

ABSTRACT

It is now a truism in educational thought that education can play a dynamic role in promoting economic and social transformation but it is generally conceded that its ability to effect that role is determined by the environment in which such a system operates. This study, influenced by that principle, attempts to examine educational policies which have influenced objectives and practices of the system over the period.

Educational Policies are determined from an analysis of Educational Plans in the period. Though this study is primarily concerned with analysing Educational Policies in the period 1945 to 1976, because of its concern with examining attempts at implementation, especially in the case of Secondary Education, it goes beyond 1976.

Educational Policies and Attendant Programmes in the Pre- and Post-Independence periods are therefore analysed to determine the extent to which those policies actually evolved from the dynamic milieu and represented a response to the main quantitative and qualitative problems facing the School System. The extent to which those policies successfully addressed these problems was a primary concern of the study. The main quantitative variables examined are the availability of school places, teacher output, and government financing of the sector. The qualitative variables analysed are the relevance of the curriculum and proper management and evaluation systems. In short then, the study is concerned with discerning to what extent the Jamaican Educational System was responsive to new social demands and to what extent did it perform its role as an agent of social change.

The main conclusions of the study are that expansion took place in the quantitative variables examined, especially in the Post-Independence period. School places in the Primary System increased by 100,000 in the first ten years after Independence, reflecting an annual average increase of 10,000 places per year. Total enrolment in the Secondary Sector expanded from 42,637 to 83,205 in 1970, reflecting expansion in that sector. Teacher output increased from 344 in 1965 to 955 in 1970. Government financing remained at an annual average of 15% of the total budget. There were also qualitative improvements in the School System.