the teachers' colleges. A system of “block time” is used. With this arrangement, the entire first-year or second-year group is divided into two, three, or four groups (depending on the number of lecturers in the subject area) for instruction in a particular area. Only the lecturers in that particular area would teach at that time; the other lecturers would have free time. This means that, often, the student/staff ratio is more likely to be in the region 60:1.

CHAPTER 8

Emerging Issues

8.1. Selection and Recruitment of Teacher Trainees

In Trinidad and Tobago, there are large numbers of students who are successful at the CXC or GCE O Level examinations. There is, also, a relatively high rate of unemployment. This means that there is a fairly large pool of persons from which to choose teacher trainees. In fact, it is hardly likely that an aspiring primary school teacher would be able to gain access to a teachers' college with less than two years of service as an untrained teacher in a primary school.

Now that selection is taking place from the OJT pool of graduates, questions arise about whether or not the OJT programme synchronizes well with the teachers' college programme, and whether or not it is a meaningful preparatory programme for full teacher training.

The change in entry qualifications for the teachers' colleges that was made in 1985 was supposed to result in a better quality of teacher trainee, in that the knowledge base of the trainee was supposed to be better than in earlier periods. It is not clear whether or not this is in fact so. Exposure to the OJT programme should also impact on the performance of teacher trainees. Again, it is not clear whether or not this is happening. These issues need to be researched. Part of the problem that will be experienced in researching such issues is the incomplete nature of the data bases kept by the institutions.

Since primary school teaching is not a high-paying job, persons with superior qualifications, such as a university degree, are not likely to be drawn to it. The training programme must, therefore, be organized to work in the most efficient manner with those CXC/O Level graduates who apply for the positions.

8.2. Teacher Education Curriculum

The view has been expressed that the teachers' college curriculum is too content oriented, and the training programme is not organized to facilitate the full development of students as practitioners. There is the need for a thorough analysis of the curriculum; the policy-making structures that give rise to the curriculum; and the ways in which the curriculum is translated in the teaching/learning situation. The preparation of trainees in the practical aspects of teaching seems to warrant special attention. It is striking that the inertia associated with the renewal of the curriculum of the teachers' colleges has existed for a very long time. The reasons for this should be explored.

Students and lecturers alike seem to feel that the teachers’ college curriculum is overloaded and

they are overworked. The organization and delivery of the teachers' college programme need to be explored, with a view to putting a system in place that would focus on the important aspects of teacher training, and that would allow for an effective and efficient delivery of the programme. There is also the need to explore whether there are context-specific variables that impact on the two state training colleges in different ways, given that they have sought to implement their programmes differently. Information should be sought from the Caribbean Union College and comparisons made, since this (church) institution operates in a different context. Trainees' views on any innovations that have been undertaken would be of utmost importance.

Ultimately, the aim would be to generate information for devising curricula that would make maximum use of the skills, knowledge, and abilities that the trainees bring to the colleges; that draw on the strengths of the particular institutions; and that would equip trainees to be reflective and innovative in the classroom situations that they would encounter.

8.3. Support for New Teachers

The absence of appropriate support systems for the novice teacher has been highlighted. This situation needs to be researched. In particular, there is the need to understand the climate in those schools that have voluntarily set up such support systems. The role of School Supervisors in providing support for novice teachers should also be explored.

The ways in which novice teachers have sought to cope with their experiences in the classroom, with and without a support system, must also be understood. The extent to which the novice teacher draws on expertise within the training college, after he/she has left the institution, should also provide some useful insights.

8.4. The Product of the Teacher Training Programme

Since there is the perception that there are falling levels of achievement in the primary schools, there is the need to explore whether or not the training of primary school teachers is having an impact on the system. It is to be recognized, though, that other variables might be impacting on the performance of students at this level.

8.5. Gender Issue

There is a very high concentration of females in the teaching profession in Trinidad and Tobago. Yet, females are not found at the administrative levels in the same high concentrations. The reasons for this situation need to be explored. The impact on the high proportion of female teachers on the performance of male students needs to be investigated. Data generated in pursuing these issues should help to shape appropriate gender-sensitive curricula for the teachers' colleges

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