The necessity for planning education for economic development is the topic of this paper, which focuses particularly on the relationship between the Caribbean region and South Florida. First, a general overview of the current state of education in the Caribbean is presented, and the relation of formal education to development is discussed. Next, education and educational planning in the Caribbean are surveyed, and then the current trend toward integrating educational planning with social, economic, and cultural goals is cited. Finally, it is proposed that a dynamic between educational content and teaching method, in the form of a new "generative curriculum" should be a current focus of Caribbean educators and planners. (KH)
FORMAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN:
A FUNCTIONAL OR DYSFUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP?

Dialogue #16

Occasional Papers Series
DIALOGUES

Latin American and Caribbean Center
Florida International University
Tamiami Trail, Miami, FL 33199
(305) 554-2894
FORMAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN:
A FUNCTIONAL OR DYSFUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP?

Dialogue #16

By: Robert V. Farrell
PREFACE

Dr. Robert V. Farrell is an Associate Professor in Florida International University's School of Education. A specialist in Latin American education, Dr. Farrell is currently conducting research on education and change in the Caribbean region. This paper is part of that larger research project. It was presented at the 11th meeting of the Latin American Studies Association in Mexico City, September 28-October 1, 1983.

Mark B. Rosenberg
Director
Planning education for development has been a popular topic for a number of years. Since the euphoric days of the 50's and 60's educational planners have forged ahead in refining their techniques and in setting their educational targets. However, as the Second Development Decade (1970's) drew to a close, certain facts and questions surfaced which challenged formal education's role in development. How much does educational planning and the education sector contribute to economic growth and development? What is the meaning of development, anyway? Are educational systems in the Third World really suited for the development of culturally independent, clear thinking students? These and other questions will be addressed in this paper.

The idea for this paper stems from both a concern and a course. The concern is related directly to the Caribbean and Caribbean Basin, and their relationship to South Florida. As a resident of South Florida, I have watched with curiosity the growing awareness among Floridians of the Caribbean region. Migrations of Haitians and Cubans, geographic proximity, growing tourism and international business connections, all point to the importance of the Caribbean to the future of Florida. Valid and reliable knowledge of this area will be essential to guide this relationship to the 21st Century.

The course is one I recently began to develop which critically analyzes educational planning in the context of the 1980's. It is recognized in this course that all is not well with educational planning. Despite
refined techniques, educational targets have too often proven illusory. More and more scholars are questioning whether there is a functional or dysfunctional relationship between formal education and economic development. It is now recognized that while much educational growth has occurred in the Third World in the last twenty years, real development and real educational reform have been slow in coming.

Course and concern have come together in the present work. The paper will be divided into three sections. The first will deal with the current state of educational planning, and the relation of formal education to development. This section will be a general overview of the "state of the art." The second section will survey education and educational planning in the Caribbean area. An effort will be made to summarize statistics and goals in order to get an accurate picture of this extremely diverse area. Finally, the last section will propose a substantive, critical juncture for educational planning in the Caribbean. It will be proposed that the "dynamic" between educational content and teaching method, in the form of a new Generative Curriculum, rather than educational expansion, should be a current focus of Caribbean educators and planners.
I. Contemporary Educational Planning

The necessity of educational planning and the connection of education with development have been popular areas of interest for the last thirty years. Given scarce resources in the Third World, what better way to use these resources than through planning? The objective of educational planning was (and is!) the optimization of resource utilization. Educational plans were to be rational and objective, taking into consideration the needs of society and the optimal way of meeting these needs.

As for the relationship of education and development, the connection here was the concept of human resource development. Planners critically analyzed educational systems in terms of their human resource potential for development. Said society needs so many engineers by such and such a year, so many technicians, so many retail clerks, ad infinitum. Manpower projections in terms of human capital needs became the "sacred cow" of educational planners. As a graduate student in the 60's, I bought this line, along with the Harbison and Myers' text, hook, line and sinker. It was the great development hope!

