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**TERTIARY EDUCATION IN ST. LUCIA:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR SMALL ISLAND STATES**

**CALLIOPA PEARLETTE LOUISY**

A thesis submitted to the University of Bristol  
in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Faculty of Social Sciences, School of Education

November 1993

## ABSTRACT

The expansion of tertiary education in small states is both problematic and controversial. On the one hand, the international literature on small states has generally portrayed them as being constrained by size, remoteness and dependence on external factors. Their economies have been regarded as open, constrained by a small internal market with limited demand for specialisation, and capable of sustaining only a small modern sector. This, and the small size of their populations has been used as the rationale for discouraging the development of national tertiary education sectors and for the regional provision of higher education in large groupings of small states. On the other hand, economic and political pressures are leading small states to challenge this received wisdom and to re-appraise their tertiary education capabilities. Policies aimed at strengthening national capacity have thus re-opened the debate about the credibility and viability of national tertiary level institutions.

In the light of the small-state literature, the thesis critically evaluates recent developments in tertiary education in the two largest groupings of small states - the Caribbean and the South Pacific. The study is based upon original fieldwork data collected for a detailed case study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St. Lucia. A comparative analysis of tertiary provision in the non-campus territories served by the two regional universities - the University of the West Indies and the University of the South Pacific - supplements the case study data. The analysis identifies factors which have contributed to the establishment of national tertiary level institutions in both regions, and considers the policies that national authorities have adopted for the on-going expansion of in-country provision of tertiary education.

The thesis argues that the development of national tertiary education sectors is primarily motivated by issues of access, cost, control and human resource development needs. National responses to a wide range of local needs have thus resulted in a multi-level tertiary sector which has the potential to be both politically and economically viable. In both regions, parallel processes of centralisation and decentralisation are leading on the one hand to the establishment of national multi-purpose institutions, and on the other to a new form of regional provision based on networks of mutually-supporting institutions. In what can be considered new responses to the challenge of scale, isolation and dependence, small states are consolidating provision at the national level, establishing mechanisms for harmonising policy and practice at the regional level and strengthening international linkages.

## DEDICATION

*To my mother, Rita, who taught me to look beyond the constraints of the moment to the promises of the future.*



## *A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S*

This dissertation is the fruit of the love and labour of a whole community of people. In expressing my deepest gratitude to all of them, I am inviting them to share its ownership.

I owe a special debt to the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College for sponsoring this research programme. To the Management, and in particular to Vaughan Lewis, Leton Thomas, Martha Pierre, Catherine Felicien and Jane King-Hippolyte, I express my thanks.

My Advisor, Dr. Michael Crossley has been a source of encouragement and a valuable resource person. His sensitivity and his colleague approach to supervision sustained me throughout. To him I express my sincerest thanks.

Steve Packer of the Commonwealth Secretariat and David Atchoarena of the International Institute for Educational Planning deserve special mention. They shared with me their insights and infected me with their enthusiasm for small-state issues.

My Caribbean colleagues compensated for the scarcity of published work on tertiary education in the region. My thanks therefore to Alistair Francis of the Antigua State College; Kay Polidore of the Clifton Dupigny Community College; Lawrence Carrington of the Faculty of Education, UWI, St. Augustine; Jimmy Emmanuel and Herbert Sabaroche of the Central Secretariat of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States; and Bevis Peters and Olivia Edgecombe-Howell of the Office of University Services, Cave Hill for supplying me with data and in-house reports.

The untimely death of Herbert Edwards of the Organisation for Co-operation in Overseas Development robbed me of the opportunity to thank him for his contribution to this study. My thanks therefore to his wife for her continued support.

I gratefully acknowledge the contribution of all my interviewees who so willingly agreed to provide the data for the study.

My thanks to my mother, Rita; to all the members of my family and to all my friends for their prayers and their support.

My very special thanks to Waltrude Louisy, for her dedication and patience in transforming my many handwritten drafts into this finished product.

And finally, my sincerest thanks to George Louis for his loving concern, his unfailing support and his faithful stewardship.

I certify that this dissertation is my own work and that it has not been previously submitted for any other university degree.

Signed. *Blouisy*.....

Date. *November 15, 1993*.....

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## List of acronyms

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>ACTI</b>    | Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions                     |
| <b>CARICOM</b> | Caribbean Community and Common Market                              |
| <b>CARNEID</b> | Caribbean Network of Educational Innovation                        |
| <b>CAST</b>    | College of Arts, Science, and Technology                           |
| <b>CHES</b>    | Commonwealth Higher Education Support Scheme                       |
| <b>CIDA</b>    | Canadian International Development Agency                          |
| <b>COL</b>     | Commonwealth of Learning   |
| <b>COPE</b>    | Consortium On Pacific Education                                    |
| <b>GCE</b>     | General Certificate of Education                                   |
| <b>LMIS</b>    | Labour Market Information System                                   |
| <b>NCC</b>     | Non-campus countries   |
| <b>NIC</b>     | North Island College   |
| <b>NUS</b>     | National University of Samoa                                       |
| <b>OECS</b>    | Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States                           |
| <b>OERS</b>    | Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Education Reform Strategy |
| <b>OUS</b>     | Office of University Services                                      |
| <b>TLI</b>     | Tertiary Level Institution   |
| <b>TVET</b>    | Technical and Vocational Education and Training                    |
| <b>UNESCO</b>  | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation   |
| <b>USIU</b>    | United States International University                             |
| <b>USP</b>     | University of the South Pacific                                    |
| <b>UWI</b>     | University of the West Indies                                      |
| <b>UWIDITE</b> | University of the West Indies Distance Teaching Experiment         |

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*C H A P T E R O N E*

*INTRODUCTION*

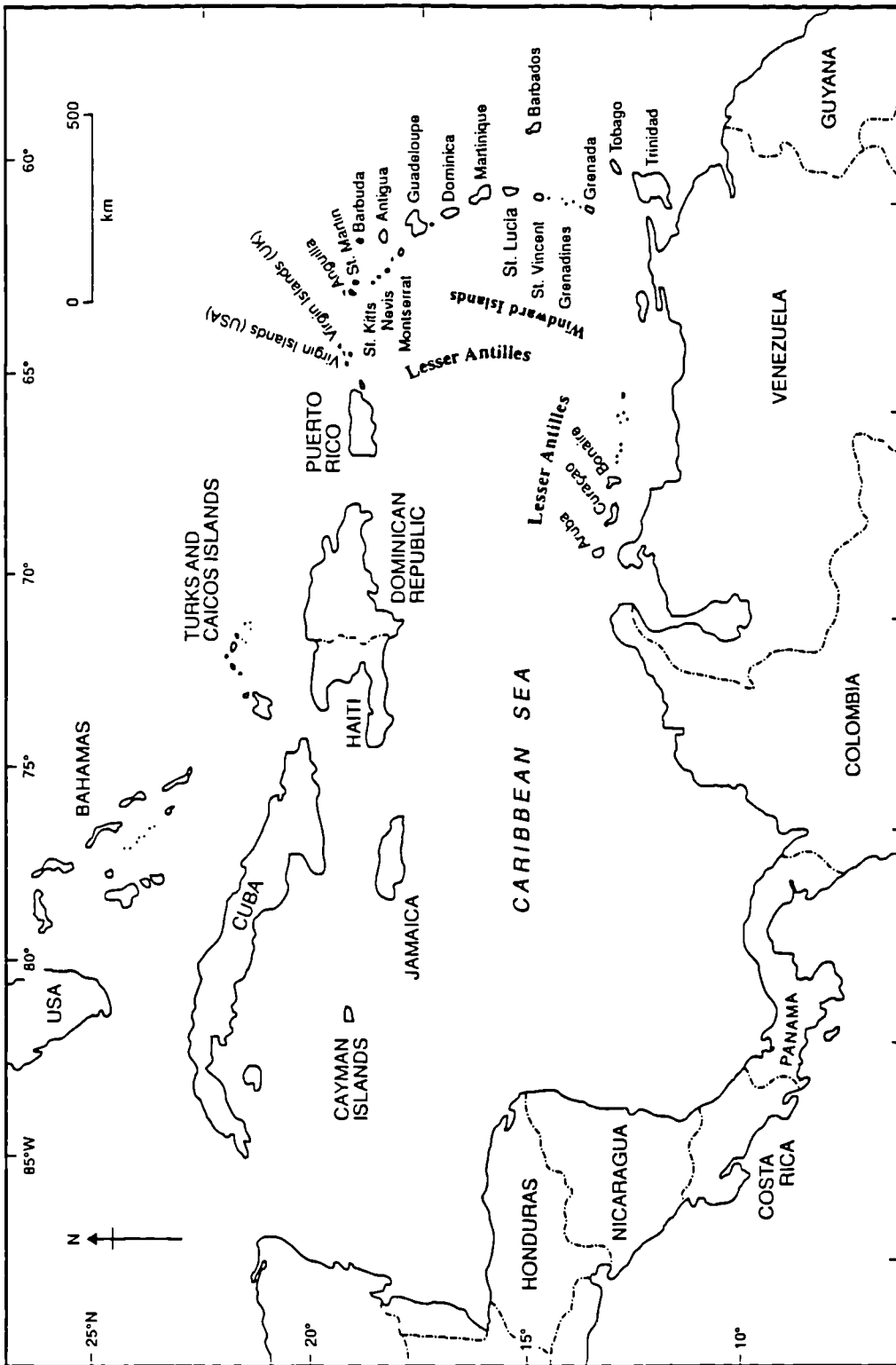
*"The surface may be littered with the despairs of broken systems and of failed experiments; the river, stilled, may reflect, mirror, other images, but that is not its depth. It could not be".*  
*Derek Walcott*

## **Introduction**

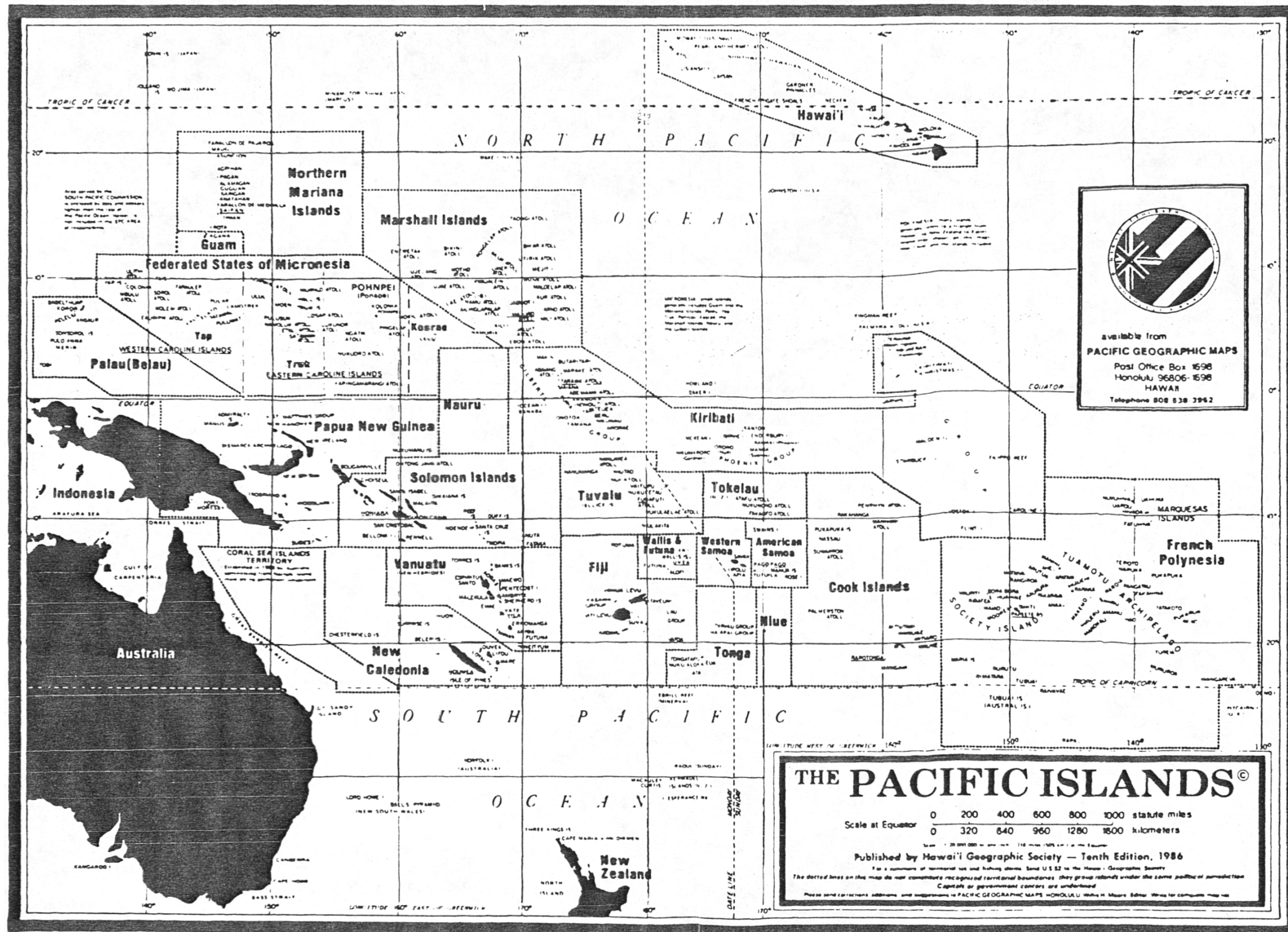
Recent initiatives in tertiary education provision in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific point to a determination to enhance local capacity in the face of limited resources, rising costs, increased social demand for access, and urgent human resource development needs. In developing these strategies, they have turned on the one hand to the establishment and expansion of national institutions and on the other to the development of structures and mechanisms for the co-ordination and harmonisation of tertiary education policy-making and planning at the regional level. While these policies and planning models have been quite innovative, the expansion of tertiary education in these small states, in the light of contemporary international debate on the crisis facing higher education, is regarded as problematic and controversial. This thesis critically reviews these recent developments, and assesses both the relative strengths and limitations of these national and regional policy options, and the implications of such policies and strategies for other small states. The need for such a study is more keenly appreciated when one considers the current dilemma facing developing countries - devising tertiary education strategies that can stimulate and sustain development in a climate of limited and sometimes dwindling resources. Nowhere is this tertiary education dilemma more apparent than in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific which are the focus of this study (See Map 1.1 and 1.2).

Perhaps the most powerful force behind the expansion of the tertiary education sector in the developing world during the past two decades has been recognition of the contribution that tertiary education can make to the overall economic, cultural and social development of a nation. In a competitive international environment where development performance increasingly is related to the quality of the human resource

Map 1.1  
The Caribbean Region



Map 1.2  
The Pacific Islands



available, best utilisation of that resource has become one of the main priorities of national governments. Tertiary education is seen to have the potential to substantially enhance that human resource quality, raising it to a point where it can initiate and sustain essential economic and social development. Of no less significance is the role that tertiary education is perceived to play in enhancing individual creativity, and in improving each citizen's level of participation in the social and cultural development of their country.

On the other hand, economists, planners and development agencies have repeatedly suggested that developing countries should reduce resources allocated to the tertiary sector of education in favour of investment in primary schooling. This is argued on the grounds that the social rates of return on investment in the latter sector are higher and therefore more beneficial to the nation as a whole. Expansion of the tertiary sector in developing countries is therefore both problematic and controversial and, often against international advice, many of these countries have over the past two decades given high priority to such expansion. Indeed much of it has been financed by the international development assistance community itself, in apparent contradiction to its recently stated preference for priority to be given to basic education (1990 World Conference on Education For All).

The fact that developing countries have persisted in tertiary expansion is related to the difficulty of discouraging social demand for access (Hallak, 1990), and to a search for survival in an international environment which places the greatest premium on technical and scientific progress. It is instructive however, to examine the specific circumstances which have prompted the development and expansion of the tertiary sector in different categories of developing countries as well as the "form, style and extent" (Smawfield, 1985) of tertiary provision that each has adopted. It is argued that a better understanding and appreciation of national priorities, and a knowledge of the contexts within which tertiary education policies are to be implemented can contribute significantly to the formulation of more realistic strategies for human resource development within developing countries.



## **Rationale for the study**

The shifting perspectives regarding the relationship between higher education and development have been described by Coleman and Court (1993) as providing an example of how ideas and theories that acquire dominance during a particular era both reflect contemporary socio-historical circumstances and evolve under their influence. Thus the widespread acceptance in the 1960s of higher education as a strategic variable in development which gave way in the 1970s to disillusionment over its developmental record and its promise of economic growth, is again gaining momentum as increasingly greater numbers of countries embrace a human resource-propelled development strategy. While some still contend that higher education can be considered an obstacle rather than an agent for economic development in view of its higher cost, its inequity and inefficiency and its low rate of return compared with primary- and secondary-level education (Saha, 1991), there is a growing consensus that the development of educated leadership in all areas of endeavour is central to any development or progress (See, for example, Husén, 1991; Coleman and Court, 1993; World Bank, 1993). In this regard, Hallak (1990) argues for example that the economic success of the newly industrialising countries in Asia is attributed in large measure to investment in human resource development at the tertiary level. Singh (1991) argues that their experience suggests the need for higher education as a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for development, and points to the role of higher education institutions as the principal producers of the scientific and technological human resources which contribute to national goals and development. It is the recognition of this role that has led Bourne (1988) to argue that the small developing countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean are constrained in their efforts to improve substantially their development performance because of deficiencies in the tertiary sector.

However such a role is not restricted to developing or newly industrialising countries. Industrially mature economies also look to higher education to stimulate growth and expansion. Illustrating this in respect of the United States of America, Johnstone (1991) argues that the changing economy by the year 2000 will call upon higher

education to enhance its university-based basic and applied research and to upgrade the workforce at all levels. In the same vein, the ability of the European Community to strengthen its position in the global economy is seen to depend on its efforts at achieving excellence in the development of human resources particularly in the area of education and advanced training (Jones, 1991). This symbiotic relationship between higher education and development is captured in Johnstone's (1991) analysis that what higher education will become in the future depends very largely on what becomes of the key economic, demographic and social variables of which a country's key colleges and universities are very much a function. Indeed it is now being argued that institutions of higher education have the main responsibility for equipping individuals with the advanced knowledge and skills required for positions of responsibility in government, business and the professions (World Bank, 1993).

Paradoxically, the expansion of higher education in the developing world which may well have been stimulated by the correlation made between the development of higher education and economic development has sparked another debate: the wisdom of encouraging the proliferation of higher education institutions, and methods of containing "fiscally unsustainable enrollment growth and a sharp decline in quality" (World Bank, 1993: iv). This latest "crisis" in higher education in the developing world (Husén, 1991; Saint, 1992; World Bank, 1993) has great relevance to recent developments in tertiary education provision in some of the world's smallest states. An examination of recent developments in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific over the past two decades reveals a significant increase in the domestic provision of tertiary education with the establishment of national colleges and universities (Table 1). Given the contemporary debate on the expansion of tertiary education in developing countries, it is instructive to examine the factors that have provided the impetus for such expansion in small states. It is also instructive to examine the nature of this expansion since the international literature has generally considered the development process of small states as constrained by problems imposed by scale, isolation and dependence. Recent developments in tertiary education in these states thus argue for a reconsideration of these three factors, and a discussion of their impact on the provision of tertiary education, as small states

Table 1  
National Tertiary Institutions in the Small States  
of the Caribbean and the South Pacific  
1973-1993

| Institution                                     | Year Est. | Country         | Region        |
|---|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
| College of the Bahamas                          | 1974      | The Bahamas     | Caribbean     |
| Antigua State College                           | 1977      | Antigua         | Caribbean     |
| Clifton Dupigny Community College               | 1979      | Dominica        | Caribbean     |
| National University of Samoa                    | 1984      | Western Samoa   | South Pacific |
| Solomon Islands College of Higher Education     | 1985      | Solomon Islands | South Pacific |
| Sir Arthur Lewis Community College              | 1986      | St Lucia        | Caribbean     |
| St Kitts/Nevis College of Further Education     | 1988      | St Kitts/Nevis  | Caribbean     |
| Grenada National College                        | 1988      | Grenada         | Caribbean     |
| Tonga Community Development and Training Centre | 1988      | Tonga           | South Pacific |

Sources: Commonwealth Secretariat (1988) Post-Secondary Colleges in the Small States of the Commonwealth.

Crocrombe, R. and Meleisca, M. (1989) "Higher Education in the Pacific Islands: spheres of influence, trends and developments"

consider policy options and develop strategies to provide tertiary education opportunities at the national level.

An overview of these developments points to a complex pattern of interrelated centralist and decentralist movements in the management and provision of tertiary education opportunities. The nature of this pattern, the interplay of forces and the national policies that have been put in place to accommodate them, have implications for future planning and development of the sector at national and regional levels. The study of these implications can contribute quite significantly to the formulation of national human resource development strategies and realistic policy options.

Finally, although often marginalised as far as international developments are concerned, small states often face the same problems in tertiary education as their bigger counterparts. As members of the broader international community they have the potential to contribute to the development of theoretical ideas that can have an influence upon the further evolution of international models and systems beyond their own boundaries.

### **Aims of the study**

Five main questions arise from the issues raised above, and these provide the focus for the study:

- What factors have provided the impetus for the expansion of the tertiary education sector in small nation states?
- How have small states dealt with the constraints of scale, isolation and dependence in the development of their tertiary sectors?
- What internal and external imperatives are shaping the current pattern of tertiary provision in small states?
- How may small states enhance tertiary education provision at the national and international levels?
- What lessons can be learnt from the small - state experience that have relevance for policy, practice and theory in the wider international arena?

The study examines these questions within the framework of a comparative analysis of tertiary education provision in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific, and in the light of a detailed case study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St Lucia. The conduct of in-depth studies of specific education institutions as well as comparative analyses of education in small states by nationals themselves have been recognised as important research strategies for the formulation of relevant policy options and the recommendation of appropriate measures (Brock, 1988b). It has been accepted that, in spite of their diversity, small states have much in common, and therefore could benefit considerably from each other's experiences. It has also been recognised that decision makers and educational planners in small states are in a particularly commanding position to identify these commonalities and to suggest these strategies, contributing in the process both to intellectual debate and to educational development within their countries.

