

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to measure and examine productivity levels recorded in the Jamaican sugar industry between 1760 and 1830. It examines and analyzes the technology of sugar production, the extent of the technical changes that were implemented therein and establishes and measures the extent of the relationship between productivity change and technology.

The work maintains that the Jamaican planters were entrepreneurs who were in a business to make profits. They were producing sugar for a very restrictive but increasingly competitive market and they were influenced by market forces. For them to survive they had to innovate. This work demonstrates that from field to factory new and improved techniques were implemented which played a significant role in increasing productivity levels that were recorded during the period under review.

The conclusion, therefore, is that Jamaican planters were not conservative in their attitude to new and improved technology. Innovations were implemented and these contributed to maintaining and increasing productivity levels. The presence of slaves did not prevent the implementation of innovative measures which qualitatively improved the sugar industry.