Coring down to the present decade, there is increasing skepticism about educational planning and formal education's contribution to economic growth and development. Criticisms come from many quarters and many perspectives. Below we will attempt to analyze these criticisms in preparation for our discussion of the Caribbean and its educational future.
Human capital theory was enthusiastically embraced by educational planners in the 1960's. Here was a theory which finally showed educators what schools were really meant to do! Schools were to give students skills that would enable them to slide easily into a national job market. Simple? Unfortunately, there are a number of apparent dilemmas in this approach. First, with so many children excluded from the full cycle of schooling in the developing world, a determination seems to have been made that their human capital is not needed for national development. Only about two thirds of primary age children in the Third World are in school. About one third of the twelve to seventeen year old age cohort are in school, while less than one tenth of the 18 to 23 age group are studying. The dilemma here is moral, but none the less real:

But the above dilemma is not the real problem of human capital theory. The real problem is that the theory does not seem to work, or that it works only in very controlled, centralized national environments, if at all. Planners have tended to operate on the premise that education is a technical, apolitical process, and that manpower projections and targets for a society will systematically be met through a rational and objective decision making process. However, this is not the case. Education is extremely politicized and does not bend easily to mechanistic formulas. Manpower projections and targets too often proved unacceptable to conflicting vested interests, or worse yet, were not.
only to result in numerous educated unemployed. National economies did not meet the expectations of planners with resulting negative consequences. In short, overestimation of the effectiveness of manpower projection techniques and other quantitative indicators, and the haunting reality of educated unemployed in the Third World, have severely weakened the position of contemporary educational planning.¹

However, the inadequacy of human capital theory is only one factor working against the efforts of educational planners in the contemporary world. A strong catalyst for educational planning was the belief that educational growth in and of itself would impact favorably on the political, social and economic conditions prevailing in the developing world. In other words, the more educated citizens, the more democracy, equality and economic growth. It is increasingly apparent that this is not so, as dictatorships and growing socio-economic inequities abound along with educational expansion. There is no longer much support for the notion that expansion of educational systems will automatically lead to societal betterment. The dichotomy between have's and have not's persists, and in leading developing countries like Mexico and Brazil, there are increasing inequities in income distribution despite impressive educational growth. Many current educational critics believe that the status quo of exploitation, inequality and political tyranny are reinforced through neo-colonial, Western-model school systems.⁴ Furthermore, some also believe that the hope of reform through expanding
school systems distracts societies from basic, radical, structural reforms.  

Another criticism of educational planning and the association of education with development stems from a growing disenchantment with the Western definition of development. In the 60's, development had some very impressive goals. Scholars looked at the phenomenon of development in the Third World as a means of achieving a more equitable spread of wealth, a more equitable social structure. However, the reality of development takes on different meanings with critical contemporary analysis. Development has not meant equality and social progress. It most often has meant an urban, consumer, industrial reality, often at the expense of local cultures. A small number of efforts in the Third World to redefine development in terms of local needs and desires, like Tanzania's efforts at Self-Reliant education, have been attempted. Defense of folk cultures and challenges to cultural dependency have also occurred. However, stemming the momentum of the urban/consumer/industrial model of development seems almost impossible to achieve without radical surgery.  

There are a number of other criticisms of educational planning in the Third World. They include the obvious neglect of implementation in original planning efforts. So often planners, with planning for planning sake mentalities, look upon their planning documents as finished products. This phenomenon most certainly contributed to numerous unachieved
educational goals documented in the mid-1970's. Educational planning has also been criticized as a top down enterprise, allowing little or no participation from the lower levels of the educational pyramid—parents, teachers, and students. Many consider this a flagrant oversight since these lower levels are essential for planning success. Finally, the dominant focus on growth and quantitative expansion is another criticism frequently heard in educational circles. This focus has contributed to a neglect of more radical, structural educational reforms in a number of countries. In fact, the focus on educational expansion has been effectively used to blunt crisis situations that might have moved countries towards serious change. But more of this below.

The above criticisms of educational planning are valid, but planning momentum continues in developing countries. Changes have occurred, but fundamental modifications of the "expansion mentality," manpower concerns, and Western development models, are slow in coming. With this recognition we now turn to an examination of formal education, planning and development in the Caribbean.
II. Education and Planning in the Caribbean

A complete description of formal education in the Caribbean is obviously beyond the scope of this paper, as is a complete description of educational planning efforts in this area of the world. However, we will attempt to give the reader a feeling for both the scope and direction of Caribbean education and educational planning.

First, a clarification is in order. The Caribbean Basin includes countries both in and surrounding the Caribbean Ocean. The latest issue of UNESCO's Statistical Yearbook (1982) lists some thirty-two nations and territories associated with the Caribbean. Central America, Colombia and Venezuela are included as integral parts of this area of the world. However, for this paper, our discussion will be limited to those countries traditionally associated with the Caribbean—all but four (Belize, Guyana, French Guiana, and Suriname) are island nations, and most are considered MiniStateEconomies (MSE's) with populations under 250,000.