The case study itself documents the factors and processes which led to the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, and the factors and issues which continue to shape its development. It examines the extent to which the College has fulfilled the mandate it was given and considers strategies that it has adopted, in the light of issues raised in the international literature on education in small states. A comparison of St Lucian responses with those of other institutions in the Caribbean and the South Pacific provides a broader intellectual context in which to analyse small - state tertiary education provision. The study is therefore designed to make a contribution to our understanding of contemporary trends in the planning and management of tertiary education in small-country settings.

## **Conceptual, theoretical and methodological orientations**

### ***Conceptual orientation***

The international literature on small states provides the conceptual and analytical framework around which the study is organised. Issues such as economies of scale and critical mass, self-reliance and dependence, isolation and internationalism are

addressed, in the context of the provision of tertiary education. In particular, Brock's (1984) conceptual framework of scale, isolation and dependence is adopted as a reference point for reviewing the literature on educational development in small states, for eliciting the perceptions and perspectives of those involved in the provision and management of tertiary education in small-state settings, and for analysing the form, style and extent of tertiary education opportunities provided. When this framework was first proposed in 1980, it was with the hope that small island states would find the analysis of scale, isolation and dependence in relation to educational provision one which would contribute in a practical way to the national and international debate on policy development (Brock, 1984). This trinity of concepts therefore underlies the discussion throughout the study, providing the axis around which revolve different themes regarding the provision of tertiary education and the development of the tertiary sector in small nation states.

The current role played by tertiary education in the development process as well as the contribution that it is perceived to make towards that process provide a focus for examining its provision in what is seen as the relatively constrained, remote and dependent world of the small state (Brock, 1988b). The contemporary international debate on higher education and development, and on the changing role of the State in higher education draws attention to the underlying tension between the economic and the cultural dimensions of development, and to what looks like the present triumph of the former over the latter (Watson, 1992). From a small-state perspective, Jeremia Tabai of Kiribati argues for the complementarity of the two dimensions:

*For us in Kiribati, development is not only concerned with increasing the material and social welfare of the people. While that is certainly very important, we view development primarily as a process by which we expect to be able to live a viable and dignified way of life (cited in Crossley and Mebrahtu, 1992: 84).*

His position is supported by other small-states planners (Taufe' ulungaki, 1991; Caribbean Community Secretariat, 1992), as well as international educationalists who argue that while sound economic planning and realistic investment strategies cannot be under-emphasised, a deeper analysis of the cultural dimension is essential for

those seeking to understand the role of higher education in development (Mazrui, 1992).

The development of the tertiary sector in small states is therefore inextricably bound to the development of their human resource, which is itself seen as the main ingredient in the overall process of development. Strategies aimed at improving the quality of, and access to, tertiary education in a context of limited natural and financial resources would tend to emphasise the value of interdependence, co-operation and collaboration. The strategies that small states have embraced in their efforts to develop their tertiary sectors are thus discussed against a background of increasing international recognition and encouragement of such interdependence in higher education (McIntyre, 1988b; Crocombe and Meleisea, 1989; Watson, 1991, 1992; Bown, 1992a, 1992b; Crossley and Mebrahtu, 1992; Kerr, 1992).

### *Theoretical and methodological orientation*

Differences noted earlier in the perspectives held by the international development assistance community and many developing countries regarding investment in tertiary education for example, demonstrate the need for greater attention to be given to the perceptions and judgements of national decision makers working within context. In this study efforts are made to document those directly involved in tertiary education in small states; the judgements they make; the options they choose, and the contextual circumstances influencing their decisions. The study is therefore influenced by the work of those comparative/international education researchers who are concerned with phenomenological research perspectives and efforts to portray the insider's view of educational issues that is sensitive to the influence of both historical and contemporary contexts. A second dimension of the comparative education tradition - that of examining two or more systems in a search for similarities and differences provides a focus for the study. Such work, it is argued, can assist in the solution of identified problems and in the further development of educational policy and practice (Watson, 1984; Crossley and Broadfoot, 1992).

The importance of understanding and appreciating the value of different perspectives on the process of education, and of the influence of local contexts on the form and extent of educational provision thus underpins the methodological approach adopted for this study. Accordingly, here, a predominantly qualitative approach is adopted because it offers the most appropriate methods of generating information on the issues addressed. In addition, research in comparative education is now beginning to pay more attention to the potential of qualitative and case study research methodology. Stenhouse, for example, argued in 1979 that:

*... comparative education would miss making an important contribution to the understanding of schooling if it did not participate in the current development of case study approaches to educational process and educational institutions (Stenhouse, 1979 : 9).*

This is particularly relevant to the Caribbean and the South Pacific where the general paucity of information documenting their educational systems argues for more detailed studies of individual systems and institutions to inform the further development of policy and practice. In the case study approach, Stenhouse recognised two principal research traditions - the ethnographic tradition utilising participant observation and the historical tradition emphasising the "gathering of oral evidence by interview" (1979 : 10). Both of these approaches inspire the methodology for the study, for central to the St Lucian case study is intensive fieldwork and the use of the in-depth interview as a research technique.

### **Structure of the study**

As a subject of specialist academic study, small states have only in recent decades appeared on the international agenda. The study begins in Chapter Two with a critical review of the literature on small states, followed by more specific attention to the literature and issues concerning educational development in general and that of tertiary education in particular. It is argued that this literature has been dominated by discussion of the problems imposed by size, but that small states will be better served if more attention is paid to strategies for dealing with these challenges. A case is made for more detailed studies conducted particularly by small-states researchers



themselves who could bring their distinctive perspectives to the research activity. The arguments for such an approach and the research strategies and techniques associated with it are discussed in Chapter Four.

The central concern of comparative educationalists provides the rationale for Chapter Five which examines the context within which tertiary education in St Lucia has evolved and discusses the challenges facing the future development of the sector. The case study report on the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College is presented in Chapter Six. This is organised around the following themes used by the Human Resource Development Group of the Commonwealth Secretariat for a meeting on post-secondary colleges in the small states of the Commonwealth held in St Lucia in 1988 (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988):

- reasons for the establishment of post-secondary colleges;
- processes and procedures leading to their establishment;
- the colleges' institutional mission and purpose;
- the organisation, management and financing of the post-secondary colleges;
- the colleges' range and level of courses; and
- co-operation and linkages.

These themes are discussed in the light of perceptions and insights obtained from interview respondents within St Lucia and from the general literature on tertiary education in small states. They are taken up again in the following chapter which focuses on a comparative analysis of tertiary education provision in the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

The final chapter considers the contribution that small-state studies can make, and have indeed made, to the formulation of educational policy, practice and theory. It highlights the main factors and policy decisions which influence the development of tertiary education in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific and

critically assesses their impact on the structure of the tertiary education systems in these two regions. Specific proposals designed to enhance tertiary provision in these states, and suggestions for further research on their newly emerging systems conclude this analysis of trends, strategies and policy options in tertiary education in small states.

## Clarification of concepts

### *Tertiary education*

The need to clarify the use of the term "tertiary education" as used in the context of this study is captured in the following observation made by Norman Henchey, Emeritus Professor of Education at McGill University, in the introductory section of a paper on reforms in tertiary education commissioned by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) for its Education Reform Strategy exercise:

*There are a number of terms used to describe the period of the education system following secondary education: tertiary, post-secondary, post-compulsory, higher, advanced, further education. Sometimes these are used interchangeably (for instance, post-secondary and tertiary); in some countries post-secondary is also post-compulsory; higher education sometimes is used in the traditional sense of university education, sometimes more broadly to include non-university formal institutions; further education may include higher education but also various forms of adult education programs which would not normally be included in the concept of advanced education (Henchey, 1991: 4).*

Agreement on a generic term has therefore proved very elusive. King (1962) suggests that "further education" is the best generic term, although he admits that the description comes into its own particularly with full-time vocational instruction given with the express purpose of attaining particular qualifications. This association which he makes between further education and vocational training parallels that made between tertiary education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) by bodies such as the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the World Bank. In a review of recent reports and surveys on education in the Caribbean, COL

distinguishes between tertiary and university education, envisaging a Caribbean tertiary education system made up of the national tertiary colleges of the OECS, the College of Arts, Science and Technology (CAST) in Jamaica, the Barbados Community College and the John Donaldson Institute in Trinidad and Tobago (Commonwealth of Learning, 1993). Similarly the World Bank associates tertiary/post-secondary education in the Caribbean with skills training, and makes a distinction between it and university education (World Bank, 1992a, 1993). Caribbean education authorities make no such distinction as, in naming the regional network, "The Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions" (ACTI), they implicitly recognise "tertiary" as the generic term.

In the United Kingdom there are undertones of parochialism in the concept of the tertiary college as provider of all or nearly all the full- and part-time education for everyone over the age of sixteen in a given locality (Cotterel and Healey, 1981; Janes et al, 1985; Terry, 1987). In the South Pacific, Crocombe and Crocombe (forthcoming) see a case for the term "tertiary" to describe what follows primary and secondary, considering it simpler, more logical and broader than other alternatives. They argue that restricting 'tertiary' to selected forms of higher education may carry an unnecessary connotation of elitism. Whether these selected forms of higher education refer to university education is not quite clear, but Short and Short's definition of higher education as it is generally understood in the South Pacific suggests some regional tension:

*It is education provided by a university utilising the various modes of teaching and research. It includes those programmes of study offered and monitored by a university for the purpose of issuing or awarding certificates under the seal of the University (Short and Short, 1991: 104).*

The difficulties which such differences in perspective pose for a study such as this which proposes to compare tertiary education provision across a range of states are obvious. However the tertiary concept as defined by Henchey himself for this third level of education and training provides the widest coverage, and it is this term that is applied to the range of provision available at that level in the small states under

review:

*The concept of tertiary education can be seen as applying to a level of learning (more advanced than secondary), to a type of clientele (normally older adolescents and young adults, but increasingly older adults as well), and to a certain level of institution (universities, colleges, institutes, advanced schools) that are distinct from the structure of primary and secondary education (Henchey, 1991: 5).*

For purposes of the study therefore, tertiary education encompasses all full- and part-time university programmes, teacher education, technical - vocational programmes, General Certificate of Education (GCE) 'A' level courses, as well as continuing education programmes offered by public institutions, employers, private institutions and non-governmental organisations. The term "tertiary" is thus used in its broadest sense, and is not restricted to university - level programming which in practice accounts for only a small percentage of the offerings in the national tertiary institutions in the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

### *The small state*

The small state is not a new phenomenon. However, it is the increase in the number of small independent nation states that has prompted inquiry into their particular circumstances and in their ability to sustain themselves as viable entities. In spite of the growing recognition that, in purely numerical terms, the world is a world of small states, there is no common indicator of smallness of size in the international literature. While Chapter Two examines this issue in much greater detail, it is worth noting here that population is usually the main criterion, with area and size of economy as supplementary indicators. The largest concentrations of small states are in the Caribbean and the South Pacific, and it is to these two clusters of island - developing countries that this study primarily refers. Particular attention is paid to St Lucia and the other member states of the OECS: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts-Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines; and to the non-campus countries served by the University of the South Pacific (USP): Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu,

Table 2  
Indicators of Scale: The OECS and the South Pacific Islands

| Country               | Political Status | Yr./Independence | Population | Area/sq. km | GNP/US \$ | T. E. Prov.     |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Antigua/Barbuda       | Independent      | 1981             | 79,000     | 442         | \$3,880   | TLI, E/C        |
| Dominica              | Independent      | 1978             | 82,000     | 751         | \$1,670   | TLI, E/C        |
| Grenada               | Independent      | 1974             | 94,000     | 344         | \$1,900   | TLI, E/C        |
| Montserrat            | Dependency       | -                | 13,000     | 102         | \$3,330   | E/C             |
| St Kitts/Nevis        | Independent      | 1983             | 41,000     | 262         | \$2,860   | TLI, E/C        |
| St Lucia              | Independent      | 1979             | 145,000    | 616         | \$1,810   | TLI, E/C        |
| St Vincent/Grenadines | Independent      | 1979             | 114,000    | 388         | \$1,200   | E/C             |
| Cook Islands          | Associated State | -                | 17,500*    | 234         | \$3,000   | E/C             |
| Kiribati              | Independent      | 1979             | 69,000     | 886         | \$700     | E/C, INST       |
| Marshall Islands      | Independent      | 1986             | 34,000     | 181         | \$2,000   | TLI             |
| Nauru                 | Independent      | 1968             | 8,000      | 21          | \$12,000  | E/C             |
| Niue                  | Associated State | -                | 2,000      | 259         | \$1,330   | E/C             |
| Solomon Islands       | Independent      | 1978             | 314,000    | 28,446      | \$570     | TLI, E/C        |
| Tokelau               | Dependency       | -                | 1,700      | 10          | \$600     | -               |
| Tonga                 | Independent      | 1970             | 98,000     | 699         | \$910     | TLI, E/C, INST  |
| Tuvalu                | Dependency       | -                | 10,000     | 28          | \$650     | E/C             |
| Vanuatu               | Independent      | 1980             | 152,000    | 14,763      | \$860     | E/C, INST       |
| Western Samoa         | Independent      | 1982             | 159,000    | 2,842       | \$720     | UNIV, E/C, CAMP |

Note: Population and GNP figures as at 1990 except where marked by an\*

Key : T.E. Prov - Tertiary Education Provision  
 Inst - Regional Institute  
 Univ - National University  
 E/C - University Extra-Mural Centre (Caribbean) Extension Centre (Pacific)  
 Camp - University Campus  
 TLI - National Tertiary level Institution

Compiled from several sources

Commonwealth Currents October/November, 1991.

Crocombe, R. and Meleisea, M. (1989) "Higher Education in the Pacific Islands: Spheres of influence, trends and developments".

Monnell - Davis, M. and Naidu, S. (1989) "Reaching Out: Distance Teaching and Higher Education in the South Pacific".

Brock, C. (1984) Scale, Isolation and Dependence: Educational Development in island developing and specially disadvantaged States.  
 Individual country data.

Vanuatu and Western Samoa. Table 2 shows the type of tertiary education facilities which these states currently maintain in relation to their constitutional status and their performance on the indicators of scale referred to above.

### **Limitations of the study**

Although the study examines the provision of tertiary education across a range of small states, only one detailed case study is conducted and reported here. While this case is researched in the light of generalisations already made in the international literature, the comparative analysis would have been strengthened by more of what Tripp (1985) refers to as the comprehensive and unique features of other individual cases. However, the case-study report itself is of value in its own right, as a contribution to the cumulative data base from which general principles and trends concerning tertiary education in small states can be derived.

Secondly, although every effort is made to search out the views and perspectives of persons writing from the "inside" - from small-state nationals themselves - the library-based component of the comparative analysis falls short of the first-hand involvement which Filstead (1970) recommends for the conduct of qualitative research. What the comparative analysis lacks, but what in fact strengthens the St Lucian case study is the "critical and corrective contact" (King, 1979: 510) made with those who know the location, the culture, the institutions and the practices discussed. However there is a strong case made by Glaser and Strauss (1968) for the use of documentation as a qualitative source, alone or in combination. In this regard they observe:

*There are striking similarities - sometimes obvious although often overlooked - between field work and library research. When someone stands in the library stacks, he is, metaphorically, surrounded by voices begging to be heard. Every book, every magazine article, represents at least one person who is equivalent to the anthropologist's informant or the sociologist's interviewee. In these publications, people converse, announce positions, argue with a range of eloquence, and describe events or scenes in ways entirely comparable to what is seen and heard during field work. The researcher needs only to discover the voices in the library to release them for his analytic use (Glaser and Strauss, 1968: 163).*

Despite these similarities, it is recognised that there are potential problems associated with library research - purposely misleading information yielded by writers, inaccurate renditions of events reported by observers, lack of continuity of unfolding events (Glaser and Strauss, 1968) - and it is these which limit the scope of the present study. On the other hand, it is one of documentation's main advantages - accessibility in terms of distance, time and cost - that has broadened the study's data base.

As pointed out in the previous section, the study is based for the most part on issues and developments in tertiary education in two sub-regions in the Caribbean and the South Pacific. The member states of these sub-regions are all non-campus constituents of their respective regional universities (although Western Samoa hosts one campus of USP). Some of the issues discussed here may therefore not be quite applicable to the whole range of small states. The issue of regionalism, for example, is of less relevance to small enclaved or isolated states; access may no longer be a major issue for campus countries or those with national universities; and concerns about dependence on external financial assistance may hold little significance for resource - rich small states. Indeed, it has been argued that the one thing that small states have in common is diversity (Wood, 1967). Yet within this diversity there are also common strands, which are most effectively revealed through the comparative analysis of trends in tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

### **Significance of the study**

This analysis of tertiary education in small states draws mainly on the perceptions and perspectives of small-states' planners and policy makers involved in the development of the sector. In this respect, the study helps correct an imbalance in the existing literature which to date has reflected, in a grossly disproportionate measure, the perceptions of external actors and researchers. In documenting the development of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and the strategies and policy options adopted by the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific, the study makes an original contribution to the existing literature, and an important addition to the information base on tertiary education in small states from which policy makers, both

within these states and in the wider international community, can draw in formulating policies for this emerging sector. A critical review of this literature on educational development in small states is the subject of the chapter that follows.



***C H A P T E R T W O***

***ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION  
IN SMALL NATION STATES: A CRITICAL REVIEW  
OF THE LITERATURE***

## **Introduction**

To establish a conceptual framework within which tertiary education planning in small states is to be examined, and to provide the backdrop against which the evolution and ongoing development of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College is to be viewed, this Chapter reviews the pertinent literature dealing with the impact of smallness of scale on development trends in general and educational development in particular. Throughout, a special effort is made to relate the demographic, economic and sociological aspects of smallness to the provision of education, with examples drawn largely from the countries of the South Pacific and the English - speaking Caribbean. Following a review of the debate on the dimensions of scale, the Chapter examines factors which underpin the need for the intensification of human resource development in these two regions. The problems and advantages of smallness of scale, as identified in the literature, are examined against these imperatives, focusing where possible, on realistic policy options and practical measures suggested by people with a "view from the inside". Recent trends in the provision of tertiary education in small countries are examined, shifts of emphasis and changes in priorities are considered, and the limitations of the existing literature are identified. Finally, the contribution of the present study to the growing body of literature on educational development in small states is examined.

### **Small - states' literature: an historical perspective**

The literature on small states does not have a particularly long history. While the nineteenth century may have been the age of small states, featuring prominently as they did in the policies of expansionist Europe, and while island states in particular may have provided the idyllic or sometimes desolate settings for many a work of art, interest in their particular circumstances did not seem to attract much attention until the 1960s with the pioneering works of Robinson (1960), Demas (1965) and Benedict

(1967). Even then, such interest focused on the economic problems and consequences of smallness of size. This was later augmented by the debate on the impact of size on the development process and upon development policy in small countries (Selwyn, 1975). Only recently however, have educational issues in small states become a subject of specialist academic study, beginning, it would appear, with the work of Harrigan (1972 cited in Bray, 1990), followed later by Brock (1980, 1983, 1984, 1988a, 1988b), Packer (1985), Bacchus and Brock (1987), Bray (1990, 1991b, 1991c), Bray and Packer (1993), and Atchoarena (1993). This growing body of literature on educational development in the smaller territories of the world is, to a large extent, the outcome of initiatives taken by the Commonwealth Secretariat, to address an issue of concern to a sub- group that represents a substantial proportion of the membership of the Commonwealth (Brock 1984). Indeed, in spite of a lack of consensus on the definition of smallness, Brock (1988b) identifies some 45 education systems in the Commonwealth that can be classified as small in scale. Many of the issues identified as important for this group remain, as yet, relatively underexplored, though of pressing and particular importance in the 1990s is the provision of tertiary education.

### **The issue of scale**

Every small-country study attempted so far has been prefaced by an examination of the notion of smallness. Definitions however, have proved problematic. The one thing on which writers are all agreed is the arbitrariness of any cut-off point in the threshold of the indices of scale that have so far been applied. While some have committed themselves to specific criteria and thresholds, (Demas, 1965; Benedict, 1967; Knox, 1976; Brock 1984), others are content to speak only of intensive and extensive small states (UNITAR, 1969: cited in Jacobs, 1975). There are also those who proffer no definition, on grounds that the use of a single variable is too narrow (Jacobs, 1975) - an intellectual surrender which Schiavo-Campo considers unnecessary. He suggests that:

*A country may be classified as small because its availability of a specific input is small, or because its total production is small. If...*

*one is interested in the problems arising from the raw materials base, the country's territory is probably the best single proxy measure ... If one is instead interested in problems of the availability of human resources, then clearly the criterion of country size ought to be population .... If capital is the main concern, the appropriate measure of country size ought to be some estimate of the capital stock ( Schiavo-Campo,1975: 185-186).*

Indeed there is evidence in the literature to suggest that these three criteria have been widely recognised and accepted, with the balance very much in favour of the demographic index. Demas (1965) settles for a population threshold of five million or less, thereby concurring with Jacobs (1975); their figure, however, is appreciably higher than Brock's (1988b) two million, Bray's (1991a) one and a half million or Shand's (1980) 250,000.

Notwithstanding such a broad range of population indices, Brock (1988b) suggests that in respect of human considerations, including the provision of education, it is common sense to accord the demographic variable the prime position. Taking the argument one step further, he suggests that the extent of educational provision could also be a useful criterion of smallness, since it is not uncommon to find that formal education provision may be completely lacking at certain levels as the overall scale of a country diminishes (Brock and Smawfield, 1988). Widening the use of educational criteria as an index of smallness of scale, Bacchus and Brock (1987) draw up a league table of states which range from those where some tertiary education facilities are available locally, even at university level, to those where the provision of universal primary education is still not a reality. The introduction of another parameter, while raising some very interesting issues, does not seem to add an entirely new dimension, for the absence or presence of a complete education system could be linked to the demographic or economic variable. Smith (1991) for example, attributes the incomplete educational system of the Falkland Islands to its small population and its small resource base which renders it under - resourced both in financial and human terms. On the other hand, Brunei Darussalam, ranked among the wealthiest nations of the world, can afford to have its own university, and thus be considered to have a ceiling of educational provision comparable to a large rich state, but the institution remains constrained by the small size of the population it

serves (Attwood and Bray, 1989). These two cases lend more support to Brock's (1984) earlier view that education appears to have more of an indirect than a direct relationship to scale. The difficulty which small nations experience in providing a range of educational provision comparable to that of large countries, he argued, is not directly a result of scale per se, but of a mismatch between the scale of national resources and the scale of national policies in education (1984). The constraints that small national units encounter as they attempt to cut their coat according to their cloth, as it were, have become one of the main concerns engaging the minds of educationalists, planners and aid agencies.

