

A B S T R A C T

An Economic Analysis of the Efficiency of Port Operations
at Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, 1965 to 1980

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The Trinidad and Tobago economy may be classified as an export economy, one that produces mainly for export while relying heavily on imports for food and other consumption items.

The port, as a crucial intermediary in the transport and distribution chain which links international economies, plays a major role in such an economy, especially in the case of Trinidad and Tobago where most of the cargo flows associated with the export and import trade are accommodated at the port.

Over the years however, there has been a widely held view that the main public port, the port of Port-of-Spain, has been operating at a low level of efficiency. In this study, an attempt is made to quantify output produced and inputs utilised and to use this in a measure of changing efficiency of factor use at the port over the period, 1965 to 1980. Chapter One describes the role of the port in the

national economy, and against this background gives a general outline of the nature and context of the study.

Chapter Two focuses specifically on the port of Port-of-Spain and gives an outline of the historico-economic circumstances surrounding its establishment and its growth. Other background information including a description of operations at the port, changes in the techniques of cargo handling, administration, and management are also contained here.

Chapter Three is an assessment of the physical and financial performance of the port and an analysis, mainly from a qualitative view point of the socio-economic impact on the national economy.

In Chapter Four, the major issues and problems determined to be responsible for the quality of performance over the years are identified.

The changing level of efficiency at the port is examined in Chapter Five, utilising a measure of total factor productivity and applying this measure over the years 1965 to 1980.

In Chapter Six, the results are examined and analysed in terms of their statistical and economic significance and in terms also of the implications for port operations.