Even with this limitation, the kaleidoscope of countries in the Caribbean is astounding. They range from larger island nations like Cuba and the Dominican Republic, to the soon to be independent MSE nation of St.Kitts-Nevis. The cultural/ethnic heterogeneity of this area of the world is truly impressive, with past affiliations with Spain, France, Great Britain and Holland primary language and culture determinants. Racial representation is also diverse, with a preponderance of East Indians in a few areas, and a majority of African-origin citizens.
in the total area. Such diversity, coupled with formidable travel
distances, have contributed to fragmentation and slow regional
integration in this part of the world.

In terms of formal education related to enrollments and educational
attainment, the Caribbean as a whole seems to be better off than many
other developing areas. Of course, there are incredible differences.
For example, in terms of literacy, countries range from Haiti's
illiteracy rate of 75%, to Barbados' .6%. However, most countries in
this area have literacy rates well over the 85th percentile mark,
which is quite respectable in terms of world literacy.11

Most national educational systems in the Caribbean have inherited
characteristics directly from their colonial parent powers. For example,
British educational style prevails in both Commonwealth and independent
British colonial territories. Only recently in the British Caribbean
has serious thought been given to making secondary exit exams more
responsive to local Caribbean values and needs. And so it goes with
Spanish, French and Dutch colonial-origin nations in this part of the
world. Be that as it may, most countries have free, compulsory and
universal education, ranging from 6 to 10 years in length. Centralized
control pervails through Ministries of Education or National Councils
of Education. Enforcement of compulsory education laws, however, often
vary according to the diverse socio-economic conditions prevailing in
specific countries.
In terms of goals and purpose, countries in the Caribbean region have surprisingly similar educational aims. Loyal and productive citizens, capable of serving themselves and society, equal educational opportunity and education as a national unifying factor, seem to be popular educational goals. However, despite similarity in aims, it is apparent that there is a wide range in terms of educational attainment in the Caribbean. For example, the British Caribbean seems to be better off in terms of educational attainment. In 1960, Barbados, Grenada, and Jamaica had only 2%, 7%, and 16% respectively of their total populations without any school experience whatsoever. In comparison, the figure was 90% and 70% for Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the same period. Percentages of adult populations with more than 4 years in school range from 81% in Barbados and 74% in Jamaica, to 64% in Haiti and 12% in the Dominican Republic. In terms of secondary education, statistics seem less positive, with well under 25% of Caribbean national populations having completed secondary level education. Repeaters and drop-outs are still common, especially in the primary cycle. Also, differences in urban and rural educational opportunities persist in educational systems that range in size from a handful of primary schools and one high school in some island nations (eg., Anguilla) to educational systems that have many regional departments and numerous districts within these departments (eg., the Dominican Republic). Finally, expenditures on education in this part of the world
generally well over 5% of Gross National Product, a respectable showing in the world of education.

Turning now to educational planning, we see that educational planning efforts have been present in this region for a number of years. At least for some, even education in the colonial era was "planned" in order to dehumanize and develop loyal colonial servitude. However, planning in the modern sense began to manifest itself with the growing concern for regional integration in Latin America. Beginning with the Regional Education Seminar in Caracas in 1948, and continuing through a series of Conferences and Inter-American meetings of Ministers of Education and development experts, the relation of education to development was formalized over the next three decades. Guidelines and recommendations stemming from these meetings directly impacted on the direction of educational planning in the Caribbean. Expansion of education, especially on the secondary and tertiary levels, was early seen as the key to meeting the manpower needs of developing Caribbean nations, and education in general was associated with "the wider solution of social, cultural, political and economic issues." Specialized planning divisions began to appear in Caribbean countries in the late 1950's and early 1960's, and during this period, Caribbean scholars, like A. Arthur Lewis, began to support the investment role of education in economic development. The Institute of Education of the University of the West Indies also became directly involved with educational planning in the early 1960's.
Coming down to the present, despite contradictory evidence, attempts at rational planning of human and financial resources continues in the Caribbean. However, there have been some basic changes in planning philosophy. For one thing, politics is increasingly seen as a fundamental factor influencing educational planning. Also, the Project for Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (1978), as well as the 1979 Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning of Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean, have spurred a reassessment of the relationship of education and society. While recognizing the persistence of educational problems in this area of the world, the Regional Conference stressed a more integrated approach to educational planning. No longer could education be planned in isolation. It had to be integrated as part of a total social, economic and cultural development effort. Regionalization and deconcentration were stressed in order to meet local population needs. The quality of education was also linked to curriculums which were appropriate to the actual needs of each country involved. Finally, international impediments to educational and economic growth were recognized in the Conference's call for a New International Economic Order.