Small states, some writers argue, have an ecology of their own, and are not simply scaled - down versions of large countries (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1986). While conceding that there are problems and conditions specific to small states, others suggest that some of the problems they experience are similar to those of larger nations, but "writ large" (Brock and Smawfield, 1988: 228). Both sides accept that there is a cluster of factors which suggest particular strategies for the smaller states of the world (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1986). The difficulty in implementing any strategies across the board, however, stems from the very diverse circumstances within which small states operate. What Wood said of the smaller territories of the Commonwealth represents an extreme position:

*The small territories of the Commonwealth .... have only one apparent general characteristic and that is diversity. They vary in resources, population, their degree of economic and political development, and area (Wood, 1967: 28-29).*

But no one disputes the fact that the small states of the world display a wide range of economic, geographic and cultural diversity. Brock speaks of the cultural kaleidoscope within the island zones of the Caribbean and the Pacific, and of the permutations of human ecology resulting, as well as their diverse topographical and spatial features, all of which must have a considerable impact on the differential effectiveness of education provision (Brock, 1980). The differences in economic resources are no less striking. Brunei Darussalam's per capita Gross National Product of US \$14,120 for example, contrasts sharply with that of Vanuatu - US \$860 (Commonwealth Currents, 1991). Yet within this diversity one can discern important

common threads (Bray, 1991a). It is the recognition and classification of these common threads that have nourished the growing body of literature on small - country studies.

### **Justification for small - state studies**

The need for continuing work on small-country studies finds support in the realisation that "small is normal" (Brock, 1980, 1988b; Brock and Parker, 1985; Bray, 1990). More than half of the national units in the world can be classified as small whether one applies the spatial, demographic or economic criterion. It makes sense therefore, in the light of the growing sense of interdependence across national boundaries and the growing mutuality of interest among states (Watson, 1991), that the circumstances of what constitutes in political terms half of the world be examined and understood. Furthermore, by virtue of their numerical importance, and therefore of the impact of their representation in the assembly of the United Nations, small states are a growing force to be reckoned with on the international scene (Atchoarena, 1988). Harden (1985: 5) summarises the situation when she advances that "the world community has not yet thought its way through the phenomenon of very small states in the world that is emerging in the end years of the twentieth century". Except for the rare occasions when one of the world's micro-states causes "macro-political havoc at the United Nations and in major world capitals" (Harden, 1985: 4), they are, in the words of Shridath Ramphal, "ignored, imposed upon and generally discounted" (quoted in Harden, 1985). Small countries are in general marginalised (Miller, 1987b), operating "beyond the fringe" (Brock, 1988a), with their chances of making an impact seeming to depend on their discovering what cards they have to play and how best they can play them (Selwyn, 1975). Selwyn argues that:

*... far more useful than a study of dependence .... is an examination of the methods of bargaining open to small countries... A successful policy [of exploiting a series of short-term measures] depends on an awareness of what is the last card which small countries have to play - and if possible, to change the rules of the international game, as did the oil-producing countries by the establishment of OPEC, and as Malta did by opening up new options in the strategic base game (Selwyn, 1975: 14).*

But how much room for manoeuvre do the majority of small states have, given their vulnerability and their lower capacity to respond to both national and global crises (Harden, 1985)? Brookfield attributes the inertia which seems to be a feature of small states to the fact that most of these governments are risk - avoiders (quoted in Selwyn, 1975). But the point is made that for them there are fewer options and the margin for error is less generous than for larger states (Brock and Smawfield, 1988). What seems to be a constraint in some contexts however, can be an asset in others, for Brock argues elsewhere that:

*... one of the potential advantages of small state education systems is their almost laboratory scale. Fundamental experimentation is possible given the will (Brock, 1988a: 117).*

Even with the best will in the world, it requires an almost total exercise of small states' creativity, imaginativeness and problem - solving capacity to reduce the marked dependencies of their small open economies on external factors, and their great vulnerability to hemispheric and global trends (Miller, 1991a). Speaking from the inside, Miller (1987b) draws attention to the marginality of small states located as they are on the periphery of power, status and wealth in the world community of nations. The strategy which he recommends for the OECS in the Caribbean sub-region could perhaps, *mutatis mutandis*, be adopted by the majority of small states:

*The future of the OECS economic development would be decided on whether the region could make the switch from a development strategy based on the development of natural resources to a strategy that depended on human resources, knowledge and technology (Miller, 1991a: 6).*

How this switch can be implemented and how much of an impact its outcome will have in determining what is played out on the international stage is one of the main challenges facing small national units today.

### **Human resource development in small states**

It has been noted that one of the characteristic features of small states is the small size of their human resource base, and, with notably few exceptions, the even smaller size of their natural, and hence economic resource base. This makes the choice of a

developmental strategy quite problematic, and many national governments find themselves on the horns of a dilemma. Attacks have been launched against Schultz's (1971) investment in human capital theory of development, and doubts have been expressed in some quarters about the direct relationship between human resource development and economic growth. Yet it is difficult at this point in time to see what other options are open to small countries with few, if any, natural resources which can fetch a price on the world market, other than to focus on the only reproducible resource at their disposal - the human resource, small though it may be. Deterministic though he may seem, Abbott takes a practical approach to the issue of smallness of national size, when he argues that:

*... short of war and other hostile activities, there is not much that the new nations can do to increase their national boundaries. There is thus a certain finality about size. They start with it, and will probably finish with it. They accept it as a fact of life and operate within the national and geographic constraints which it imposes on them (Abbott, 1975: 107).*

To this can be added the developmental constraints imposed by their dependence on foreign capital, whether in the form of grants or loans; on foreign patterns of consumption, which largely determines the type of goods available for export; on trade policies of the metropolitan and industrially mature economies of the Western world. The realities of the constraints that smallness of size imposes, force a recognition and an acceptance that small countries cannot completely eliminate dependence on external forces - in fact, as Bray (1993) recently pointed out, it may not even be desirable to do so. It is argued however, that small states can strive to lessen the degree of dependence, to narrow the gap that currently exists between themselves and the larger more economically viable countries, but more particularly to cure themselves of their dependency syndrome by becoming more equal actors on the international stage. One of the more immediate options open to them is the further development of their one available resource - the human potential. Questions of educational development in small states therefore take on greater significance.

The relationship between human resource development and economic growth has been receiving increased attention in recent years among small country planners. Throsby



(1987), for example, affirms that human resource development has been one of the main keys to economic growth in developing countries, and he calls for greater attention to be given to such development in the small island states of the Pacific. Bourne (1988) recommends an improvement in the human resource quality of the Commonwealth Caribbean if it is to adapt to "structural changes in the world economy and substantially to improve its development performance". He notes:

*People are an asset in the development process. Their asset value is enhanced by education and training. Thus policies adopted towards improving the quality of labour are of considerable developmental significance. The development process itself generates a demand for qualitative and quantitative changes in human resources (Bourne, 1988: 49).*

Mc Intyre, a leading Caribbean economist and academic, takes up the call, reminding tertiary education planners in the region that:

*We face a burgeoning demand for highly educated and trained people to meet the immediate needs of economic growth, to respond adequately to the challenges of a rapidly changing world (McIntyre, 1990: 8).*

Reference is made earlier to Miller's (1991a) recommendation to the Ministers of Education of the OECS that the sub-region adopt a development strategy based on human resources, and Atchoarena (1988) argues the case for a correlation between educational expansion and growth in small open economies. All of those referred to above however, are articulating, with more insistence perhaps, and a greater sense of urgency and inevitability, what Demas had recommended and emphasised in respect of the Caribbean, at the very dawn of the debate on small country issues: The development strategy, he wrote:

*... must include the closest possible attention to education and training at all levels .... All I want to do here is to emphasize the important role of education and training in the Caribbean where the only resource - apart from oil and bauxite - is the people (Demas, 1965: 138)*

This is no less true today, than it was almost thirty years ago. Indeed the strategies for economic revival and growth adopted by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states in the "Port-of-Spain Consensus" of March 1, 1991 assigned the

highest priority to human resource development (Caribbean Community Secretariat, 1991).

### **Educational development in small states**

A chronological review of the literature on small states can be categorised into four phases, each progressively reflecting a more positive view of, and a more pragmatic approach to, the reality of smallness of national size. Initially, the problems of smallness took centre stage. Later, these problems came to be regarded more as constraints within and around which small countries could perhaps manoeuvre. While conceding the preponderance of these constraints, more attention then began to be given to the advantages derived from smallness, advantages encapsulated in phrases such as Schumacher's (1973) "small is beautiful" and Brock and Parker's (1985) "small is normal". More recently however, the focus has shifted to a discussion of the strategies and options which small states can consider as they plan the development thrust which will take them into the twenty-first century. The main issues addressed in each of these four phases as they relate to the provision of education are dealt with in turn in the sections which follow.

#### ***Problems and constraints***

Initially small countries were often regarded as, if not ridden with problems, at least very problematic. Benedict et al (1967) look at the "problems of smaller territories" from a political, economic, demographic and sociological point of view. Jacobs (1975) examines the administrative problems of small countries, while Abbott (1975) reflects on the paradox of the existence of small states. He invites those involved in small state issues to consider:

*Why .... in spite of the obvious pressures and trends towards larger and more efficient units is there a proliferation of small states? Is this a contradiction? Are there values which compensate for the constraints arising out of small size (Abbott, 1975: 106)*

He calls for a rethinking of people's attitudes towards these states in order to

understand the forces which make for separate existence, and as a corollary to this, to understand the dynamics of their existence. Schumacher (1975) may well have provided an answer to Abbott's questions when he extolled the beauty of smallness and challenged the economic minds of his day to learn to think in terms of an articulated structure that can cope with a multiplicity of small scale units. It is worth quoting him at this point on what may well be considered some of the advantages of smallness of scale:

*While many theoreticians - who may not be too closely in touch with real life - are still engaging in the idolatry of large size, with practical people in the actual world, there is a tremendous longing and striving to profit, if at all possible, from the convenience, humanity and manageability of smallness (Schumacher, 1973: 53).*

Notwithstanding Schumacher's optimism, it is the problem of smallness of scale and its attendant consequences that have been the focus of most of the early small country studies. Here we review those problems which are seen to plague the education systems of small nations. We examine, first of all, two problems which they share with their larger counterparts, then discuss others which are considered specific to small states.

The problems faced by small states have been discussed both in the light of those which they share with larger states, but which are "writ large", exacerbated, as it were, by smallness of scale (Brock and Smawfield, 1988: 228), and those that are specific to them. One of the problems faced by both large and small states is that of matching the output of the education system with the manpower needs of the economy. Brock and Smawfield (1988) argue that large countries have large diversified economies and it is not desirable to target one or two particular occupations on which to base the school curriculum. A broad-based curriculum is therefore presented as the preferable strategy to adopt. The small state, on the other hand, has a small, open, concentrated economy, heavily reliant on external market forces. The need to service the two sectors of its economy also requires the adoption of a broad-based curriculum. However, since there is a limit to the extent to which either sector can absorb the output of such a curriculum, the issue of providing jobs for all school leavers becomes more problematic in the context of the small national

unit. Illustrating this point in respect of Jamaica, Miller has this to say:

*Given the limited capability of the Jamaican economy, if educational opportunity is related solely to job opportunities provided by the local economy, then of necessity, the vast majority of Jamaicans would be confined to a life of unemployment and under-employment. The question arises as to whether or not the limited capabilities of the Jamaican economy should set the limits for the provision of educational opportunity (Miller, 1990: 114).*

This question is one which most small country governments have to grapple with. Mc Master, for example, reports that the Solomon Islands Government faces a range of complex policy problems with regard to the further development of the education sector, which as recently as 1987 could not financially support universal primary education. The demand for wage employment by school graduates, he predicts, is "likely to be well beyond the employment creation capacity of the economy over the next decade" (Mc Master, 1987: 117). The popular view, Miller (1990) reports, is that individuals should be given the best education possible and allowed to solve their economic difficulties in the best way they can, wherever they find economic opportunities.

In a large country, this could simply mean changing one's job, re-locating to another town or city or in the case of some developed countries, even exporting their people to various parts of the developing world. In a small country, the solution is more often migration. Bourne (1988) quotes several recent studies which report substantial 'white collar' emigration from the Caribbean, where "white collar" is defined to include professional, technical, managerial and clerical workers; all from the formal sector. Miller et al (1991) put the net loss of the OECS countries through migration in the 1980s in the order of 20%. Blandy and Richardson (1987) estimate that nearly a quarter of all Tongans are overseas, adding that there is significant migratory movement of the peoples of the Pacific. While some governments deplore this "visa mentality" (Miller, 1990) of their nationals, others like those in Monsterrat and Tonga which anticipate and encourage emigration because of its economic returns via remittances, have to provide the type and level of education which could be marketable in the destination countries (Bray, 1991a). Because of the high emigration rate of most small states, brought about by both economic and demographic

pressures, small-country education 'is required, by its clientele, to respond to economic possibilities and opportunities beyond those available through the local economies" (Miller, 1991a: 6). Education for export therefore, is one of the options which governments are being asked to consider. Johnstone, writing on policy dilemmas facing education in the Pacific, identifies education for export as one of the four major purposes for education in Pacific countries. He contends:

*... the fourth and final purpose for providing education in Pacific countries and one which must be more explicitly acknowledged by policy makers in Pacific nations, is that people at various levels of educational achievement will wish to migrate to another country to seek employment (Johnstone, 1987: 92-93).*

Moreover, given small countries' position on the periphery of the international arena, the export of intellectual and cultural products is important to force greater respect and recognition from the rest of the world (Atchoarena, 1991a). The problems that this poses for the quality, level and quantity of education which small country governments must provide are obvious. One may scoff at:

*... the endemic belief in "education for migration" generated during colonial times and deeply rooted in the derived dimension of small-island cultures, especially in the Caribbean (Brock, 1988b: 306),*

but to ignore this feature of small states is folly (Miller, 1991a).

Another problem common to both large and small states, according to Brock and Smawfield (1988), is that of professional promotion. They argue that the high incidence of specialised training prevalent in large countries can sometimes make it difficult for people to move readily into different fields or spheres of operation. In a small country setting however, the problem manifests itself differently. The problem of blocked promotion is not so much one of heavy specialisation; in fact, small countries are often unable to provide enough work to justify the full-time employment of specialists (Bray, 1992). It is due perhaps more to the small number of senior posts available in a small system, a situation which accounts in large part for the outflow of personnel from education to other departments in the public sector, to the private sector, and ultimately to destinations abroad. Bray (1991a) reports that Ministries of Education have adopted a strategy of multi-functionalism to deal with

the problem of blocked promotion, since generalists seem to have greater flexibility and stronger promotion prospects. It is argued, however, that this strategy has been born of necessity, and not from deliberate planning, and that, in the long run, this "extensive versatility" requiring professionals to opt for breadth rather than depth (Bray, 1992: 31) may still result in a loss of qualified professionals from the education sector. There are however, other educational problems which have been identified as being specific to small states. These are discussed from the demographic, sociological and economic points of view.

### *Demographic constraints*

Smallness of national population below a certain point, Brock and Smawfield (1988) contend, will prevent the provision and operation of a complete education system. Certain sectors could be entirely foregone, and some areas of specialisation could be completely lacking. Smith (1991) shows the extent to which the small population size of the Falkland Islands (2,000) affects the education system, which now provides a more or less complete primary sector, but with secondary provision restricted to the age range 11-16 and a complete absence of indigenous tertiary institutions. Tuvalu, (population approximately 10,000) provides universal primary education but only partial secondary education, since it is more cost-effective to send selected students to New Zealand, Australia and Fiji where good quality secondary education can be obtained at comparatively little cost (Johnstone, 1987). However, this assumption is now being challenged as Monsterrat, with approximately 13,000 inhabitants, provides not only universal primary and secondary schooling, but also hosts a technical college and an extra mural centre of the University of the West Indies (UWI) which offers some first year degree courses (Bray and Fergus, 1986), while Tonga maintains an Extension Centre of USP and the privately - owned Atenisi University.

Small population size, Brock (1984) argues, is aggravated by isolation. In his seminal work Scale, Isolation and Dependence: Educational Development in Island Developing and Specially Disadvantaged States, he examines the effect of spatial, political and cultural isolation on the provision of educational services and concludes,

somewhat ambiguously that:

*Isolation is most potent not in physical terms but in its contribution to valued notions of individual and national identity which form part of the dependency legacy of colonialism, and its model of schooling in particular (Brock, 1984:42)*

Ambiguously, it is argued, because in spite of the perceived effects of remoteness in stunting the provision or expansion of formal educational facilities in small countries, it seems that it is this very system of formal education that carries within itself the seed of isolation. For Brock (1984: 42) goes on to argue that "the fact that an education system with an approved structure and content is part of the regulatory apparatus of the modern state, illustrates the isolationist potential of formal education". This perhaps only illustrates, once again, the dilemma faced by small-country policy-makers. At what price, education?

Isolation, however, whether internal or in terms of distance from other countries, does influence the type of educational provision available locally. There can be great disparity in the degree of accessibility to educational facilities in widely-dispersed multi-island nations or small countries with low population density. On the other hand, isolation from other countries may well serve as the impetus for providing a more complete education system, other factors being favourable. Distance education has been proposed as one solution to overcome the constraint of isolation, though it creates problems of its own:

*Distance education looks like one way of overcoming barriers of isolation ..... in small states, but cannot itself escape from just these constraints. (Perraton, 1987: 81).*

In this regard, Guthrie (1990,1991) recommends cautious optimism in embracing distance education since, in general, large enrolments are required to provide financially viable distance programmes, and since their cost advantage can be minimised if the investment in media and materials is excessive relative to the number of students in the system. With small populations and generally limited resource bases, small countries would need to enter into collaborative initiatives to benefit from the economies of scale that distance education can provide. Monsell-Davis and Naidu (1989) for example, see such cooperation becoming a central feature of distance

education in the South Pacific, while COL (1991a) signals the commencement of OECS television broadcasting as having the potential for making a significant impact on the promotion of distance education in the Caribbean sub-region.

### *Sociological constraints*

In some strange way, what small societies have been envied for - the humanity of their social relationships - seems, in the eyes of some analysts, to be their special weakness, or the greatest barrier to "sound", "efficient" management. Wood conjures up sinister goings-on beneath the surface as people juggle allegiances, compromising both their personal loyalties and their professional integrity:

*Perhaps the greatest disadvantage of being small lies in the field of human relations. Here the process of forming a universalistic society comes up against peculiar snags in small territories with only a limited pool of manpower, particularly educated manpower. Here the conflict of small private loyalties with wider impersonal allegiances can touch murky depths among those who are, so to speak, constantly penned together for work and play (Wood, 1967: 33).*

It is argued here that too much is made of this problem and its implied consequences of patronage and nepotism. Brock, for example, describes "the educational response of small countries to an acutely dual economy" as taking the form of "a combination of early selection and legitimised nepotism" (Emphasis added) (Brock 1988b: 306) and places the issue of patronage and nepotism as "first on a list of distinctive socio-economic characteristics.... of many small Commonwealth States" (Brock and Smawfield, 1988: 228). Benedict too, identifies one of the outstanding characteristics of smallness as:

*... the coincidence or overlapping of roles so that individuals are tied to each other in many ways. This makes impartiality or impersonal role -relationships very difficult to maintain (Benedict, 1967: 7).*

Others take a more middle-of-the-road approach, preferring only to commit themselves to observing that "decision-making in small countries is more personalised than in larger countries" (Attwood and Bray, 1989: 71), and that "small states have highly personalised societies in which people know each other in a multitude of settings, and in which relationships are longlasting" (Bray, 1991b: 21). Bray refers



to what has been dubbed "managed intimacy" as the strategy adopted by small societies to avoid hostility or perpetual conflict. He quotes Lowenthal's somewhat idyllic view of small country societies:

*To enable the social mechanism to function without undue stress [small-state inhabitants] minimise or mitigate overt conflict. They become expert at muting hostility, deferring their own views, containing disagreement, and avoiding dispute in the interests of stability and compromise (Bray, 1991b: 21).*

The larger countries of the world might learn a lesson or two from small states in this respect. However, all is not gold that glitters, and life in small countries has its fair share of tensions.

It is difficult to see the direct relationship between educational development in small states and the real or perceived problems associated with the personalised nature of their societies. Policy decisions affecting education are not generally taken informally, as many governments have in place high-level structures for planning and decision-making (Bray, 1991b). There may be problems involved in the management of the system, in terms of placement, promotion and training of personnel, but to imply that the system is riddled with incidences of patronage and "legitimised nepotism" is to overstate the situation unduly. Indeed many would argue that close circles of people do play a disproportionate role in larger states as well, with whole sections of society effectively shut out of positions and opportunities by class, professional networks and other mechanisms.

### *Economic constraints*

Reference is made earlier to the dual nature of the economy of small states; their small internal markets; their reliance on one or two products for export, and their dependence on foreign trade and aid. All of these add up to produce constraints like diseconomies of scale resulting in high unit costs, difficulties in raising finance and therefore in providing for basic services, and an agonisingly slow pace in the implementation of development plans due to the excessive reliance on foreign aid. All these constraints have implications for the quantity and quality of education that

small states can provide.

Ranis and Fei (quoted in Bacchus, 1980: 251), writing on the economic structure of less developed countries, note that it is characterised by the co-existence of two economic sectors, a "relatively large and overwhelmingly stagnant subsistence agricultural sector" - the traditional sector - and a "relatively small .... commercial industrial sector" - the modern sector. Lewis refers to these two sectors as the "high wage" and the "low wage" sectors, thereby implying a dual wage structure and income differentials (cited in Bacchus, 1980: 252). Speaking of the implications of this situation for the education system in Guyana, Bacchus has this to say:

*The persistence of the income differentials between the two sectors of the economy has had a very important influence in raising the level of educational aspiration of the population. This becomes even more marked as access to these high-paying and high-status jobs in the modern sector was increasingly thrown open to all, and was to a large extent dependent on the candidate's formal education. It was also a major reason for the increasing level of education among the unemployed, who tried to acquire as much education as possible in the hope of obtaining a job in the very rewarding but slowly expanding modern sector (Bacchus, 1980: 254-255).*

The popular pressure of such a demand for formal education has forced many developing country governments to concentrate on meeting the needs of the modern sector, incurring the criticism of those from outside who call for greater relevance in educational provision in developing countries, where relevance education is generally taken to mean relating the design of basic schooling to the life and work of the community (Sinclair and Lillis, 1980). But how to deal with the need to prepare people for the traditional sector with the increasingly insistent demand for the diffuse skills needed to operate effectively in the international sector, has long challenged educational planners and policy makers (see e.g. Foster, 1966). It is perhaps the need to survive, if not win, in the international game, to give themselves that room to manoeuvre (Selwyn, 1975), which explains the small-states' perspective upon this common dilemma, and the paradox that Thompson has noted:

*The paradoxical situation prevails in much of the Third World that while existing [educational] provision is under attack as a colonial inheritance dominated by metropolitan models, it is precisely the most internationally conventional aspects of educational systems which are*

*being vastly expanded and to which most of the scarce resources allocated to education are being devoted (Thompson, 1977: 155).*

Small countries are continually being advised to develop systems of education tailored to their own needs. But the reality of the situation is that theirs is a dual economy, and as such both sectors must be taken into account in educational planning and reform. For both societal and educational development to be sustained, Miller advises, they must take account of, and relate positively to, political, economic, and demographic imperatives which are both the context and the substance of educational planning:

*Education, properly focused and planned can allow societies to shape their future in desired directions in spite of prevailing conditions. However, these prevailing conditions cannot be ignored or wished away. They must be confronted and dealt with constructively and creatively (Miller, 1991a).*

Miller was speaking of the Caribbean, but his observation holds equally good for other small countries.

The small size of the population of small countries makes it difficult for them to achieve economies of scale, particularly as one moves towards the top of the educational pyramid. This results in high unit costs, both in the provision of physical resources and in maintaining a stock of high-level manpower ( Atchoarena, 1988; Brock 1988b; Brock and Smawfield, 1988; Bray and Hui, 1989; Bray, 1990). This clearly affects the type and level of education that a small country can afford, as already some allocate between 15% and 24% of their national budgets to education (Atchoarena, 1988). Benedict observes that:

*... often a painful and politically delicate decision has to be made as to whether to stress universal primary education or technical and higher education for a few (Benedict, 1967: 3).*

Faced with such a decision many small countries have opted to send their citizens abroad for higher education. The problems inherent in such a strategy - outflow of human resources, inappropriate training, cultural alienation - are well documented both in the academic and general literature. The problem of cultural alienation, for

example, has been the theme in works by such nationals as Wendt (1973), and Walcott (1992) among others. As for the issue of inappropriate training in foreign institutions, it is argued that this should be considered less of a criticism of the decisions taken by small countries, and more of an indictment of the parochialism of some host country institutions who seem remarkably resistant to the idea of incorporating an international dimension more integrally in the overall range of academic programmes which they offer, even in their departments of education. The danger of neglecting more global perspectives in the field of education, particularly in an era when nations are forced to become aware of their mutual interdependence has been pointed out by educators like Watson (1991) and Crossley and Broadfoot (1992). The tendency remains nevertheless, for such interdependence to be considered as existing among equals, and there is still a reluctance on the part of large countries to team up with small states. It is argued too, that the problems associated with overseas training of small country nationals can be greatly minimised if those involved in teaching them would, as Little (1988) suggests, keep abreast of their literature, recognise their intrinsic merit and help their students evaluate this literature in relation to that from elsewhere. In so doing they can help those preparing for the return home to value their own country's experience and so further the development of endogenous and national models of education.

The reliance of small countries on external aid has been established as one of the characteristics of their small open economies. De Vries (1975) argues that small countries receive more development assistance per capita than large countries, and suggests strong economic reasons why they require more of it. Although the validity of some of his arguments has been questioned (Schiavo -Campo, 1975), there is little doubt that small states have received and benefited from the use of external assistance in a number of important ways. Through capital grants and loans, they have been able to improve and increase access to education and training opportunities, to construct and refurbish schools and equip them with educational technology and equipment (Bacchus and Brock, 1987). But there is no denying that this dependence on external aid has taken its toll on development policy and strategy in small states, not least in the human resources and education sector. Illustrating this in respect of

the South Pacific, Jones notes:

*South Pacific development strategy over the past two decades has been shaped decisively by the vicissitudes of decolonisation and foreign aid. Neither the smallness nor the isolation of the states alone accounts for the unique developmental character of the region. No other area in the world ..... appears so structurally dependent on foreign aid (Jones, 1989: 199).*

This dependence on aid has a powerful influence on the priorities which governments have to accord to their development plans, (Bacchus, 1989) and it is in this regard that Thompson (1977) calls for a critical examination not so much of the quantity as the quality of the aid that is received. He observes that while donor countries assert that decisions concerning development strategies must be made by recipient countries, they have always tended to seek to retain control of the allocation and use of the aid they provide. The international development assistance community is therefore in a position to influence, if not to determine, the points of growth and contraction of the educational system, for example. Studies commissioned by donor and lending agencies are often given more credence than the needs articulated by recipient countries themselves. To illustrate this point, it suffices perhaps to examine one of the issues which has been influencing international development assistance in education in the developing world during the past decade.

Reference is made earlier and in later sections of this Chapter to calls made by Throsby (1987), Bourne (1988), Mc Intyre (1990), Miller (1991a) among others, for promoting the expansion of locally provided tertiary education as a means of advancing the economic growth of the nations in the South Pacific and the Caribbean. However, some authors argue that a consensus has emerged among economists from the developed world suggesting that priority in public investment in education should be given to primary, at the expense of tertiary, education (Curtin, 1991). Governments of developing countries, and by extension of small countries, were being advised to re-allocate their financial resources from the tertiary to the primary sector on the grounds that the social rates of return are higher in the latter. Indeed Blaug (cited in Curtin, 1991) sees the over expansion of tertiary education as the scourge of the Third World and regards any policy that tends to decrease enrolments

at the higher level as a step in the right direction.

The recent debate in the literature relating to the financing of higher education in Papua New Guinea is a case in point. Gannicott's (1987) work on the evaluation of human capital in Papua New Guinea conducted under the aegis of the Australian National Centre for Development Studies, is especially critical of public investment in higher education, claiming that the social return from investment in that sector is minimal. The indigenous response to his recommendations, which include the rationalisation of existing tertiary institutions, and the withdrawal of all public funding to very small tertiary institutions which have no chance of becoming viable in the foreseeable future, has been less than enthusiastic (Crossley, 1989). In a similar vein, McGavin (1988, 1989), though calculating a higher social rate of return than Gannicott does, defends the latter's general policy conclusions arguing that they imply not a contraction of tertiary education but an alteration of the basis of funding between the different levels of education. Curtin (1991), on the other hand, feels that the World Bank's use of Gannicott's figures as a base for its policy recommendations to the Papua New Guinea government is unjustified. Curtin gives greater weight to contextual factors and the specific needs of small states and argues instead that the greatest gains from public investment in education accrue when individuals are enabled to continue their schooling to the limit of their abilities (Curtin, 1991). His own recommendation is that the World Bank and other donor agencies should finance tertiary education in developing countries and so help them out of the "low-level equilibrium trap" into which many have fallen precisely because of their neglect of post-primary education (1991: 128). Indeed the World Bank's recent policy paper on higher education, (World Bank, 1993b), which recognises the contribution of higher education to national economic development vindicates Curtin's argument.

It is also argued here that Psacharopoulos (1980), who has conducted several cost benefit analyses of education for the World Bank may have misread the minds of policy-makers in small developing countries when he states that the most common prescription for economic development is injections of basic, and especially, vocational education, for current evidence points to the contrary. Indeed, in spite of

donor declarations at the World Conference On Education For All held at Jomtien in 1990, that they favour aid to basic education, the World Bank reports that only 5% of donor aid has gone to primary education (Hallak, 1990; King, 1991). There is truth in Psacharopoulos' (1982) argument that it is difficult to rationalise expenditure on a university when a high proportion of the country's population is illiterate. Economic analyses alone, however, do not adequately deal with the cultural and political dimensions of educational development that so often dominate the aspirations and perceptions of those involved within the country (Crossley, 1990). Indeed McGavin and Ross (1988) admit that close local knowledge is needed to support the decisions that are involved in the actual implementation of the policies that he and Gannicott recommend; closer and local investigation of the needs articulated and expressed by the country on whose behalf these policies are being made.

Although educational development in small countries continue to be thwarted by donor interests (Jones, 1989), King (1991) reports a wind of change in current aid practice. In what he refers to as a new aid paradigm, donors are now beginning to require that aid projects be sustainable, equitable, locally-owned and executed, and supportive of good policies in the education sector as a whole. King quotes the World Bank as putting the case for local ownership of development assistance by calling for:

*... close national involvement in analytical work related to ... project preparation ..... Indeed as project preparation generally includes elaboration of policy options to address sensitive sector issues, it is very difficult to create ownership if this work is done predominantly by donors or external consultants (Frederiksen, 1990: 20, cited in King, 1991).*

Already, small tertiary level institutions in the Caribbean have become beneficiaries of this new emphasis on local institutional capacity building, with development assistance from the British Development Division currently being used to help support technical teacher training programmes in two Centres of Specialisation in the OECS (Peters, forthcoming). There seems to be little doubt that donors will still need to be convinced that local policies are acceptable before they agree to fund projects, but this new aid approach at least signals an aspiration for small countries to assert greater

control and direction of their own educational analysis (King, 1991).

This discussion of the issues relating to small countries' dependence on aid and development assistance for the provision of a service which every government feels obligated to offer its nationals, concludes this review of the problems and constraints which are seen to be associated with smallness of national size. Before examining the development of tertiary education in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific in detail, the next section will examine some of the advantages which smallness of size is seen to offer.

### *Advantages of smallness*

Reference is made earlier in this Chapter to the question posed by Abbott (1975), as to whether there are benefits which compensate for the constraints arising out of small size. Phrased differently, are there any advantages in being small? There is some ambivalence about this in the general literature, as positions change and attitudes shift. In his early work, Brock (1984: 3) for example, argues that Schumacher's (1973) "small is beautiful" was perhaps little more than "an escapist platitude", since there was in general a disadvantage attached to being a small unit in a world that was organised politically and economically to benefit the large. However, he later criticises what he feels is the tendency to view small developing countries in terms of the disadvantages they encounter as a result of smallness (Brock and Parker, 1985), and emphasises the need to recognise the advantages to be gained from smallness of size (Brock and Smawfield, 1988). From a public administration point of view, Jacobs (1975) sees any advantages as being rather "marginal", but Bray (1991b) believes that the flexibility that organisations need to adopt to fit the changing patterns of human resource availability may be a strength rather than a weakness. Jules (undated) questions the "small is beautiful" stereotype in a situation where one suffers from diseconomies of scale in production, infrastructure, marketing, communication, and where one's livelihood has to be earned in an increasingly competitive international market structurally biased to favour "the big". On the other hand, smallness of size can be turned to advantage as opportunities are afforded for close



interaction between policy makers and implementers, and consequently for the democratisation of policy formation and implementation (Jules, undated).

Atchoarena finds compelling reasons for a reconsideration of the issue of scale in his assessment of the performance of the economies of some of the islands in the Caribbean, and concludes that the belief that smallness is a handicap may eventually be proven wrong. From an economic perspective, he observes:

*Smallness of size provides many benefits. The small size of the territory and of its population limits the volume of needs to be addressed by development strategies. For the countries providing aid, external markets and emigration outlets, the cost of such policies is rather limited, if not marginal .... In very small islands low-cost measures, in absolute terms can easily have a tremendous impact on the entire economy and population (Atchoarena, 1991a: 12).*

The move in some large countries towards the delegation of control and the management of resources to small largely self-regulating units (the Local Management of Schools policy in the United Kingdom, for example) has led their educational practitioners to appreciate the convenience, humanity and manageability of smallness to which Schumacher (1973) had referred. In this regard, White (1992) suggests that perhaps the tasks of operating education systems in small countries will now be seen as less problematic as the perceptions of people in large countries regarding the attractions of small size change. Small is practical (Bray, 1991b) and so the ease with which services can be managed and administered, the ease with which one can gain access to facilities and personnel, and the flexibility and adaptability with which the system can respond to the needs of the community it serves have been identified as some of the attractions and advantages that smallness offers. Thus Brock and Parker argue that:

*...communities comprising small island nations like St Lucia and Grenada in the Caribbean and Tonga and Kiribati in the Pacific have a visibility in their education due to the close proximity of officials, leaders and institutions .... Such visibility may be associated with notions of relevance and adaptability which are able to inform networks of communication and decision - making. In short, they are open to inspection and influence by their surrounding community to a much greater extent than in larger countries (Brock and Parker, 1985: 54).*

The same advantages of flexibility, visibility and adaptability can be enjoyed in government and the labour market (Atchoarena, 1991a). It would seem then that in this era where economic imperatives are forcing the creation of mergers and megablocks, the wheel has come full circle: small is fashionable and highly to be prized.

### **The development of tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific**

The foregoing has identified and reviewed the main socio-economic and educational issues raised in the literature on small-country studies. In the specific field of education many writers seem to have followed the lead taken by the Commonwealth Secretariat whose 1980 survey analysed the "significance of scale, isolation and dependence upon the development of education systems" of "Island Developing and Other Specially Disadvantaged States". Brock's monograph (1984) commissioned by the Secretariat and intended to contribute "in a practical way to the national and international debate on policy development in relatively small countries" (1984: v) set the stage for most of the work subsequently undertaken by the Secretariat's Human Resource Development Group. One of the areas that has been receiving particular attention in recent years, and which has particular relevance to the present study, concerns the development and expansion of tertiary education (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988; Crocombe and Meleisea (Eds), 1988; Crossley (Ed.) 1989; Bray, 1990; Jones et al, 1991).

Until very recently, the literature on tertiary education in the Caribbean focused almost entirely on the establishment and development of the UWI. Braithwaite (1958) for example, reviews early attempts and failures to establish higher education in the West Indies from the early eighteenth century leading to the setting up of the regional University College of the West Indies in 1948. Payne (1980) discusses the effects which the ebb and flow of political integration in the region have had on the development and functioning of the university since its inception. Bird (1984) discusses the challenges faced by the regional University during the 1980s, while

Sherlock and Nettleford (1990) document the founding and the growth of the institution. In the South Pacific, Meek (1982) examines the function, structure and character of the then newly established University of Papua New Guinea in a newly independent nation, testing how well theories of adaptation, conflict and change fit the reality of a new university in a Melanesian environment. Crocombe, Meleisea and others (1988) review the achievements and problems of Pacific universities and look towards their prospects for the future, while Jones, Meek and Weeks (1991) critique recent explorations in higher education in the region.

The limitations of the regional universities serving these two island clusters however are clearly evident in the literature. Regionalism, which was advanced as a strategy for overcoming some of the constraints imposed by smallness, is coming under increasing pressure as non-campus countries demand that these institutions respond more directly to their individual needs (Brock, 1988b). The reasons for the tension are complex, and not always clear. While some from the non-campus countries criticise campus territories for a lack of real commitment in practice to the regional ideal (Wendt, 1989), some administrators attribute the universities' inability to respond to their needs in part to a lack of certain infrastructural arrangements in the countries themselves. Hunte (1987), speaking of the UWI observes:

*For some time now it has been evident that the ability of the University to respond more directly to the needs of individual countries is to some extent dependent on the existence of certain infrastructural arrangements in the countries themselves.*

The regional response to the provision of tertiary education in the Caribbean and South Pacific was built on the assumption that separate institutions for each of the constituent countries would not be economically viable. On a political level however, Abbott (1975) questions the notion of viability as justification for the existence of small states. He argues that not only is viability an ambiguous and in many ways an irrational concept, but that small states accord independence a higher priority than viability. Attempts to achieve regional interdependence which go against the principle of national independence are therefore likely to fail (Abbott, 1975). The near demise of the UWI as a regional institution following the collapse of the West Indies Federation in 1962 (Payne, 1980), supports Abbott's view. If Abbott is right in

affirming that not only can small states hold their own, but that they can play a responsible part in the international community, then there is a sound foundation for the new kind of regionalism which is emerging in the development of tertiary education in the small countries of the South Pacific and the Caribbean. The new direction is calling for a system of mutually - supporting tertiary level institutions (Mc Intyre, 1988b); a new collaborative effort which requires an increase not only in the number but also in the quality of what Hunte (1987) refers to as "infrastructural arrangements" in each of the territories themselves.

Indeed there has been a marked increase in the domestic provision of tertiary education facilities in small states in recent times. It is suggested that an underlying reason for the emergence of these institutions is a determination to increase national autonomy in education and training following the attainment of political independence (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988). But it is argued here that a stronger imperative is the call by planners for an improvement in the quality of the local human resource to initiate and sustain economic growth. Throsby (1987) in the Pacific, and Bourne (1988) and Mc Intyre (1990) in the Caribbean see the tertiary level institution as being in the forefront of human resource development in their respective regions. Tertiary level education and training, Bourne argues, provides the capacity for analysis, problem formulation and management at both general and specific levels, as well as the cadres of para-professionals who perform important tasks at the level of project implementation, direct production and capital maintenance. He calls therefore for "special concentrated attention on domestic institutions" to provide the type of personnel who would be equipped to undertake the tasks of development in the twenty-first century (Bourne 1988: 52). Coupled with this urgent need, is the growing uncertainty of the future of the regional universities, and growing disillusionment with the uneven distribution of costs and benefits in regional initiatives (Payne, 1980; Bird, 1984; Crocombe and Meleisea (Eds), 1988; Bray, 1990).

While the current literature on higher education in larger developed countries seems to be concerned with issues of management and structure (Lockwood and Davis, 1985; Kogan, 1989; Mahony, 1990; University of Surrey, 1991), other critical issues

and challenges facing the development of tertiary education dominate the minds of educational planners and practitioners in small nations (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988; Crocombe and Meleisea, (Eds) 1988; Crocombe and Meleisea, 1989; Attwood and Bray, 1989; Packer, 1989; Bray, 1990; Jones et al, 1991). The most recent shift in the literature on small states is now very much in evidence. More of the studies are now being conducted and reported by those able to provide an internal perspective, so often necessary for a realistic and full appreciation of the forces at play. In addition, there is more of a pragmatic approach to the issue of size, less preoccupation with the problems and constraints of smallness, and more attention to strategies and initiatives for dealing with the challenges which confront small states.

Packer, in his 1989 paper on post-secondary education in the small states of the Commonwealth, covers the gamut of issues currently under examination. These include the re-assessment of the role of regional universities, the diversification of international and regional linkages, the role and contribution of distance education and international aid, and not least the consolidation of the institutions themselves. Maraj (1989) warns that the regional university should not be expected to meet all the needs of its constituent members and therefore invites planners in the Caribbean to think more clearly "not about a unified approach to higher education, but an integrated system of higher education". Similarly Crocombe and Meleisea (1988) call for a new form of regionalism, one based on national institutions voluntarily sharing facilities and responsibilities and in so doing avoid the recriminations which surface in regional initiatives where so often "the benefits accrue where the concrete is poured". (Crocombe and Crocombe, forthcoming). This increasingly complex network of interrelationships between national institutions and regional and metropolitan institutions is regarded as an inevitable consequence of the changing demography, value systems and political realities of small states. The potential of distance education in this regard has been assessed by Monsell-Davis and Naidu (1989) for the South Pacific and Renwick et al (1992) for the Caribbean.

These, then, are some of the issues in tertiary education which have dominated the literature during the past decade. The message that comes through is well articulated

by Maraj in his advice to the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, in St Lucia:

*Small nations must take the best from wherever the best is to be found in ideas, in approaches and in resources, and they must combine these into their own distinctive blend (1989).*

This advice is in many ways similar to the view expressed by Harrigan (1972) when he called for a re-structuring and a redesigning of institutions of higher education so that small countries could "evolve a distinctive identity by a recognition of their limitations" (quoted in Bray, 1990: 266).

### **Limitations of the existing literature**

The literature on small states and development is relatively young, and perhaps because of this it tended to focus on problems, real or perceived, imposed by smallness of scale. While in no way attempting to make light of these obvious problems and constraints, it is argued here that small countries would be better served if more attention were paid to strategies for dealing with these challenges. The more recent literature on the development of higher education in small states has, fortunately, begun to address this. However, issues associated with the planning and management of educational institutions have barely been discussed (Bray 1991a, 1991b). The field of education in small countries could also have benefited, it is suggested, from more in-depth and comparative case studies of individual institutions and systems that are well grounded in context. Crocombe and Meleisea's (1988) study of Pacific universities and national colleges, is a useful example of such studies. The need for this type of research has not gone unrecorded elsewhere, and Brock concludes one of his papers with the observation that:

*...whatever the eventual answers to the problems of educational provision in small states might be, they will more likely be found if there is much more research both into particular and general issues in this field. This means more in-depth case-studies of individual systems as well as more comparative analyses across the numerous range of small states (Brock, 1988b: 312).*

The value of such comparative studies has been emphasised by Crossley and Broadfoot (1992) and the call for case studies which would elicit the distinctive

parameters influencing the actual working of individual education systems and institutions has been made by Broadfoot (1977) and Crossley and Vulliamy (1984). There is need too, one might add, not only for more collaborative studies by metropolitan and indigenous scholars of the type undertaken by Bray and Fergus (1986) and Crocombe and Meleisea (1988), but more particularly for more comparative and collaborative work by small country educationalists themselves who, from their distinctive perspective, are clearly in a strong position to contribute to both the intellectual debate and the process of educational development within their countries without falling prey to the dangers of international, [methodological and theoretical] transfer (Crossley, 1990). The improved knowledge and understanding which such work could generate could lead to greater insights, not only into the local situation, but into more general educational issues; a critical mass of indigenous researchers from small countries would also be generated, while the recognition of such national models would in turn provide the conditions necessary for "the collective creation of international knowledge and international models of education" (Little, 1988: 20).

Finally, much of the information available on education in small states in the international literature has been culled from quantitative surveys conducted by external agencies like the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO, from country profiles prepared by nationals at the request of external bodies, and from perspectives gained by external consultants on short-term visits. There is therefore a need for more of what Crossley and Vulliamy (1984) call a methodological broadening of scope, particularly of the qualitative type in which detailed, multi-faceted and long-term field studies of individual cases can provide a richer understanding of the processes involved and the various perceptions held. Moreover, the descriptive aspect of qualitative studies can make them much more user-friendly - to borrow an expression from the language of information technology - for the direct use and assistance of a wider range of practitioners and policy makers in small developing countries.