The direction of the 1979 Regional Conference strongly challenges the notion that educational expansion is good in and of itself. Expansion must be directed in such a way that it results in a quality educational experience. Unfortunately, that has not always been the case of educational planning in the Caribbean. Exploding population...
pressures, coupled with perceived needs of self-government and independence, have prompted Caribbean educational planners to concentrate on quantitative expansion in their planning efforts. As if acting to reinforce this expansion mentality, educational growth in the Caribbean has also been viewed as a means of overcoming periodic political crisis situations.

The importance of education to most governments in the Caribbean is obvious, and expenditures on education have increased over the last two decades. However, resource limitations seem to be the primary recurring problem in Caribbean educational planning, as it is throughout the world. Dysfunctionality also seems to be a recurring reality, as most jobs in the tourist, agriculture, fish and extract economies of these island nations require little of what is known as traditional schooling. To complicate this situation, on the other hand, traditional schooling is often perceived as a social need by previously excluded population groups. The task of the educational planner has indeed become most formidable in this area of the world:

Finally, most countries in the Caribbean have some form of educational development plan. Quality of plans vary, as does emphasis. Expansion of primary education is a current popular concern, while manpower and industrial needs often promote expansion of lower secondary and vocational levels of education. Planned literacy campaigns have occurred in Jamaica and other countries, and the continued upgrading of the University of the West Indies is a popular goal.

However, as in other developing areas, educational results too often fall far
short of planned educational targets. Caribbean educational plans and studies are not lacking. As Figueroa points out: "Anyone now struggling with contemporary education problems is time and again taken aback to find that many of the present problems were long since dealt with in theory by some dusty report written long ago by energetic and hard working experts, local and foreign." Theory abounds, but the full implementation of educational plans and the achievement of educational targets are too often crippled by the economics of underdevelopment. It is suggested, therefore, to better meet the realities of this resource problem, that planners put more emphasis on refining the quality and relevance of classroom experiences. Planning places, equipment, and buildings is essential, but costly. The idea of improving the nature of activities within the classroom, often assigned a low priority by expansion-minded planners, is as essential, if not more so, and can be less costly. We will explore this idea in the next section of this paper.
III. A New Direction in Educational Planning

There is concern for the quality of education in the Caribbean. The 1979 Regional Conference referred to above cited as a major educational problem the lack of curricular quality and relevance, and noted the "limited place of knowledge of social, economic and cultural realities of countries in national curriculums." Do you have to have a revolution to get accurate national histories and priority social concerns into curriculums? I think not. But given traditional educational priorities, the introduction of such realities certainly presents a challenge.

Quality and relevance in education are concepts that have been discussed and analyzed periodically in educational literature. For example, the United States is presently trying to define the concept of quality education for its schools in order to counter-balance a perceived drop in educational standards. However, is quality education as it is defined in the United States relevant to the needs of Caribbean countries? The answer depends on your perspective. In so much as quality schooling may mean the development of clear thinking, wise individuals, I believe it is relevant. However, this would only be a part of an essential definition of quality education for the Caribbean. The notion of "Becoming," which is often lacking in discussions of educational quality in the United States, should also be an essential ingredient of Caribbean education. This notion of movement towards individual and national potentials will be discussed more below.
Caribbean educators have noted deficiencies in their local school curriculums, and calls for relevant, appropriate course content are frequently heard in educational circles in this part of the world.\(^{37}\) But these curricular demands must be brought together into sharper focus. Calls for quality and relevance must be based not only on what the Caribbean is, but what it is to become. Only then will quality education have the direction needed for authentic socio-economic development.