## Perspective of the study

In the light of the above review of issues which have dominated the literature on development policy in small nations, and especially on educational development, it is argued that these countries will be better served if more attention is focused on positive and realistic strategies, measures and options that can be considered by policy-makers. Human resource development has been seen as a key to economic growth in countries with small natural resource bases, and some analysts see the role of tertiary education in such development as paramount. The in-depth case study of one tertiary level institution in the small Caribbean state of St Lucia is seen as a significant, if small, contribution to an understanding of the mechanisms at work in the planning, management and administration of higher level education in a small country setting. An effort is made to elicit the multiple perspectives of those who have been and those who continue to be engaged in the process of the development of this institution, perspectives from which we can gain an appreciation of the "context of culture and circumstance" (King, 1973: 39) which has shaped its development. This approach places the study in the methodological tradition of comparative education which emphasises research that is sensitive to historical and contemporary cultural contexts (Crossley and Broadfoot, 1992). Kandel, an early pioneer in the field of comparative education, signalled one of the directions that this approach could follow when he wrote:

*The comparative study of education must be founded on an analysis of the social and political ideas which the school reflects, for the school epitomises these for transmission and for progress. In order to understand, appreciate and evaluate the real meaning of the educational system of a nation, it is essential to know something of its history and traditions, of the forces and attitudes governing its social organisations, of the political and economic conditions that determine its development (Kandel, 1933: XIX).*

The study focuses on the one hand, on the phenomenological or "inside view" aspect of the comparative education tradition (King, 1979), a focus suggested by King's comment that "the final criterion for ..... judgement of an educational situation is ... the multiple judgement of a community of people" (1973: 34). The other dimension of the comparative education tradition - that of examining two or more systems in a



search for similarities and differences underpins the second focus. Such work it is argued can assist in the solution of identified problems and in the further development of educational policy and practice (Watson, 1984; Brock, 1988b; Crossley and Broadfoot, 1992). Issues identified in the St Lucian case study are thus discussed within the broader framework of a comparative analysis of tertiary education provision in the Caribbean and the South Pacific. While the study does not claim to settle the on-going methodological debate surrounding the two strands of this research tradition (Watson and King, 1991), it hopes, by straddling the comparative/international divide, to go some way in identifying and recommending practical policy options for planners engaged in the development of tertiary education in small states. It is hoped that the findings of the study will help fill one of the gaps in the current literature on tertiary education in small states as it deals with issues identified by the writer herself along with Crocombe (1987), Brock (1988b), the Commonwealth Secretariat (1988). Indeed Crocombe (1987: 133) argues forcefully that since "a grossly disproportionate share of the studies of islands and island communities has been done from external perceptions" it is perhaps time for more involvement from members of the researched community itself.

***C H A P T E R   T H R E E***  
***TERTIARY EDUCATION IN SMALL STATES:***  
***NEW RESPONSES TO THE "CHALLENGE OF SCALE"***

*"Marginal countries are in the most favourable position  
to take the risk of adopting a global perspective while  
operating at the local level"*  
*Errol Miller*

## **Introduction**

The world of small states has been described as relatively constrained, remote and dependent (Brock, 1988b), and it is within this framework that the international literature has been analysing their education systems. However evidence from the case study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St Lucia presented in a subsequent chapter, indicates that despite these constraints, small states are succeeding in providing tertiary education opportunities for their people. It is argued here that these achievements reflect new responses to the challenge of scale, and new perspectives on the part of policy makers in small states. Drawing on the perspectives and perceptions of people involved in the development and management of tertiary education in St Lucia (the research process which generated this data is outlined in a later chapter), and on the literature on tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific, this chapter re-examines the factors of scale, isolation and dependence reviewed in Chapter Two, and discusses them in the light of recent policies and strategies adopted by these small states in developing their tertiary education sectors.

### **Scale, isolation and dependence re-examined**

#### *Scale*

It has long been argued that the provision of tertiary education in small states is not financially feasible, and that small-state tertiary institutions themselves are not viable by virtue of factors of scale. Education planners in small states admit that smallness is indeed an inhibiting factor, but increasingly it is being argued that it is "not a problem as long as you do not believe that you can do anything you like", and that "there is a lot to be optimistic about once you accept your size as something that will

always be there and work with it" (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). The small size of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College for example, has not prevented it from providing the kind of service for which it was established. It has however recognised the point at which it needs to look beyond its own resources, and it has adopted and developed strategies to access the expertise and the resources of external institutions. It is argued that there comes a point at which the provision of a higher education sector is impossible in a small country context (Brock, 1988b: 305). The counter argument advanced here is that this depends in large measure on one's idea of what should constitute a higher education sector. While in a large country setting this could refer to a whole system of institutions offering a diversity of programmes at various levels, in a small country context, the sector could consist simply of a single institution or the local extra-mural centre of an external university. This is the case in the Caribbean with the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St Lucia and the UWI's School of Continuing Studies in Montserrat, and in the Pacific with the National University of Samoa and the USP Extension Service in the Cook Islands. The issue also seems to be not so much one of provision of tertiary education as of the form that such provision can take. Viewed from this perspective, it can be argued that the size of the population, the prevailing financial resources and the educational needs of the country are the factors that should determine the "form, style and extent" (Smawfield, 1985) of the tertiary sector. This type of approach allows the sector the flexibility to contract, expand or change course as circumstances and needs change, thereby ensuring its continued viability.

Viability, Doumenge (1983) explains, is the combination of the conditions necessary and sufficient for existence and durability. It is purely conjunctural and can therefore change very rapidly, according to the circumstances obtaining at the time. A tertiary sector that can change as circumstances do, can thus remain an affordable, viable option. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College's strategy of accessing the UWI's Bachelor of Education and selected first-year degree programmes whenever there is a demand, releases it from the financial burden of having to build up its own capability only to have it under-subscribed and therefore non-viable when the demand drops. Similarly, the ability of the Cook Islands to "buy" the Form Seven Foundation

Course from the USP (Short and Short, 1991), enables it, in spite of its size, to meet some of its tertiary education needs.

The high capital cost of educational infrastructure at the tertiary education level and the high recurrent unit costs of maintaining the sector, are presented as disincentives to small states planning their tertiary education sectors. There is a preoccupation in the literature with the "economies of scale" approach, even though it is admitted that "it is very difficult for small countries ... to achieve economies of scale because the optimum number of students is well above the actual number to be educated" (Atchoarena, 1991b: 531). But perhaps like the concept of scale, this optimum level is a relative one, and needs to be seen in relation to the size of the population. Most small countries which have proceeded to develop their tertiary education sector seem to have subordinated these quantitative considerations to more qualitative ones. Planners in St Lucia, for example, argue that the economic concept of cost-effectiveness which relies heavily on quantitative data should not be the sole consideration (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92). This issue revolves in part around the debate as to whether it would not make more economic sense, given the small state's generally narrow resource base and the small number of people that it generates, to send people for training abroad, and concentrate on the local provision of primary and secondary education. There are concerns however of a more qualitative nature. As one economic planner puts it:

*One has to measure the economic cost against the orientation and the biases which are inherent in external training because of where it takes place, and because of the society, the community, the school of thought out of which it develops and to which trainees are exposed. One needs to ask oneself what affinity would the training they receive have to the needs of the country, if an increasing number of the people at the top levels in the community are trained outside the country (Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92).*

There is also the distinctive role that a domestic institution is seen to play in helping people develop their own notions of history, their identity as a people, and their own creative possibilities (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). Similar concerns occupy the minds of people in the small states of the South Pacific where Taufe' ulungaki (1991)

for example, sees the in-country provision of tertiary education and the use of in-country-based models as having less to do with rationalisation of access and equity, cost-effectiveness and internal efficiency, but rather with issues of control and self-reliance. She submits that the views of the Minister of Education in Tonga echo sentiments prevalent in the region:

*It is freely admitted that Tonga could meet its high-level manpower requirements by continuing to send its leaders to university institutions outside Tonga. But ... could Tonga afford not to have a say in the training of its leaders and is it entirely appropriate that it continues to permit developed countries to shape their thinking, values, dreams, hopes and perceptions of the world and life? (cited in Taufe' ulungaki, 1991: 582).*

Unfortunately, though long on ideas and expectations, small states are very often short on cash, and frequently need to turn to external sources to implement domestic policies. But this does not make their concern for the qualitative aspects of education and training any less valid. The need to seek a balance between purely economic considerations and qualitative considerations is brought to the fore in Saint's (1992) recent study of higher education institutions in Africa. Here the downward trend in unit costs achieved in response to a call for containment of higher education's share of education budgets was found to be more often than not the result of having less budget for more students, rather than the result of any significant achievements in internal efficiency. Furthermore, reductions were achieved largely through cut-backs in staff development, library acquisitions and maintenance (Saint, 1992). Small states are just as concerned as large ones about carefully husbanding their scarce resources and widening access to tertiary education. The Cook Islands policy of Education at Home for example, has enabled the country to fund ten students as undergraduates for the same cost of sending one student to New Zealand (Short and Short, 1991), while the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College can accommodate seven students for the cost of sending one first-year undergraduate to the UWI. But the concern for performance indicators measured solely in quantitative terms does not seem to be an overriding factor in these small states' decision to provide tertiary education opportunities for their nationals.

Indeed it is suggested that the inability of small-state institutions to achieve economies of scale should not necessarily be seen as an indication of their non-viability. Crocombe and Crocombe for example, question the concept of "critical mass" as used in the Pacific context. They report that a survey of tertiary institutions in the region revealed that those institutions that are most cost-effective and academically sound are those that are most likely to be regarded by those concerned with "critical mass" and "economies of scale" as being non-viable by virtue of their smallness. Indeed, these institutions see smallness as correlating positively with quality of educational experience (Crocombe and Crocombe, forthcoming).

It is commonly held that as national scale diminishes, so the problem of matching the output of the formal education system with the manpower needs of the economy becomes more acute. It is also argued that the economies of small states tend to be over concentrated on a few products and services, and yet there is a need to service the small "modern" sector (Brock, 1988b: 305). While this concept of duality has been applied to the economic structure of all developing countries, small states are seen as being particularly affected, experiencing "a sharp dichotomy between the components of the dual economy" (Brock, 1988a: 169). The question that needs to be asked is whether this sharp dichotomy is inherent in smallness of size, whether it depends on the nature of the localised sector, or whether this is the result of the particular development strategy suggested for, and adopted by small states. The answer would have implications for educational planning and development, as it is generally held that the nature of the educational policy of a country depends to quite a considerable extent on the structure of that country's economy and its style of development (Bacchus, 1987, 1989; Atchoarena, 1991b). It would be instructive therefore to examine different development strategies adopted by small states, and the implications of these for education provision, particularly at the tertiary level.

The assumption that this dual economic structure is inherent to smallness and that the odds are stacked against an expansion of the modern sector has led to the recommendation of locale-specific educational provision for small nation states. The argument advanced is one of relevance to the real needs of the community and in

particular those of the majority of people who must live and work within its boundaries. Another assumption, that the localised sector does not require "diffuse and modern skills", has hindered the development of the tertiary sector in many small states. The result of educational policies based on such assumptions is a low level of enrolment and a belated concern over access, quality and efficiency in the tertiary education sector of small states. A recent regional study of tertiary education in the Caribbean for example, notes that:

*... formal programs appear to be very limited while training and apprenticeships provided by private industry are virtually non-existent. The proportion of the cohort enrolled across the region in total is equal to only half of the average of all middle-income countries and is essentially below that in most Latin American countries ... Since secondary school enrolment ratios are relatively high, the transition rates from secondary to tertiary appear to be extremely low compared to the high secondary school enrolment ratios ... Even allowing for overseas training, the proportions of the labour force with post-secondary education or training tends to be below those for middle income countries in general (World Bank, 1992b: 1X-X).*

To redress this imbalance, the study calls for an increase in access to tertiary and higher education as "the anticipated changes to the structure of the Caribbean economies will require larger numbers of tertiary trained workers" (World Bank, 1992a: X1V. Emphasis added). Implicit in this is a recognition that there is nothing immutable about the current structure of small economies, and that solutions can be found to counter the perceived vulnerability and lack of viability of small countries as regards their ability to provide tertiary education opportunities. Fundamental experimentation is possible, given the appropriate enabling environment.

The fast-changing technical and scientific world of today in which small economies must survive therefore renders the locale-specific approach inappropriate. To cite Bacchus and Brock:

*The strong association throughout the world between formal education systems and the national spatial parameter is particularly inappropriate for small states whose concerns have increasingly to be with very local and global contexts at the same time (Bacchus and Brock, 1987: 13).*



Insularity and parochialism in education, especially at the tertiary level is therefore not a feature of small-state systems. Continued association with metropolitan systems, old and new, is construed by some as aimed at facilitating the escape of those selected and successful (Brock, 1988a), while others see it as providing international recognition and credibility (Packer, 1989, 1991; Atchoarena, 1991b). Small-state planners often have a different perspective. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, for example, is actively seeking to strengthen existing links with metropolitan and international institutions, and to develop new ones because it recognises that it needs to expose its staff and students to a diversity of methods and institutions. Similarly, the Cook Islands have adopted a strategy for accessing higher education in international and metropolitan institutions through its policy of "Selected Pepper-Potting". Short and Short explains:

*This policy is aimed at the placement of students into institutions of higher learning world-wide, for academic acculturation. It is aimed at fostering diversity in thinking and perspectives. It is aimed at developing divergent - thinking scholars (Short and Short, 1991: 112).*

Without this international dimension small states would feel the full impact of the isolation which is also associated with smallness of size.

### ***Isolation***

The issue of isolation or remoteness is the second factor which is identified in Chapter Two as being of critical significance to educational development and prospects in small countries. Implicit in this diagnosis is the recognition that there is a centre, a source or point of action from which things emanate, but an assumption that the small state is not that centre. Small countries however are not necessarily functionally or spatially removed from where the action is, and yet the concepts of smallness, and particularly islandness, and isolation are very often not separated. One is led to wonder, in passing, whether this is not a throw-back to the Latin derivation of the word 'isolation' where insulatus meant literally "made into an island". Be that as it may, while it is admitted that isolation, like scale, is a relative concept, it is argued here that its impact on small states has been somewhat overstated.

Rapid developments in communications technology have reduced that sense of isolation which twenty years ago would have been considered a constraint of smallness. The constraint on cross-border interactions, regarded as one of the effects of spatial isolation or aerial constraint (Bacchus and Brock, 1987) is relevant and real, particularly with regards to the costs involved in air and sea transport (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). Not so relevant though is the concept of cultural and social isolation, for small-state nationals are too migratory to be considered constrained by cultural isolation. Indeed, it is this very mobility which has given rise to the expression "migration mentality" (Brock and Smawfield, 1988: 235) to describe small-state nationals' search for broader opportunities outside their homelands. Moreover, the location of the Caribbean islands in Middle America, and of the Pacific islands on the doorstep of the Rim countries, and the implications of that location in a world in which technology can penetrate so easily have robbed this particular argument of its poignancy.

The evidence from the St Lucia case-study suggests that from a small-state perspective, the issue of isolation is not a problem in itself since it can be offset by the type of alliances one cultivates (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92). Hence the strengthening of a regional approach to education, especially at the tertiary level, and the growing phenomenon of twinning arrangements between national and foreign institutions. The type of isolation which the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College seems more concerned about is what can be referred to as intellectual or academic isolation which can effectively limit the opportunities that staff have to interact with colleagues in other institutions (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). It is for this reason that the College is anxious to establish linkages with other institutions and other scholars (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). Such linkages it is argued, help foster colleague relationships and reduce the sense of isolation that staff would otherwise experience. In the case of the small states of the Caribbean, aerial constraint is offset by the satellite link provided by the University of the West Indies Distance Teaching Experiment (UWIDITE) which facilitates the delivery of programmes through audio links and interactive video, and enables the Colleges to discuss matters of mutual interest with regional colleagues through its teleconferencing facility. UWIDITE in

the Caribbean, the Pan Pacific Education and Communication Experiments by Satellite (PEACESAT) and the International Telecommunications Satellite Organisation (INTELSTAT) in the South Pacific show small states' potential for overcoming the constraints imposed by distance. In the opinion of one small-state planner, isolation is problematic only when resources are limited (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92).

But perhaps a more productive way in which small states have approached the notion of isolation is by focusing on the obverse concept of internationalism and on its significance to prospects for educational development. In the highly inter-dependent world that we live in, countries, small ones in particular, need to have a sound knowledge of the international environment and to develop an international awareness. Watson (1991, 1992) for example, has pointed to the dangers of a too narrowly conceived curriculum, arguing instead for the development of a more international programme both for the training of teachers and for the education of students in general. What he is advocating for the large states of Europe is no less valid for the small states of the Caribbean and the Pacific. For the latter group, complete localisation of educational content or provision, especially at the tertiary level would be counter-productive, and would only serve to make them even more marginalised. They need the ability and the flexibility to access resources, skills and comparative experience from the international community. The Commonwealth Secretariat's comment on the future of tertiary institutions in small nation states cited in an earlier chapter, bears this out:

*The watchword for post-secondary colleges and the countries they serve is flexibility; flexibility in ... accessing a wide range of opportunities regionally and further afield, both to increase opportunity and to tap sources of skill and expertise (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988: 28).*

Arranging for their nationals to obtain part of their education in an international environment or incorporating elements or components of an international programme within their national curricula, is not only of value, but of significant importance to small states. Illustrating this in respect of the Pacific, Crocombe and Crocombe

(forthcoming) affirm:

*Isolation is not a goal of any Pacific Islands country or territory. All want extensive contact with the world community and espouse a principle of internationalism.*

As we have seen, the Management of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College aims at making the institution "eclectic in its approach, with far-flung international associations, drawing on a pool of metropolitan experience and expertise" (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92). Similarly the policy of "Selected Pepper-Potting" referred to earlier, is intended to provide academic acculturation for Cook Islanders. Both of these efforts are attempts by small nations to internationalise themselves. To do this however, they need an enabling environment, and the wider international community must assist. Watson (1991) suggests four reasons why the international community should show greater concern for our interdependent global system than is currently apparent. To these, the historical, moral, political and economic, one might add a fifth. To cite one small-state planner:

*No one is so poor that he cannot contribute to somebody else's good and welfare. If we accept this as a basic policy, there must be some way in which small states can contribute to bigger developed countries, and it is in this way that we become interdependent. However small a country, it can make a contribution (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92).*

### ***Dependence***

The third issue that small states have had to reconsider even in a situation of increasing global interdependence, is their level of dependence on external forces. One educational planner from St Lucia speaks for the whole community of small states when he observes:

*The issue of dependence is ... very real. But small countries need not make a song and dance of it. If we lived in a perfect world, our more developed brothers would feel some kind of responsibility towards their underdeveloped brothers, but we do not. Instead small nations are being asked to survive in this unequal situation. Economically, they are at the mercy of the developed world and are very much dependent on the external economic and financial climate. The question arises as to how they can erase this dependence. Self reliance is a laudable virtue, but it cannot erase this dependence (Interview, PRN-T, 06-08-92).*

Almost two decades ago, Selwyn (1975) suggested that an answer to this question lay in their discovering what cards they had to play in the international economic game, and how best they could play them. However, the rules of the game keep on changing, and small countries are continually faced with new challenges. Policy makers in the Caribbean and the South Pacific are increasingly persuaded that the answer lies in their adoption of a development strategy that relies on human resources, knowledge and technology. It is argued that such a strategy has the potential to narrow the gap that currently exists between their small states and the larger economically mature countries, making the people themselves more independent even if their countries are not. Concluding their overview of schooling in the Pacific Islands, Thomas and Postlethwaite (1984) note that although the islands will move further towards self-reliance over the coming decades, they will still need to be allied with large influential political and economic combines in order to prosper or even survive. It is their management of these alliances however, that will determine the extent of this self-reliance.

It is argued that self-reliance need not mean self-sufficiency. Caribbean middle-income countries realise that they cannot afford educational self-sufficiency and argue for greater external collaboration. They face the choice of relying on their own resources and isolating themselves from external influences in the process, or exposing themselves to external ideas and becoming equipped to take independent action. Crocombe and Crocombe's (forthcoming) advice to small nation states is that they aim for the latter in order to acquire a sound knowledge of the external sources of power. Isolation, they argue, facilitates not self-reliance but external control.

### *Cultural dependence*

The search for alliances with larger metropolitan countries has raised questions about the cultural dependence of small states. Indeed all are agreed that small states must maintain their identities, their languages, and those cultural elements which have brought meaning to their lives, whether through the "Pacific Way" or embodied in

the "Caribbean Man" for example. But culture is not static and influence need not mean dependence. Speaking on the preservation of the cultural heritage of the Arab region, Kazem (1992) cautions against allowing the present and the future being over-influenced by the past, glorious as it may be. A major role of an Arab university, he suggests, should be to realise that a healthy growing society has roots, but that nourishing the roots of a society calls for extending and expanding its possibilities and not holding back forward development. The same could be said of tertiary institutions in the small nation state. St Lucia looks towards tertiary education to improve not only the academic standing of its people, but to prepare them culturally and intellectually to become citizens of their country and of the world (Interview, BGV-T, 13-08-92). This is a recognition that tertiary education must belong to the international academic community and yet remain relevant to the local culture, responding to its needs and supporting its further development (Kazem, 1992). It is argued here that such exposure to the international dimension can not only enhance cultural parity but also bring countries to a better understanding of their own cultures. In this regard, the value of a comparative approach to the study of international systems, be they educational, cultural or religious, merits greater consideration. The observation that Michael Sadler made at the turn of the century about the value of studying the works of foreign systems of education, is still very pertinent today:

*The practical value of studying in a right spirit and with scholarly accuracy, the works of foreign systems of education is that it will result in our being better fitted to study and understand our own (cited in Crossley and Broadfoot, 1992: 106).*

A more informed knowledge of the cultural aspects of the systems of other countries can lead small states to a better appreciation of their own, and hence to an enhanced capacity to restrict contact with elements that threaten to subordinate their own. A multiplicity of contacts can reduce the possibility of any one external source having excessive leverage over them and can consequently lessen the impact of their dependence on any one system. It is this exposure to the international dimension in tertiary education that can give the small state the flexibility and the freedom of informed choice to select the best "from wherever the best is to be found in ideas, in approaches and in resources and then to combine these into its own distinctive blend" (Maraj, 1989).

### *Educational dependence*

A growing phenomenon in the provision of tertiary education in small states is the twinning and other institutional linking arrangements with foreign and external institutions. However, such links are regarded by some as a feature of continued educational dependence. It is argued that while such links may be of value to small states, they have added complications for the redirection of education towards internal local cultural imperatives (Bacchus and Brock, 1987). This need not be so, if such collaboration takes the form of an arrangement in which local resources are pooled with external assistance to achieve goals which have been locally determined, and if the institutions involved recognise that circulation of information in education need not lead to standardisation. International contacts play an important role in the quality of education, and therefore what needs to be ensured is due respect by the larger institution for the cultural context and the particular situation of the smaller institution in the partnership. In this regard, the St Lawrence College/Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Linkage Project referred to earlier, is a particularly successful model of the type of linkage that small institutions could encourage. The strength of the linkage lies in the fact that it incorporates several of the essential characteristics of a successful international human resource development project - ownership and recognisable inputs by the host institution, the "long haul" approach to development assistance, and institutional will by both parties.

The use of curriculum material from larger, more developed countries is also regarded as maintaining educational dependence and constraining reform. Crocombe and Crocombe (forthcoming) argue however that there is no case for small states to re-invent the wheel at the tertiary level, and that use could effectively be made of mass-market materials from larger nations where much more time and resources have been devoted to their preparation, and where they have been tested in wider and more competitive markets. The small-state response has been to complement these with a mix of national materials. The sustained hold over most educational publishing by companies based in the older, larger developed nations, and their reluctance to undertake the small print runs that are involved in servicing country-specific materials

are situations for which they must accept responsibility as there is no doubt that such international networks of constraint (Thompson, 1977) make it difficult for small states to strike out completely on their own. Mebrahtu (1984) calls on the South to enlist the much-needed support and understanding of the North in its development efforts. The small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific await a co-ordinated response from the North.

### *Aid dependence*

Perhaps one of the most sensitive and controversial aspects of the dependence issue is the one which concerns foreign aid. Knapman (1986) argues that small state economies have greater need for aid than large developing economies because they suffer disproportionately larger shortfalls of domestic savings and foreign exchange, while DeVries (1975) calculates that the small-country bias in aid allocation increases as national scale, measured in demographic terms, decreases. Moreover, the bias seems to be persistent, for it has been observed that whereas aid flows have stagnated overall during the world recession, aid to Pacific economies for example, has continued to expand (Knapman, 1986, Maglen, 1990). In some of its forms, aid perpetuates dependence on aid; in others, it exerts a potent influence on the policies adopted by recipient countries. The question is raised earlier as to whether the current economic structure of small states is inherent to smallness or whether it is the result of the type of development strategy adopted. This is the same issue that Jones (1989) raises when he claims that neither the smallness nor the isolation of the Pacific Islands alone could account for the unique developmental character of the region. This he attributes to the region's structural dependence on aid from foreign donors whose development assistance continues to be built on orthodox approaches to economic, social and technological change. It is in this respect that calls are being made for a more critical examination of the quality as well as the quantity of aid disbursed to small states.

The need for these countries to rely on aid for the foreseeable future is recognised, and so too is the fact that donors are in the driver's seat, that their own agendas will



influence the things that they are willing to finance, and that their priorities will always be a vital consideration (Interview, BGV-T, 13-08-92). Notwithstanding this acceptance, there is considerable scope for working towards a more satisfying donor-recipient relationship, and a more mutually acceptable aid product. One of these is the adoption of a strategy for accessing and channelling aid which would lessen the dependence of recipient countries on particular donors. The preponderance of bilateral aid in the Pacific for example, is seen as one of the main constraints of development assistance (Jones, 1989:200). While there are advantages and disadvantages in both bilateral and multilateral aid, it is argued that a balanced mix is less intrusive. Multilateralism is seen as not only having the potential to soften the heavy-handedness that is commonly ascribed to bilateral assistance, but more substantively as helping to diversify the range of technical advice received and the models of public policy considered in the context of development planning (Jones, 1989). The mix of bilaterals and multilaterals offering development assistance in tertiary education in the Caribbean sometimes poses problems for co-ordination of aid projects, but it has nevertheless given the region some latitude and enabled it to adopt a more critical and independent stance as far as adoption and implementation of donor policy recommendations are concerned.

The Caribbean response to recent recommendations for a human resource development strategy made by one major donor agency, illustrates the type of relationship that recipients would like to develop with the donor community. The World Bank, reporting the results of a study designed to assess levels of access, quality and efficiency in Caribbean education, concludes that, in view of the anticipated continued substantial reliance of several Caribbean countries on external resource flows to finance a significant proportion of new programmes, donors should have the responsibility to ensure that such sources are targeted towards priority needs. The assurance of long-term financial support, the study hints, might increasingly be linked to the achievement of agreed policy changes and programmes, rather than to specific projects (World Bank, 1992a). However, while the Bank argues that priority should be given to primary and secondary education, the Caribbean regards the development and expansion of tertiary education as its main concern at this point in

its development. The Caribbean response is instructive and reflects the wish that due respect be accorded to the views and perspectives of the people for whom the policy is intended. Accordingly, the Caribbean Community Secretariat calls on the donor community to appreciate the fact that responsibility for policy making in education within the Community lay with the Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for education and therefore any major initiative requiring regional implementation has to be approved by that Body. The Bank's study is given due recognition as a timely and substantial contribution to regional efforts, but it is regarded as only one of many inputs to be considered in the formulation of the region's strategy for human resources development. Insights laboriously culled from the successes and failures of national, sub-regional and regional strivings have to serve as bedrock (Caribbean Community Secretariat, 1992). It could be argued that such an independent position could only have been taken on the strength of a regional approach, but it does point the way to strategies and policy options open to small countries to manage the aid on which they must depend. This regional approach does not in any way rule out the possibility of individual countries or even individual institutions requesting that same collaborative approach in the delivery of development assistance. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College for example, is currently in receipt of assistance for infrastructural development from the European Development Fund accessed through the regional mechanism of the OECS Council of Ministers, but at the same time it is involved in the management of assistance received for institutional development from CIDA.

A second strategy that has been used to improve the aid relationship is one in which small states develop a policy framework, individually or collectively, using local institutional capacity as far as possible, and then invite the donor community to react to the policy with a view to funding those aspects which best suit their own agendas. While this might be a lengthy process, it has the advantage of giving donors a better idea of the countries' priorities and their ability to support particular sectors, and recipients a better appreciation of the extent of the support they could expect from donors. Such a strategy was successfully implemented by the OECS. With assistance from CIDA, an Education Reform Working Group made up of senior OECS

educators was assembled and charged with the preparation of a reform strategy (Miller, 1991a, Charles, 1992). The Caribbean Network of Educational Innovation (CARNEID), responsible for the promotion of educational innovations in the region, was then commissioned to meet with educational officials and other stakeholders, in order to obtain their views as to those elements of the strategy which should be regarded as priority and to which governments were committed (Charles, 1992). It was to this work programme drawn up by CARNEID, identifying priorities, national and regional objectives and components, executing agencies and possible sources of funding, that the donor community was invited to react. The conference convened for this purpose, brought donors and recipients together in a working relationship that underscored the fact that dependence does not mean helplessness, and that the aid relationship need not be a "like-it-or-lump-it" affair. A more widespread application of this strategy could change the whole complexion of aid delivery and release small states from the stranglehold reinforced by the traditional Caribbean perception that "cockroach have no business in fowl backyard" - that "might is right".

It needs to be acknowledged however that the donor community is itself in search of a new aid approach. The critical characteristics of what King (1991) refers to as the new aid paradigm are that it should be "sustainable, equitable, locally-owned and executed and supportive of good policies in the .... sector as a whole". He cites the World Bank as putting the case for local ownership of educational reform in the following terms:

*... close national involvement in analytical work related to, for example, project preparation is the key to helping ensure country ownership of the analyses and their translation into viable reforms. Such ownership is crucial to implementation of most reforms, and to create it is an important reason why project preparation must largely be done by the borrower. Indeed as project preparation generally includes elaboration of policy options to address sensitive sector issues, it is very difficult to create ownership if this work is done predominantly by donors and external consultants (Frederiksen, 1990:20, cited by King, 1991. *Emphasis added*).*

Taken at its word, this approach by the World Bank, which has been so successful in shaping important elements of global opinion (Jones, 1992), should facilitate more

widespread use of the strategy used by the OECS. In view of the donor community's acceptance of the fact that small states will continue to depend on external assistance for the foreseeable future, what is required now is less standardisation and homogenisation of conditions and procedures. Presumably because of their sheer numbers, small states are appended for the sake of convenience to larger, usually very dissimilar, neighbours. Yet their differing circumstances argue for different strategies and approaches, different expectations, and even a specialised unit within each agency to deal with development assistance to small and specially disadvantaged states.

In the education sector, the tertiary level is most affected by this dependence on aid, mainly because of the high costs involved in maintaining it. This degree of dependence influences the form, style and extent of tertiary provision, since donor and aid agencies generally stipulate the training areas they are prepared to fund as well as the institutions where such training is to be undertaken. The evidence shows that support for national tertiary institutions is generally weak, particularly in small country clusters served by a regional institution, as is the case with the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Jones (1989) speaks of the dilemmas faced by aid donors to the Pacific as they grappled with the intriguing notion that they should provide recurrent, capital and staffing support for a regional institution at the same time that bilateral requests were being received for the development of national institutions. But the numbers of these national institutions are on the rise, and donors are beginning to adjust their thinking to that reality, particularly as these institutions continue to benefit materially from the high-ranking priority that their respective national governments have elected to give them. In St Lucia and the other OECS countries the multi-purpose colleges that have emerged are supported for the most part by local resources, with external assistance complementing the national effort. There is no doubt that continued external inputs will be required to help sustain the qualitative and the quantitative aspects of these initiatives (Peters, forthcoming), and thus the pace at which the sector expands will be influenced by the alacrity - or lack of it - with which the donor community reacts to proposals submitted for funding by national governments. In the meantime tertiary institutions in these small states are working towards a greater degree of financial independence by following the example of others

much larger and much better endowed than they are, establishing joint ventures with the private sector, and setting up trust and endowment funds. The recent decision by the UWI to establish its Endowment Fund and Alumni Association, and similar proposals put forward by the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College are two such examples. An opportunity thus presents itself for these countries to recoup the human and financial losses incurred from the brain drain which is recognised as one of the main sociological features of the small state. It is argued here, that there is a reverse process that does take place, and those who have moved on can contribute to the development of their national tertiary education sectors by supporting such trust funds.

### *The centre-periphery issue*

The final aspect of the dependence issue re-examined here is the centre-periphery concept. This structural relationship of dependency can be analysed in spatial, locational or hierarchical terms, but it is argued that in the context of education provision in small nation states, the hierarchical relationship is the most relevant.

The centre periphery concept has undergone several modifications since it was first brought to prominence by the Latin American dependency school. From the group's theory of underdevelopment of developing countries by the industrialised "centres" of the North, one moves through several distillations to arrive at Marsh and Turpin's (1992) perception of centre and periphery as having the potential to be mutually supportive. The latter's positive approach to the issue, and in particular their appreciation of the value of networks and links between the two hold much promise for the development of tertiary education systems in small nation states. Marsh and Turpin liken the Australian University Research System under the new United National System to the Japanese keiretsu, a business relationship in which small suppliers co-operate with large corporations in order to maximise the advantage of each; a mutually supportive system described as a major component of Japan's economic success. They argue that researchers in the newly amalgamated institutions - the peripheral group - have the potential to provide researchers at the core with an

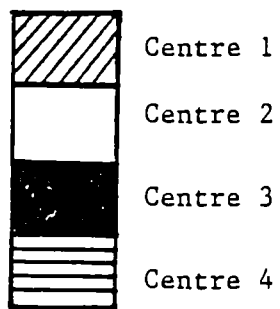
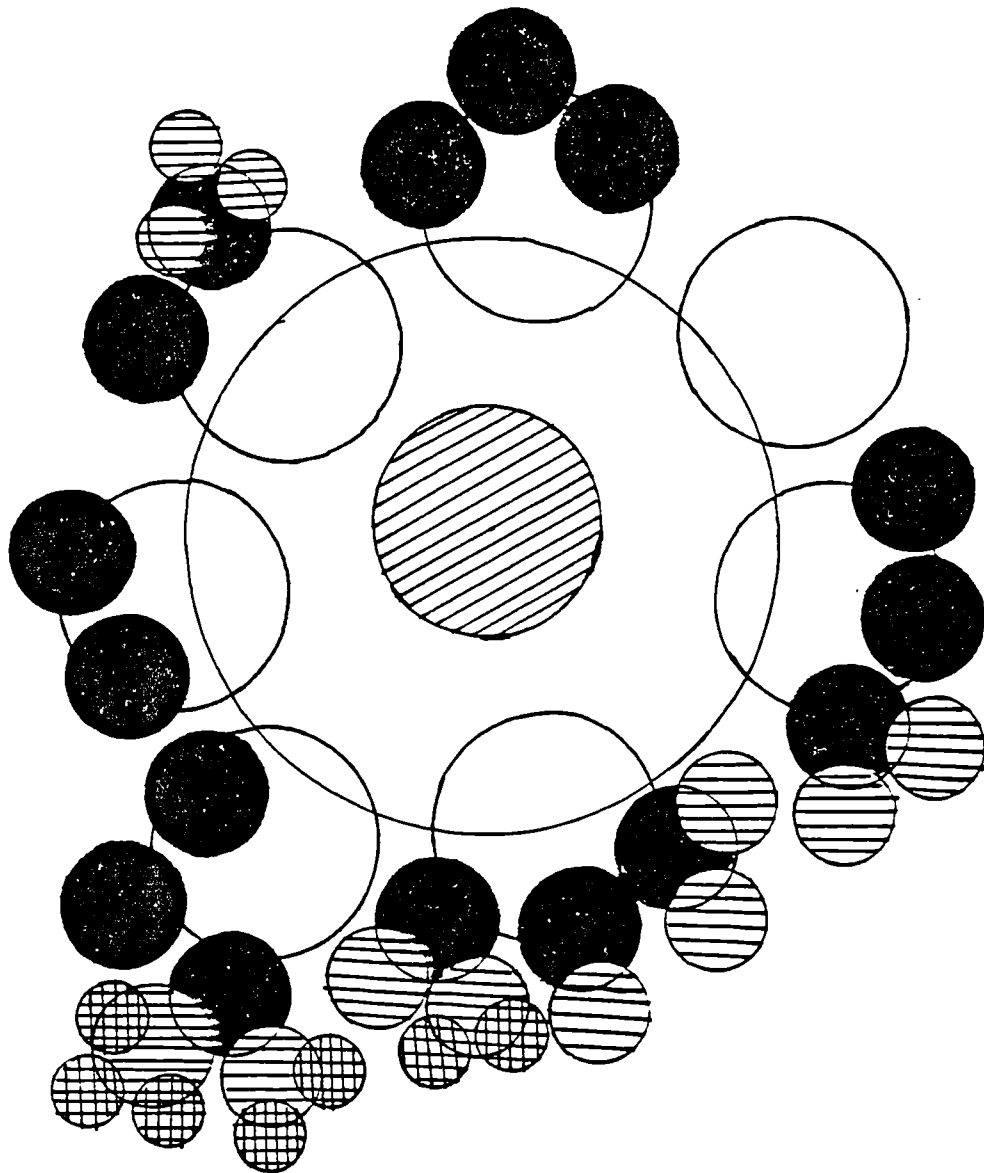
extended and locally supplied arm to their research activities. The potential for the development of the system rests then on the ability to identify the 'centre' and the 'periphery', linking the distinct cultures of each, and facilitating communication of knowledge across the network thus created (Marsh and Turpin, 1992: 354-355). This framework has been adopted to advantage by the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

Small states are generally regarded as being marginalised. They are sometimes seen as being not even on, but "beyond the fringe" (Brock, 1988a). Indeed within a global hierarchy of higher education institutions, those of small states would undoubtedly be on the periphery. However, it is also recognised that there are nodes and peripheries even within peripheries as Figure 1 demonstrates, so that even the smallest tertiary institution can, in a differentiated system and within an institutionalised network, contribute to the success of an integrated system of higher education. This hierarchical structure suggests ways in which clusters of small institutions could become focal points of a progressively wider tertiary education network. The UWI, for example, which could be described as being on the periphery of international "centres" of higher education is itself a focal point for tertiary education provision in the region. On its periphery lies the OECS Reform Unit, around which gravitate the national tertiary institutions in the OECS, some of which have themselves been developed into Centres of Specialisation. This network of mutually supportive institutions lays the foundation for an integrated system of higher education in the region and beyond. It is a model which could be used to advantage not only in small systems, but in large ones as well, as Marsh and Turpin's recommendation suggests.

### **The small-state perspective**

This re-examination of scale, isolation and dependence as they relate to the provision of tertiary education has focused on the strategies that small states have developed to release themselves from the constraint of smallness. In attempting to explain the continued existence of small states, Abbott (1975) observes that the paradox is not so much the fact that they exist as viable entities, but rather that the 'experts' have

Figure 1  
Centres and Peripheries: a hierachical structure



persisted in judging them by conventional criteria that have consistently been proven wrong. The key to their resilience is to be found perhaps in their refusal to accept that they should be constrained by size. Derek Walcott, the 1992 Nobel Poet Laureate, articulates the Caribbean perspective when he states:

*I come from a place that likes grandeur; it likes large gestures; it is not inhibited by flourish; it is a rhetorical society; it is a society of physical performance; it is a society of style ... It isn't a modest society ... It's better to be large and make huge gestures than to be modest and do tiptoeing types of presentations of oneself (Interview, 1985).*

Although spoken of the artist in the Caribbean, this sentiment pervades much of the vision and aspirations of the small state national. In the field of education, such a sentiment translates itself in efforts which to some may appear over-arching and ambitious. The development of a tertiary education sector offering progressively higher levels of education and training is one such aspiration. A critical review and evaluation of such initiatives in the tertiary education sector of St Lucia on the one hand, and of the Caribbean and the South Pacific on the other, is the focus of the chapters that follow.



***CHAPTER FOUR***  
***THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY***

*"We all see through who we are,  
and those who adhere fervently to  
an ideology, a prescribed way of seeing,  
see less"  
Albert Wendt*

## **Introduction**

This chapter examines the theoretical framework and perspectives that underpin the methodological approach and strategies adopted for the study. It circumscribes the boundaries within which the study itself is set and justifies the choices made and the decisions taken regarding the procedures and methods used in preparing for and carrying out the data collection exercise. The main focus of the study is recalled, the specific area of interest articulated, and the methods of inquiry and analysis adopted are discussed in the light of their relevance and appropriateness to the research questions posed in Chapter One.

### **Focus of the study**

The broad topic of this study, as noted elsewhere, is a critical examination of recent developments in tertiary education in St Lucia and other small island states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Until very recently, local initiatives in this arena left small-country policy makers in the educational wilderness, as far as outside support was concerned, since it was widely accepted that they should be concentrating their energies and their resources on the improvement of basic education. While attitudes towards the development of tertiary education in small countries are changing, and perspectives held by those outside are beginning to shift (World Bank, 1992a, 1992b, 1993b), research into these issues in different contexts that reflects internal perspectives is both timely and necessary. To cite King:

*... the central and abiding need is to "get inside the context". That means true factual knowledge, fidelity to the system "understood" by the natives, and empathy for the problems seen by them (King 1979: 52).*

A specific concern of this study is therefore to document the perceptions held by educational planners in small nation states about the role and future of tertiary education in the overall development of their countries; the judgements which they make; the options they choose; the contextual circumstances influencing decisions they take. It is argued that the insights gained from an appreciation and a "sympathetic concern and local understanding" (King, 1979: 148) of these perceptions can contribute not only to the more realistic formulation of policy options, but also to the development and refinement of theoretical ideas in the field of educational development.

### **Theoretical perspective**

Concern for the study of perceptions, judgements and contexts finds support in the sociological theory of phenomenology which puts emphasis on understanding the actions of participants on the basis of their active experience of the world, and the ways in which their actions arise from, and reflect back upon experience (Burgess, 1984). The basis of this orientation is that human beings have multiple ways of perceiving and interpreting reality, and any understanding of their behaviour calls for an empathetic appreciation of the subjective elements of their social action (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979). Blumer posits that the study of this action has to be conducted from the position of the actors, in order to see the way in which they perceive situations, since:

*... the actor acts towards the world on the basis of how he sees it and not on the basis of how that world appears to the outside observer (cited in Burgess, 1984: 4).*

Therefore, to understand how people in a given social context react to their environment, one needs to reconstruct their reality, to learn to see their world from the inside (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979). The "member's knowledge" thus acquired, Schwartz and Jacobs argue, would lead to a discovery of the individual's or the group's perceptions and interpretation of reality, and to an understanding of how these relate to their behaviour, and by extension, to the decisions they take and the choices they make in their daily lives. This theoretical orientation, the "sociology of the

inside" (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979), underpins to a large extent the research approach adopted for this study. The importance of understanding and appreciating the influence of subjective perceptions in the process of education, the phenomenological aspect of research, justifies this approach. In making a case for the phenomenological perspective in educational research, King strongly recommends that:

*... we really must get inside the skin of other people as nearly as we can. We must learn their 'language of life'. As far as possible we must share their priorities ... (King, 1979: 3).*

It is when we are armed with this "view from inside" that we are in a position to understand and appreciate "the partnerships and interactions of people in the process of education" and "the interactions of that process itself with the life and work of society around it" (King 1979: 497). For educational research, if it is to benefit the people whose lives it will affect should have as its starting point:

*... a prior and sympathetic insight into living and working conditions, not forgetting the myths and time-honoured institutions which affect them (King, 1962: 15).*

It is argued that such an approach can contribute to the construction of theory by bringing to bear on the local knowledge gained, "the interplay of academic insights and researches working on selected problems or topics, by means of comparative analysis using different disciplines" (King, 1962: 15). This theoretical perspective supports a predominantly qualitative research orientation; the main features of this approach, and its potential in research of the kind undertaken here are now discussed.

### **Qualitative research and the social world**

The literature on qualitative research, whether in the anthropological, sociological or other disciplinary traditions acknowledges that a main feature of this paradigm is the acquisition of "first hand knowledge about the empirical social world in question" (Filstead, 1970: 6). Underlying this position is an assumption that there are different ways of seeing the world and of responding to social situations; and it is essential to obtain information from the participants' vantage points with a view to examining and understanding "the various dimensions of the situation that they construct" (Burgess,

1984: 4). To get at this "social construction of reality" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982: 32), qualitative researchers advocate first-hand involvement in the social world through observation, in-depth interviewing or total participation in the activity being investigated (Filstead, 1970). Here again, the potential of qualitative educational research both for the analysis of contextual variables in micro-level studies and for theory - building is recognised. King, for example, advocates a "cybernetic approach" to research - an approach that calls for perception, interaction and feedback. The researcher, he argues, should have the opportunity to make critical and corrective contact on the ground with those who know the location, the culture, the institutions and the practices discussed (King, 1979). These periodic series of "interpretative interviews" will enable him to "correct his errors in a continuing cybernetic conversation" (1979: 510), and so contribute to the "refinement and development of theory ... from the generation of sound empirical data" (Crossley, 1990: 43). Similarly, Vulliamy describes the main aim of qualitative research as getting inside the perspectives of the people being researched and generating hypotheses from such perspectives (Vulliamy et al, 1990).