The notion of "becoming" is extremely important in the development of quality education. It is important in the sense that it contains the idea of movement towards something new, of evolutionary, radical change. For this reason, I have chosen the name "Generative Curriculum" to describe the type of curriculum and instruction which should be implemented through educational planning in the Caribbean. The basic aim of this curriculum is to foster a type of literacy that will enable students to become clear thinking, productive citizens needed for Caribbean development. Such citizens, fully conscious of their reality and potential, will serve as catalysts for authentic development in this part of the world.\(^{38}\)

The first point to be made in relation to a new Generative Curriculum in the Caribbean is that it must be a "dynamic" relationship between both content and teaching method. This is an important idea which needs emphasis. The most innovative, appropriate content, dealing with vital areas of concern, may be taught in a manner which does not
promote independent, critical thinking. Pouring appropriate facts and figures into students' heads is the traditional, dogmatic, so-called banking method of education. While it can result in critical thinking individuals, it too often produces gullible followers and believers. This is not the type of individual the Caribbean needs. As William Demas so aptly points out, the Caribbean, given its place in the world and its development needs, requires problem solvers, creative citizens. This is the type of citizen who will most likely challenge the "dependent under-development" which prevails in this region of the world. 

So a new Generative Curriculum must contain both appropriate content and method. But how do we determine such appropriateness? The answer is to follow the lead of those Caribbean nationalists who want their area of the world to evolve into a free, independent region in control of its own destiny. Such a nationalist is William Jemas, who believes that questions of identity, development, and unity go to the very core of a free, independent Caribbean future. Such concepts, as defined by Caribbean nationalists, should be an important curricular foundation in Caribbean schools.

Questions of identity are important in school curriculums since self-awareness and self-esteem are essential first steps in the development of clear thinking, independent students. For too long have Caribbean populations searched outside their region for keys to their identity. External influences are important, but they are only
one aspect of Caribbean identity. Schools must foster a full awareness, a consciousness if you were, that will allow individuals to deal realistically with themselves and what they are to become. Inferiority complexes, whether of external origin or of racial origin, must be challenged in classrooms. Such challenges will come through content areas which deal accurately with national and regional history, regional environment, human relations and communication, and socio-economic class realities.

Self-awareness and national awareness, so important for legitimate change, bring us to the concern for development. Just what is meant by "development" in the Caribbean? Well, again it depends on your perspective. You can be sure, though, that Caribbean nationalists do not believe that a growing tourist industry in which so much revenue is lost to the regional economy, and with so little impact on labor markets, is appropriate for authentic Caribbean development. Schools must help students realize that the development process should move countries towards the elimination of blatant social and economic inequities. Economic and sociological content must promote the realization that while complete independence is impossible for Caribbean export and service economies, interdependence without exploitation is feasible. Such realizations again could serve as catalysts for a reorientation of the direction of Caribbean development.

Finally, secure individual and national identity, an appropriate development direction, will contribute to the realization of the
Caribbean's full potential. However, many nationalists realize that with the small size of most Caribbean nation states, the development of this potential is severely limited. This goal must therefore be linked to regional integration. Such integration will augment the bargaining power of Caribbean nation states in the face of international social and economic pressures. School curriculums should support efforts towards regional unity through regional histories and language and communication studies. Such content should work to underline similarities of conditions in the Caribbean, and should promote a form of unity which recognizes socio-cultural difference, but allows the region to develop a more effective defense against economic and cultural challenges of the United States and other developed countries.

The above is a very brief description of a new Generative Curriculum Caribbean educators may choose to emphasize in their planning efforts. I intend to spend the major portion of the coming year developing the specifics of such a curriculum. In this curriculum, the development of secure national and regional identities, and realistic levels of individual awareness, are major priorities. However, content which contributes to such development must be taught in such a way as to promote critical thinking, problem solving skills in students. Such thinking skill linked with appropriate educational content will go a long way in speeding Caribbean populations towards their essential "Becoming..."
Footnotes


8See: Comparative Education Review, June 1975 issue; and Educational Planning, March 1976 issue.


12Kurian, op. cit.

13Ibid.


16 G.W. Roberts, op.cit.
19 Ibid.
21 Caesar, op.cit., p. 113
23 Lamarra, op.cit.
26 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Caesar, op.cit., p. 113.
32 Kurian, op.cit.
33 Caesar, op.cit., p. 163.


38. Many of the ideas in this section of the paper come from the various works of Paulo Freire and the existentialist educator, Maxine Greene.


Bibliography


*Only those consulted works not referred to in the Footnotes are included in this Bibliography.