A predominantly qualitative research approach is adopted for the case study because it offers the most appropriate methods to generate new knowledge on the issues addressed. This is in keeping with the advice of most researchers who offer explanations for their choice of research approach. Lewin, for example, notes that:

*... the researcher has to make choices, predominantly on the basis of research questions, to select approaches and methods most likely to provide insight and explanation into matters of concern ... The researcher should exploit those data collection and analysis techniques which offer most promise of useful insights, and recognise the epistemological assumptions which may accompany them ( in Vulliamy et al, 1990: 47).*

The qualitative approach chosen provides the "methodological congruence" that Powney and Watts (1987) call for. The approach, with its concern for "meaning" gained from involvement in the field is compatible and consistent with the general underlying philosophy of the study. It is underwritten by the theory of phenomenology, providing "a compatibility of theory and practice, an interaction of philosophy and methodology" (Powney and Watts, 1987: 178).

## Case study as research strategy

The broad research strategy selected is the case study. This choice was influenced by the need, identified in Chapter Two, for an increase in the number of in-depth and comparative examinations of individual educational institutions and systems in small-country settings. Such studies, it is argued, can elicit the distinctive issues influencing the planning and management of education in these countries - in this case, the planning and management of tertiary education - and at the same time contribute to the development of what Stenhouse calls "a better grounded representation of day-to-day educational reality resting on the careful study of particular cases" (Stenhouse, 1979: 10) in the small country context. There are perhaps as many definitions of what constitutes a case-study as there are writers on the topic. While all agree on the principle that a case study examines a single manifestation of a phenomenon (Nisbet and Watt, 1978; Stenhouse, 1978; Merriam, 1988, Yin, 1989), some stress particularly the "contemporariness" of the phenomenon. Yin, for example, refers to the study of a "contemporary phenomenon" (1989: 23), while for Stenhouse, it is the study of "a case in progress" (1978: 31). Yin, however, adds a dimension to the phenomenon which is of particular relevance and appropriateness to the approach adopted for the study. For him, the conduct of the investigation in its natural setting distinguishes the case study strategy from other strategies. He defines a case-study as:

*... an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin 1989: 23).*

The "contemporary phenomenon" investigated in this study is the expansion of tertiary education and the emergence of national tertiary education institutions in small nation states; the "real-life context" is the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in the small island state of St Lucia; the "empirical enquiry" emphasises in-depth interviewing, documentary analysis and "lived experience" based on prior participation in the setting being researched.

The case study has been designed as a single - site study. The case itself is identified since there is only one tertiary education institution in the country; the convention of

institutional anonymity therefore could not apply. Moreover this study is designed in response to the call for such research, as noted earlier, and articulated by Brock:

*Whatever the eventual answers to the problems of educational provision in small states might be, they will more likely be found if there is much more research both into particular and general issues in this field. This means more in-depth case studies of individual systems as well as more comparative analyses across the numerous range of small states (Brock, 1988b: 312).*

In view of the applied and practical dimension of the study, there was little justification for institutional anonymity. Every effort is made however to ensure confidentiality of information given by individual respondents, where such information is not already in the public domain. The case is selected primarily on the basis of familiarity to the researcher, while at the same time it exhibits features that have been identified in the new, emerging national colleges in small nation states. The researcher is aware of the concerns that have been expressed about the issues of objectivity, impartiality and bias associated with working in a familiar setting. It is argued however, that the insights that can be gained from such familiarity can far outweigh the risks. This position is supported by Stephenson and Greer (1981) in their discussion of the issues and problems confronting ethnographers working within their own culture, and the advantages and disadvantages of knowing the culture, the community and even the setting in advance. These issues are significant enough to the present study to quote them at length:

*We do not find that any of the principles underlying the problems and advantages identified are any different from those underlying problems encountered by ethnographers working in non familiar cultures. Our problems were not different in kind, though they may have differed in intensity... Beneath their particular expressions in the familiar culture context lurk our old devil-friends bias, oversimplification, prior judgement, and the human inability to separate observation from feeling. Personally, we are willing to take the risks of familiarity in order to gain understanding (Stephenson and Greer, 1981: 130).*

Stenhouse (1979) too, sees merit in being an inside researcher, arguing that its strength lies in the critical perspective which it affords the researcher, one which is inseparably linked to the cultural location of the observer. Perhaps the most compelling reason, however, for selecting a familiar case, and becoming an inside

researcher is the call made by Crocombe (1987) for more involvement in research on islands and island communities by islanders themselves. If, as Stenhouse argues, "all description derives its form from falling into place within a perspective whose structural principle is inseparable from the point of view of the observer" (1979: 8), then a representation of practice seen and described through the critical objective perspective of an insider should provide a more insightful representation of reality than one seen through the untutored "eyes" of the stranger.

Stephenson and Greer define the qualitative researcher's task as balancing "an external, objective report with an insight into the subject's own view of the world" (1981: 123). When the researcher's insight and the subject's view of the reality being researched spring from a common cultural and social experience, the findings and the conclusions derived therefrom can be both stimulating and powerful. There may be of course some element of bias in the reporting by an inside researcher, but it is argued that no research activity is completely value-free. If as King (1973) observes, our cultural bias, and the pre-occupations of our time and place, are extended into our observations as so much prejudice, then it is better to err on the side of the insider, since familiarity with the meanings attached to words and acts of participants can prevent misunderstandings (Stephenson and Greer, 1981). Lewin (in Vulliamy et al, 1990) also notes that the prior experiences of nationals within their own educational systems are likely to make them more sensitive to the perspectives of the participants within those systems. Nevertheless, objectivity is pursued in this study by the attention that is paid to the "context of culture and circumstance" surrounding the case, as well as by the operational procedures adopted for the preparation, collection and analysis of the evidence which informs the report. These procedures, which form part of the research design are set out in a subsequent section, while the "context of culture and circumstance" is the subject of Chapter Five.

The decision to conduct a single-site case study is taken with full awareness of the debate on the weaknesses and limitations of this strategy, especially as regards the generalisability of the findings of such research. A single-site case study raises questions as to how typical is the case being researched. It is to counter that type of



criticism that Spindler argues that:

*An in-depth study that gives accurate knowledge of one setting not markedly dissimilar from other relevant settings is likely to be generalisable in substantial degree to those other settings...it is better to have in-depth, accurate knowledge of one setting than superficial and possibly skewed or misleading information about isolated relationships in many settings (Spindler, 1982: 8).*

Notwithstanding the compelling logic of Spindler's argument, the question of ecological or population validity is not a major concern as it is not intended that generalisations on tertiary education provision and development in small nation states be drawn solely from the findings of this one case. Such generalisations have already been made in the international literature (See, for example, Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988; Packer, 1989; Bray, 1990). The study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College exists in its own right as an individual case study, but it can also be regarded as contributing to the "collective creation of international knowledge" (Little, 1988: 20) on educational issues affecting the development of tertiary education in the small-country setting, as well as to "a cycle of progress in the scientific understanding of education" (Tripp, 1985: 41). It responds to the call mentioned earlier for a series of studies of individual systems and institutions in an effort to move towards solutions to problems. The significance of the findings of this case is predicated on the assumption that the accumulation of cases will yield more generalisations in due course (Stenhouse, 1979), so that the findings can be seen as building blocks in the construction of models of tertiary education development in small-country settings. In addition, in so far as the study of this case can be considered an analysis of an educational policy, the findings can contribute to the more universal theory of implementation analysis by:

*... offer[ing] a particular insight into the functioning of a specific social subsystem (here, higher education) and into the interrelation among its various components and between them and forces external to the system (Cerych, 1984: 236).*

### **The research design**

The design of a research project has been described as "the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to

its conclusions" (Yin, 1989: 28). Such a sequence, whether explicit or implicit, undergirds every successful research investigation, and the case study method is no exception. However, case-study research has been criticised for its apparent lack of rigour in data collection, rendering it methodologically suspect. In addition, its predominantly descriptive mode is often interpreted as betraying a casual ad-hoc approach to investigation, relegating it to the category of 'soft' research (Yin, 1989: 26). The need therefore to design a methodologically sound case study, particularly one in the qualitative mode, is keenly appreciated, in the light of the contribution that this study is intended to make towards our improved understanding of the process of educational development within the context of the small state.

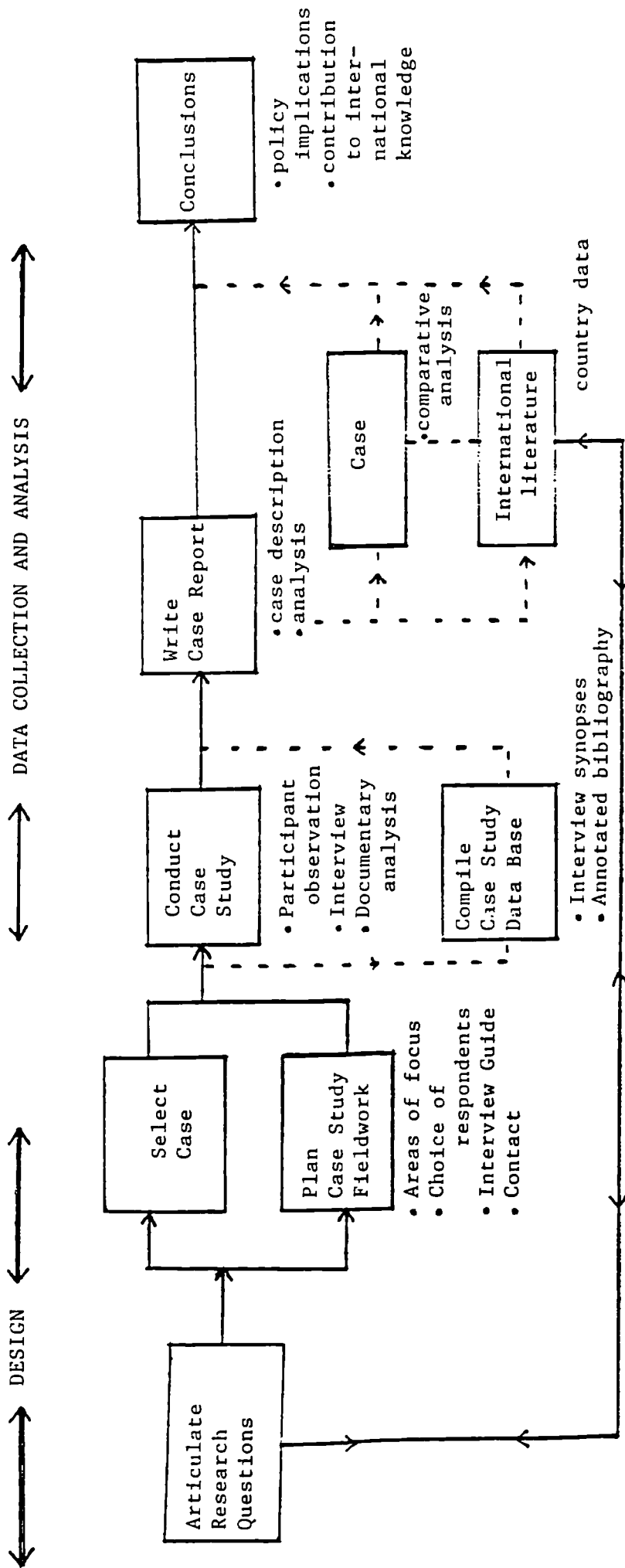
### *Components of the design*

The design for the present study is represented graphically in Figure 2. Adapted from Yin (1989: 56), this outlines the operational procedures used to collect and analyse the data, as well as the sequence of and the relationship between these procedures. The development of the research questions, the selection of the case, the decisions taken regarding methods of data collection and analysis are discussed in the sections that follow.

### *The development of the research questions*

The research described here had its origins in the recommendations emanating from a Pan Commonwealth meeting on post secondary colleges in the small states of the Commonwealth which was held in St Lucia in 1988 by the Human Resource Development Group of the Commonwealth Secretariat. The writer/researcher was then associated with the host institution in an administrative capacity and was therefore a member of the group which was enjoined to prepare a practical handbook on the establishment and development of multi-purpose colleges, which would be based on the findings of the meeting and include short case studies drawn from the countries participating in the Saint Lucia meeting (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988).

Figure 2  
The case Study Research Design



Adapted from Yin, R.K. (1989) Case Study Research, Design and Methods p. 56

As a national researcher the initial step was one of raising questions about familiar issues. In this respect the generation of the research questions outlined in Chapter One was helped by a balance of ideas derived from personal experience and insights from a reading of the international literature on small states, the "juxtaposition of the two helping [to] trigger off new insights and questions" (Vulliamy et al, 1990: 167). The collection of the data was therefore approached not from a position of total ignorance of "the literature of theory and fact on the area under study" as Glaser and Strauss (1967: 37) recommend, or even from Wilcox's (1982) "foreshadowed problem" stance, since experience and prior reading had already provided some idea as to "what is significant, what makes sense to count" and "what is important to observe" (Wilcox, 1982: 459). In fact, Glaser and Strauss subsequently acknowledge that:

*... the researcher does not approach reality as a tabula rasa. He must have a perspective that will help him see relevant data and abstract significant categories from his scrutiny of data. (Glaser and Strauss, 1968: 3).*

Thus there developed a focused approach which, it is argued, need not be seen as betraying the principles underlying qualitative research and concern for accessing the perceptions and judgement of one's research subjects. In fact, the decision to frame the investigation in terms of questions rather than hypotheses reflects a concern for openness, and an appreciation of the difference between a preconceived plan which can help to structure and guide the study and a preconceived idea which may inhibit its development.

The researcher therefore concurs with Lewin that the "extensive period of immersion prior to intensive fieldwork [provides] confidence that the restriction of scope through the formalisation of the research questions [is] legitimate" (in Vulliamy et al, 1990: 55). Research questions are first framed within the wider context of small nation states, since it has been argued that there are many "significant commonalities" which centre on the economic, political and cultural vulnerability of these small states and on the strengths which derive from the nature of their societies (Packer, 1989: 48). The investigation then focuses on these questions as they relate to one specific country and its tertiary level institution. Enquiry is structured around themes or focus areas

along the same lines as those used by participants at the 1988 Commonwealth Meeting referred to earlier. It is hoped that the Secretariat's call for case studies of national colleges will be taken up in due course by other researchers, and so the areas around which these early discussions revolved will provide a common framework for future comparative analyses across the range of small states.

### *Selection of the case*

It has been indicated earlier on in the chapter that the case was selected on the basis of its familiarity and access to the researcher. The decision therefore reflects, in Vulliamy's words "a typical compromise between what is most desirable from the research point of view, what is most practical and [the] researcher's purely personal preferences" (in Vulliamy et al, 1990: 41). Concerns about familiarity have been raised in an earlier section, and the rationale for the choice discussed. However, particular effort is made to minimise the negative aspects of insider research, even though such concerns are dispelled by Lewin's observation that:

*All researchers are in a sense outsiders since they have an agenda which is over and above any participation which they have in the activities that are the subject of their research (Vulliamy et al, 1990: 211).*

A style of inquiry and data collection is adopted which recognises both the "insiderness" and temporary "outsiderness" (Lewin, in Vulliamy et al, 1990: 211) of the researcher's position and strikes what is hopefully a realistic balance between the two. The decision was taken therefore to concentrate more on interviews and documentary analysis as methods of inquiry in the study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St Lucia.

### *Data collection methods*

Three methods of inquiry are used to collect the data or "evidence" as Stenhouse (1979, 1982) prefers to say. These are indepth interviewing, documentary analysis, and participant observation based on extensive immersion in the setting prior to the period of intensive fieldwork. In addition a limited period of observation and

participation was possible during the formal data - gathering exercise. The methods chosen can be described as pluralist, as they are all "intentionally congruent with [the researcher's] set of principles or philosophical assumptions" (Powney and Watts, 1987: 179) discussed earlier. These convergent lines of inquiry or multiple sources of evidence provide the construct validity which Yin for example, sees as one of the main criteria for judging the quality of research designs. In his view:

*... the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation mentioned repeatedly .... Thus, any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode (Yin, 1989: 97).*

More substantively, however, such "triangulation", by taking different bearings on the activity being researched, recognises that there are multiple realities, since the world in which reality is to be located is that of the perception of participants and the meanings they ascribe to them (Stenhouse, 1979).

### *In-depth interviewing*

It is useful to preface the discussion of the type of interview used in this study by referring to Brenner's (1985) definition of the term:

*Indeed, interviewing means quite literally to develop a view of something between (inter) people. If viewing means perceiving, then the term "interview" refers to the act of perceiving as conducted ... between two separate people (Brenner et al, 1985: 148).*

The interview is therefore a two-way process, both the interviewer and the interviewee bringing preconceptions to the interview which will affect what they say, hear and report and which may be confirmed or changed in the course of the interview (Simons, 1982). This strengthens the case for the "interview as conversation" (Simons, 1982; Burgess, 1984) which is chosen for this inquiry. This was a more natural way to proceed as the respondents in the study are for the most part the researcher's peers, some of them further up in the hierarchy while others can be classed as "elite informants" (Powney and Watts, 1987: 185). They are aware of the researcher's familiarity with the case which is the subject of the interview and

so it would have been too contrived to simulate ignorance and adopt the position of a naive outsider. Moreover, the research questions generated assume a certain exposure to wider issues now faced in higher education which were communicated to respondents in advance of the interview (See Appendix A). What is sought then are the respondents' personal perceptions of these wider issues as they relate to the case being researched. The interviews are therefore planned as "conversation pieces" rather than "inquisitions" (Simons, 1982). Standard texts on interviewing in qualitative research argue for an unstructured approach so as to avoid imposing a previous and possibly inappropriate frame of reference on the subjects of the research. To Lewin (in Vulliamy et al, 1990) however, unstructured approaches where there is literally no structure and no agenda to follow, appear a luxury, to be enjoyed by those committed to long-term field work. A more practical approach, and the one adopted for use in this study is therefore the semi-structured or "general interview guide" approach (Patton, 1980), based on agendas of issues identified from the research questions.

### *Documentary evidence*

Fetterman (1989) considers written documents as being one of the most valuable and time-saving forms of data collection. Yin (1989) assesses the overall value of documents in case study research by pointing to their explicit role in corroborating and augmenting evidence from other sources. The design of this study therefore allowed for documentary analysis to be conducted both before and after the main data-gathering activity - the "gathering of oral evidence by interview" (Stenhouse, 1979: 10) Documentary analysis prior to the interviews helped in the refinement of the research questions and in the preparation for the interviews, by providing preliminary insights into the perceptions and perspectives of some of the key respondents. This knowledge was to prove useful in formulating probes to explore in more depth some of the views expressed during the course of the interviews. The documentary analysis served to identify discrepancies, but it also revealed consistencies and additions to the interview data. Documentary evidence collected included both official and semi-official material - reports, memoranda, minutes,

magazines, ordinances, media articles, addresses, lectures and so on, with no prejudgement as to the validity, necessary accuracy or lack of bias, and without the kind of scepticism that Stephens (in Vulliamy et al, 1990: 155) had for "anything that looked remotely official". A qualitative researcher seeks the "view from inside", whatever that view is. The official line can be as sincere or as misleading in its written or oral form and in any case any false leads are usually detected in the triangulation process. In fact, divorces between the policy of officialdom and the reality of practice can themselves trigger new insights and lead to deeper probing.

### *Participant - observation*

The third method of inquiry used in this study is one which can loosely be described as participant observation based, on the one hand, on active involvement with the College prior to the period of intensive fieldwork, and on the other, on personal involvement and observation during the data-gathering exercise. Such participation/observation can be seen as taking place in two phases, with the "findings" used for different purposes in the research process. In the first phase, the insights gained from personal experience, and from total immersion, helped in the generation of the research questions. The observation was quite unstructured, resulting for the most part in mental notes which helped confirm or contradict issues which arose either in the literature or within the College itself. The observation was neither explicitly overt nor covert, and could in fact be justified as the normal activities of one involved in the management of the institution. The second phase was scheduled as part of the formal data-gathering exercise, and took the form of attendance at committee and planning meetings. This second set of findings was meant primarily to augment, challenge or corroborate data which had been gathered in the interviews and from the documents; another effort at strengthening the validity and reliability of the study. Vulliamy recognises the value of such observation at this stage of the research process when he argues that:

*One of the strengths of case study methods is that what people say in interviews can often be checked out by observation of their practice (Vulliamy et al, 1990: 105).*



The limited use of participant observation as a data-gathering strategy however is deliberate and is intended to minimise the incidence of bias which could be attributed to an inside-researcher's familiarity with the setting.

This departure from the classic participant observer mould categorises this case study as one based on "condensed field work" (Stenhouse, 1982; Vulliamy, 1990), which Vulliamy describes as relying:

*... principally on tape-recorded interviews and the collection of documents and, where observation is included, it tends to be limited and not of the comprehensive scale of the participant observer favoured by conventional ethnographers (Vulliamy et al 1990: 14).*

Stenhouse offers an interesting variation on the participation observation theme when he argues the case for the use of condensed fieldwork in case study research by those who cannot conduct long term studies in the field:

*The people I interview are participants and they are observers of themselves and others; my object is to provide in interview the conditions that help them to talk reflectively about their observations and experience. It is their observations I am after, not mine (Stenhouse, 1982: 266).*

However convenient that approach may seem to the beleaguered researcher, there is a lot to be said for the fresh perspective that can be achieved through "the dominance of the researcher's eye" (Stenhouse, 1982: 266), no matter how limited such opportunities may be. It is the search for this other perspective that prompts the use of this third technique.

### ***The case study data base***

It has been observed that one of the major shortcomings of case study research is the lack of a formal independent data base (Stenhouse, 1978, 1979; Yin, 1989). Too often, Yin (1989) argues, the case study data are synonymous with the evidence presented in the case study report, and a critical reader therefore has no recourse if he or she wants to inspect the data base that led to the case study conclusions. He is supported in this criticism by Stenhouse who laments the absence of what he refers to as "an intermediate stage between fieldwork and reporting in readable form to a

general professional audience" (1978: 32-33). He argues that in spite of the considerable interest in qualitative and descriptive work in the form of case study:

*... such work lacks verifiability and fails to cumulate. It is too individualistic and shows too little sense of the responsibility to lay the foundations of a sound tradition of public scholarship (Stenhouse, 1978: 33).*

Both writers therefore strongly recommend that every case study project should strive to develop a formal, retrievable data base, so that in principle, readers or other investigators can review the evidence directly. This "data base" (Yin, 1989) or "case record" (Stenhouse 1978, 1982) can serve as "grounding for [the researcher's] own reportage and as resources for communal use by the community of educational researchers" (Stenhouse, 1978:33); it can also help increase the reliability of the entire case study (Yin, 1989). In the light of these recommendations, and recognising its potential for future comparative analyses with data generated from similar research conducted in other small country settings, a data base is created from the information obtained from the interviews and the documents consulted. This data base which takes the form of synopses of anonymised interviews and an annotated bibliography of the main documents consulted is presented in Appendix G.

## **The research process**

### ***Pre-fieldwork***

The difficulty of deciding the point at which a research project actually begins is one of the issues which Burgess (1984) addresses in a review of his own work and the work of several other field researchers. It is customary, he observes, for research reports to indicate that the literature review constitutes the real start of the research. However, while conceding that it is the reading done by the researcher that helps to generate a research problem, Burgess argues that these accounts often overlook the relationship between the methodological training of researchers and their personal experiences in a social setting that may help to generate a research problem and a programme of research:

*... sociologists studying their own societies may have experience of*

*particular roles and social settings that can be utilised in their own research (Burgess, 1984: 32).*

The writer's experience supports this argument. It has been noted earlier that this study originated from personal involvement in the management of a tertiary level institution, and interest in the particular characteristics of tertiary education provision in a small institution which this involvement created. The opportunity which the Commonwealth Secretariat later provided for sharing experiences with other small-state institutions kindled this interest, pointing to the potential benefits of examining such provision across a broad range of small states. It is these personal insights and experiences that formed the basis of the present study. A reading of the literature on tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific then opened up a new line of inquiry into development issues in small states. This corpus of small-states literature, added to these personal insights and experiences, provided the backdrop against which the research questions outlined in the introductory chapter were generated.

Then followed the decision to examine these questions within the framework of a case study of one tertiary level institution. This was a decision dictated by constraints of time and cost. The selection of the case itself was motivated not so much by questions of "typicality" or "representativeness", but by considerations of access and familiarity with the setting. Burgess (1984) points to three factors which influence the choice of a research site - willingness of members of the institution to co-operate with the researcher, convenience, and ease of access. These factors, but more specifically, familiarity with the institution and the personal decision to document the evolution and development of the tertiary education sector in the writer's own country, influenced the selection of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College as the "research site".

In order to compile a data base that could lend itself readily to future comparisons with other similar studies, the framework for the case inquiry was drawn up to take into account the main issues discussed at the Commonwealth meeting on post-

secondary colleges in small states to which reference has already been made. The main areas of focus were:

- A factors contributing to the development of the tertiary education sector and to the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College;
- B the institution's mission and purpose;
- C processes and procedures leading to the establishment of the institution;
- D the organisation, management and financing of the institution;
- E the range and level of programmes required and offered;
- F co-operation and collaboration in the provision of tertiary education;
- G the impact of smallness of size on tertiary education provision.

Inquiry was therefore structured loosely around the following themes:

Planning; Governance, Organisation and Financing; Policy and Mission; Programming; Co-operation and Collaboration.

As already indicated, two main sources of data were chosen - documents and interviews. The decision was taken to use the former primarily to collect information on the factual details and aspects of the case, and on the historical and contemporary contexts within which the development of tertiary education was to be examined (Focus areas C,D,E, and F). The latter was used primarily for those areas where perspectives, viewpoints, perceptions and interpretation of events, trends, policies and directions in tertiary education were being solicited (Focus areas A,B,E,F and G). This decision was motivated by recognition of the fact that prospective respondents would have been aware of the researcher's familiarity with the case, and would not have felt the need, or even appreciated the reason, for spending time on details of the facts of the case. This was subsequently confirmed during interviews in which some respondents prefaced their remarks with the phrase "As you already know". Their assumptions were not always correct, and some information may perhaps have not

been shared because it was assumed to have been familiar to the interviewer. Hammersley and Atkinson refer to a similar situation encountered by Platt whose work was familiar to her respondents:

*A particular problem here was the tendency of respondents to invite her to draw on her background knowledge rather than spelling out what they were saying. As a result, she sometimes gained responses lacking the explicitness and/or detail necessary to bear her interpretations (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983: 120).*

This is a reversal of the situation against which insider-researchers are always cautioned - taking things for granted or overlooking situations that at first sight appear familiar. In the situation encountered in the present study, it is the researched community that was treating the strange as familiar, taking for granted the researcher's knowledge of issues and practices, giving "familiar value" to information that the researcher may not have possessed. Secondly some of the data that needed to be accessed were considered too detailed or were related to events which had taken place too long ago to be dealt with adequately in the course of an interview. This too, was confirmed by the frequency with which respondents referred the interviewer to archival and documentary material to fill in the gaps. Memory lapses on the part of the respondents, or the sheer detailed nature of some of the data justified this initial decision.

### *Sampling procedures*

The choice of the interview as the main data collection technique to some extent dictated the sampling strategy adopted. In what Burgess (1984) refers to as judgement sampling, informants are selected on the basis of the special contribution which the researcher believes they can make to the situation being studied. In this he joins other field researchers (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989; Vulliamy et al, 1990) in emphasising the need to seek out people who possess knowledge about specialised interests and concerns in the social setting, people whom the researcher feels are integral to the scenes and situations being investigated:

*In field research informants are selected for their knowledge of a particular setting which may complement the researcher's observations and point towards further investigation that needs to be done in order to understand social settings, social structures and social processes (Burgess, 1984: 75).*

Such judgement sampling however demands that the researcher have a knowledge of the situation that is to be studied in order to evaluate the individual's position in a particular setting and their knowledge of that setting (Mead, 1953, cited in Burgess, 1984). It is this kind of advantage that insider knowledge can bring to a research project.

Using judgement sampling therefore, the respondents were selected from among people involved in planning the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and those currently involved in its management and administration. An initial 22 were drawn from the Ministry of Education and Culture; the Ministry of Planning; the College's Board of Governors and senior administrative staff; the membership of the task force which was set up to plan the establishment of the College; the Central Secretariat of the OECS; the School of Continuing Studies of the UWI, and non-governmental organisations involved in non-formal continuing education and training. During the course of the fieldwork however, seven others were included, on the recommendation of the original respondents. These subsequent additions were key figures from the private sector, the Employers' Federation and the labour organisations. The open-ended nature of the research design and the sampling strategy used made it possible to accommodate these additional interviews which, in retrospect, considerably enhanced the final case study report. The value of that type of contribution from these "respondents-turned informants" is recognised by several field researchers, who consider that:

*... key informants are often critical to the success of a case study. Such persons not only provide the case study investigator with insights into a matter but also can suggest sources of corroboratory evidence - and initiate access to such sources (Yin, 1989: 89).*

The insights that these new sources yielded were not only corroboratory, but opened up a completely new line of inquiry into the role and contribution of the private sector and non-governmental agencies in the planning and provision of tertiary education.

Prior to making initial contact with the first group of respondents, a preliminary interview guide was drawn up to match each respondent with the general topics to be investigated. The match was made on the basis of the respondents' special knowledge

of the particular topic(s) and the nature of their involvement with the College or with the provision of tertiary education in general (Appendix B). From this interview guide, a pool of questions was compiled to be used as an agenda or aide-memoire during the interview sessions (Appendix G). A similar strategy was adopted by Stephens (in Vulliamy et al, 1990) who approached his interviews with a list of "important areas" that he wanted to discuss. Lewin (in Vulliamy et al, 1990) too, refers to his outline agenda which included suggested probe questions devised beforehand, while Burgess (1984) maintained a topic list covering a range of themes in all the interviews that could subsequently be compared.

### *Gaining access*

Prior involvement in the management of the College and personal knowledge of the key respondents facilitated entry into the field. However, a research memorandum, indicating the broad scope of the study, the research design, and the implications of the work for the College and those involved in it, was prepared for dispatch to respondents two months before entry into the field (Appendix A). On this issue, Burgess recommends that in presenting the study:

*... a clear indication should be given of those aspects of the setting on which you intend to focus and those individuals with whom you intend to work most closely. In particular, attention should be drawn to the implications of your work for the setting and those within it (Burgess, 1984: 50).*

A letter outlining the study and establishing the "research bargain" (Burgess, 1984: 50) accompanied the research memorandum (Appendix C). Essentially, this sought the co-operation of each respondent, and permission to have the interview tape-recorded. It indicated the general areas that the researcher wanted to address and the use that would be made of the information collected. Written agreement was received from six of the respondents within three weeks of dispatch, and verbal agreements were given by all others two weeks prior to entry into the field.

### *In the field*

The fieldwork was conducted over a period of ten weeks. The original plan to schedule the document-based research and post-field observations after all interviews had been conducted had to be revised. Cancellations and re-scheduling of interview sessions at the interviewees' request were more frequent than had been anticipated. The reality of the small-state context and the unpredictable work schedule of the multi-functional small-state administrator (Farrugia and Attard, 1989) were forcibly brought home. Archival work and attendance at meetings for purposes of observation therefore had to be scheduled when and where possible in the intervals between interview appointments.

### *Interviews*

Reference was made earlier to the pool of questions compiled as an aide-memoire for the researcher's own use. From this pool separate "agendas" were prepared for each respondent covering the issues that would be discussed during the interview. However, at the specific request of the second interviewee contacted, the agenda that was originally meant for the researcher's own use was given to each respondent a day or two prior to the scheduled session. This second interviewee, whom Powney and Watts would have considered an "elite informant" (1987: 185), considered the study too important to the future development of the tertiary education sector of the country to allow it to depend purely on "off-the-cuff" comments and observations. This respondent felt that the researcher's search for genuine perceptions and perspectives called for more reflection than was allowed for in a completely impromptu discussion. The argument was a reasonable one, the suggestion was made in good faith, and the procedure was adopted in order to maintain consistency in the interviewing process. The doubts that still lingered were dispelled by the stimulating, fruitful and information-rich conversation that ensued, and this set the tone for all the others that followed. The concern that interviewees might have taken a directive role and changed the process into a structured interview proved to be unfounded. The realisation that this was not going to be an inquisition (Simons, 1982), but a sharing



of ideas , put them at ease, and the conversation flowed easily from one issue to another. Only once did the interview follow the order on the topic list from which both interviewer and interviewee worked. It served as an aide-memoire for both parties.

This procedure, and the fact that the interviewer was known personally to all the respondents, meant a departure from some of the conventional prescriptions recommended. However, Brenner makes allowances for this kind of flexibility:

*Most kinds of intensive interviewing will require the use of an interview guide, as accounts on more than one topic need to be obtained...How [the researcher] does this is unimportant, as long as he/she acts non-directively and takes care that the accounts are adequate...and as complete as possible (Brenner et al, 1985:152).*

All the interviews but one were tape-recorded (the exception was at the specific request of the interviewee). They were, on average, of eighty-five minutes duration (two lasted over two hours), and were scheduled at times and places most convenient to the interviewees - in their offices, in their homes, on their way home from work, even on the beach. In almost every case there was "both a history and a future of collegueship and collaboration" (Powney and Watts, 1987: 184) between the writer and the interviewees, but there was no feeling, as Powney and Watts suggest, that the relationship would never be the same again. Moreover, not only did interviewees recommend others whom they knew had specialised knowledge of some of the issues discussed, but most were aware of who the other respondents would have been. This raised the question of the preservation of anonymity for the research subjects in a small-country setting, where the pool of people likely to be well-informed about particular issues is relatively small, and where such key figures are known to each other. Powney and Watts recognise the problematic nature of this ethical issue in both large- and small-scale educational research:

*... the profession is relatively small and it is difficult, even in large-scale surveys, to disguise the identity of unique schools, colleges or even distinctive styles of educational management. Therefore it is possible that even individuals can be tracked down. Concealing the identity of informants becomes still more problematic in small-scale educational research (Powney and Watts, 1987: 184).*

Attention has already been drawn in Chapter Two to the highly personalised nature of the society in small states, and to the fact that people know each other in a multitude of settings (Bray, 1991a, 1991b). The issue of anonymity was not problematic, although the convention of anonymised references to specific individuals was adhered to. Every effort was made to preserve the confidentiality of what each respondent said during the interviews, although some speculated on the positions that others would take on particular issues. While the issues of anonymity and confidentiality are usually linked in discussions of researchers' obligations to their research subjects, this study demonstrated that it is possible to treat them as distinct concerns. However, this subtle difference notwithstanding, it is recognised that in a small-state setting, the boundaries could again become blurred upon dissemination or publication of the research report.

#### *Documentary data*

On first negotiating access, specific requests were made for permission to consult any relevant documents that were held by respondents either in their official or unofficial capacities. While some were already in the public domain, many were restricted documents which had to be studied on site and for which prior clearance had to be sought before they could be retrieved (an often back-breaking, dusty task for some very accommodating filing clerks) and released. The main repositories for these restricted documents were the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College itself, and the documentation centre of the National Research and Development Foundation. These documentary sources yielded the quantitative and historical data which inform the case study report, and they augmented much of the qualitative information obtained from the interviews. The main documents consulted for the case study are recorded in the annotated bibliography which forms part of the data base (Appendix G).

## *Observation*

The observations that were carried out on entry in the field were of an informal nature and they were scheduled mainly to ascertain whether there were any substantial changes to the decision-making and planning process which obtained at the institution before the study was undertaken. The researcher's position on the College staff gave legitimacy to the participant-observer role played at meetings of the Academic Board and the Management and Finance Committee, and at the weekly planning meetings of the College Deans, which were held during the last four weeks of fieldwork. The notes taken at these meetings, and at other visits to the College were followed up in documents or through subsequent elaborations and explanations by Committee members and College staff.

## *Post - fieldwork*

## *Data analysis*

Vulliamy and Webb (1992) define analysis as the process of bringing order to data by focusing on key issues, themes and categories. The process is seen to involve primarily two things: decisions, judgements and choices about what is, or does not appear to be, important or meaningful, and the generation of insights that assist the researcher in the construction of an argument that makes sense of experience (Stephens, in Vulliamy et al, 1990). This is essentially a data reduction and interpretation exercise which involves the recording, organising and retrieval of information in an on-going process of data gathering and reflection, which contributes to what Glaser and Strauss (1967,1968) call "progressive focusing" - "the continual funnelling process which limits and clarifies the scope and aims of the research project" (Vulliamy and Webb, 1992: 220). The ongoing nature of data analysis in qualitative research, and its reliance on the creative imagination of the researcher is brought out by Hammersley and Atkinson's observation that:

*In ethnography the analysis of data is not a distinct stage of the research. It begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continues into the process of*

*writing up. Formally, it starts to take shape in analytic notes and memoranda; informally, it is embodied in the ethnographer's ideas, hunches and emergent concepts. In this way the analysis of data feeds into the process of research design (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983: 174).*

The pre-fieldwork phase of the study and the processes which led to the formulation of the research questions and the selection of key issues and themes to be investigated have already been outlined. What follows is a discussion of the processes used for bringing order, structure and meaning (Marshall and Rossman, 1989) to the data collected.

- Stage 1** Each recorded interview was played through in its entirety to reconstruct the scene and to recapture the mood, tone and general atmosphere of the interview session.
- Stage 2** During a second play-back, notes were taken and jotted down in sequence either as paraphrases of the interviewee's comments or as verbatim quotations where these were considered particularly relevant or succinctly articulated.
- Stage 3** Coding categories or "organisers" (Lewin, in Vulliamy et al, 1990) were established. These were based on the topics that were prepared before the interviews, though there was a "rag-bag" category (Vulliamy and Webb, 1992) into which other data were classified for subsequent use. These categories were assigned numbers which were then matched to units of data during several re-readings of the transcript notes (see Bogdan and Biklen, 1982: 165).
- Stage 4** The units of data were then regrouped into these pre-established categories and the interview was written up. It is this edited reconstructed version that forms the case record (Stenhouse, 1979) or the case study data base (Yin, 1989). Each interview was assigned an alpha-

numeric code, the first part of which identifies the respondent, and the second, the date on which the interview took place. It is this data base and these codes (Appendix G) which are referred to in the study. It has been argued that such a record is only a filtered version of the conversations that take place, and that the reader is usually not aware of what has been omitted, or of the criteria for inclusion or omission. Powney and Watts (1987) see the reader as being required in such a situation to trust the integrity of the researcher to include all relevant data whether or not it supports the researcher's main hypotheses or argument. However, they also cite Hull as suggesting that even where the full transcript of an interview is available, this is an incomplete record of what occurred, since what was said does not necessarily give access to the participants' perceptions as they had voiced them at the interview. From this argument, one could defend the strategy adopted for this study, in that this "edited primary source" (Stenhouse, 1978: 37) or "second record" (Powney and Watts, 1987: 192) adds the interviewer's view of the interview and the impressions gained from non-verbal gestures, intonations and emphasis, thus explaining more fully what actually happened. Moreover, such a case record, which involves the editing and re-writing of interview notes to produce what Stenhouse (1978: 37) calls a "theoretically parsimonious condensation of the case data" (see also Patton, 1980), offers an organised and structured retrievable data base which can be conveniently accessed without having to wade through a voluminous mass of raw data. The significance of such a data base

for this and other studies on tertiary education in small states has already been discussed.

Analysis of the document-based data was done concurrently with the interview-based data. The main issues in each of the documents consulted were summarised to compile the annotated bibliography. The quantitative data were extracted from the primary documents and analysed; the historical and substantive information was indexed on retrieval cards and organised chronologically in the case of the former and thematically in the case of the latter.

The whole exercise was characterised by "low-tech" methods of qualitative data analysis (Vulliamy and Webb, 1992); the sample size and the type of data collected were such that computerised treatment could be dispensed with.

#### **Stage 5**

Then followed a further review of the literature on particular themes and issues which were seen to be relevant to the research questions, but which had not been pursued in depth in the pre-fieldwork review. The value of such secondary literature in the process of analysis is signalled by Vulliamy and Webb:

*When writing up, such secondary literature is usually interweaved with extracts from the raw data to develop and refine the analysis, rather than appearing as a separate review of the literature before a discussion of the collection and analysis of the data (Vulliamy and Webb 1992: 221).*

This secondary literature provides a backdrop against which the case study report is presented and informs the comparative analysis which is built around the findings of this case study.

Themes and issues grounded in the field data are related to other published works on the nature and direction of tertiary education development in small nation states, contributing in the process to the construction of theory and the development of models of tertiary education in and beyond the small-state context.

### *Writing up*

The sixth stage in the analysis of the data collected was the composition of the report and the discussion of the findings. For Marshall and Rossman (1989) writing up about qualitative data cannot be separated from the analytic process. They argue that:

*... in fact, it is central to that process, for in the choice of particular words to summarise and reflect the complexity of the data, the researcher is engaging in the interpretive act, lending shape and form - meaning - to massive amounts of raw data (Marshall and Rossman, 1989: 119).*

From the earlier stages of the analysis of the raw data collected, three "holding ideas" (Stephens, in Vulliamy et al, 1990: 217) emerged:

- that small nation states were developing a distinctive model of tertiary education to respond to their special circumstances;
- that this model was based on new responses to the issues of scale, isolation and dependence which have been seen as constraining development in small-state systems;
- that interpretations and explanations of this model shifted between two conflicting perspectives: that the small state system has an ecology of its own, but that it could also be seen as being a microcosm of the larger system.

These holding ideas contributed to the eventual organisation of the text; they became three strands interwoven throughout the case study report itself and the comparative analysis which follows.

Writing up the study was an attempt at synthesising two processes. On the one hand, there is the analysis of the case against the background of these three ideas or conceptual frameworks. On the other, there is the examination of the development of tertiary education in a broader small-state context, building on the particularities of the case, extending the concepts to a discussion of developments and trends in other small states. The aim was to move from an analysis of the particular case to a discussion of the processes and characteristics of tertiary education provision in a wider context.

To achieve this, the data are organised in three main parts. The first (Chapters Five and Six) examines the context within which the case is set, and provides the background information needed for a fuller understanding of the report which follows. The organisation of the report reflects an interweaving of a thematic and analytic approach, the themes having been established prior to data collection. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) consider this thematic or topical organisation an excellent way of encapsulating a great deal of information in terms that may be broadly comparable to other published research. It was this prospect of future comparison with similar studies on the development of tertiary education in small nation states that motivated the decision to use this particular textual strategy for the study. The draft of this first part was sent to five of the respondents who were invited to comment on the researcher's representation of the facts and details of the case. This validating procedure, - respondent validation - which is recommended by several researchers, among them Macdonald and Walker (1977), Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), Simons (1989), Yin (1989) and Vulliamy and Webb (1992), is considered to be of value, in that participants in the events documented in the data may have access to additional knowledge of the context that is not available to the researcher. The feedback received was confined mainly to personal observations on some of the issues raised, and suggestions regarding possible lines of inquiry that could be pursued. These were incorporated in subsequent drafts of Chapters Five and Six.

The second part (Chapter Seven) moves beyond the confines of the particular case. The "holding ideas" are developed on the basis of the data obtained from the case



study and from the secondary literature reviewed. The final part (Chapter Eight) aims at a higher level of abstraction, drawing on the main issues raised, and sketching the broad outlines of arguments that are seen to have applicability beyond the group of small states that are the subject of this study. The overall study can therefore be considered as the writer's effort at "blending personal experiences with theories and data in order to make some contribution to [an] understanding of the social world" (Burgess, 1984: 183) - in this case, the world of small states.

***CHAPTER FIVE***  
***TERTIARY EDUCATION IN ST LUCIA: THE CONTEXT***

*"The greatest challenge for us all: how to ensure that a knowledge gap does not open up giving literacy a wider meaning and illiteracy a longer reach".  
Sir Shridath Ramphal*

## **Introduction**

Kandel articulates the classic rationale for the study of the context of educational development by maintaining that:

*In order to understand, appreciate and evaluate the real meaning of the educational system of a nation, it is essential to know something of its history and traditions, of the forces and attitudes governing the social organisations, of the political and economic conditions that determine its development.*

*(Kandel, 1933: xix)*

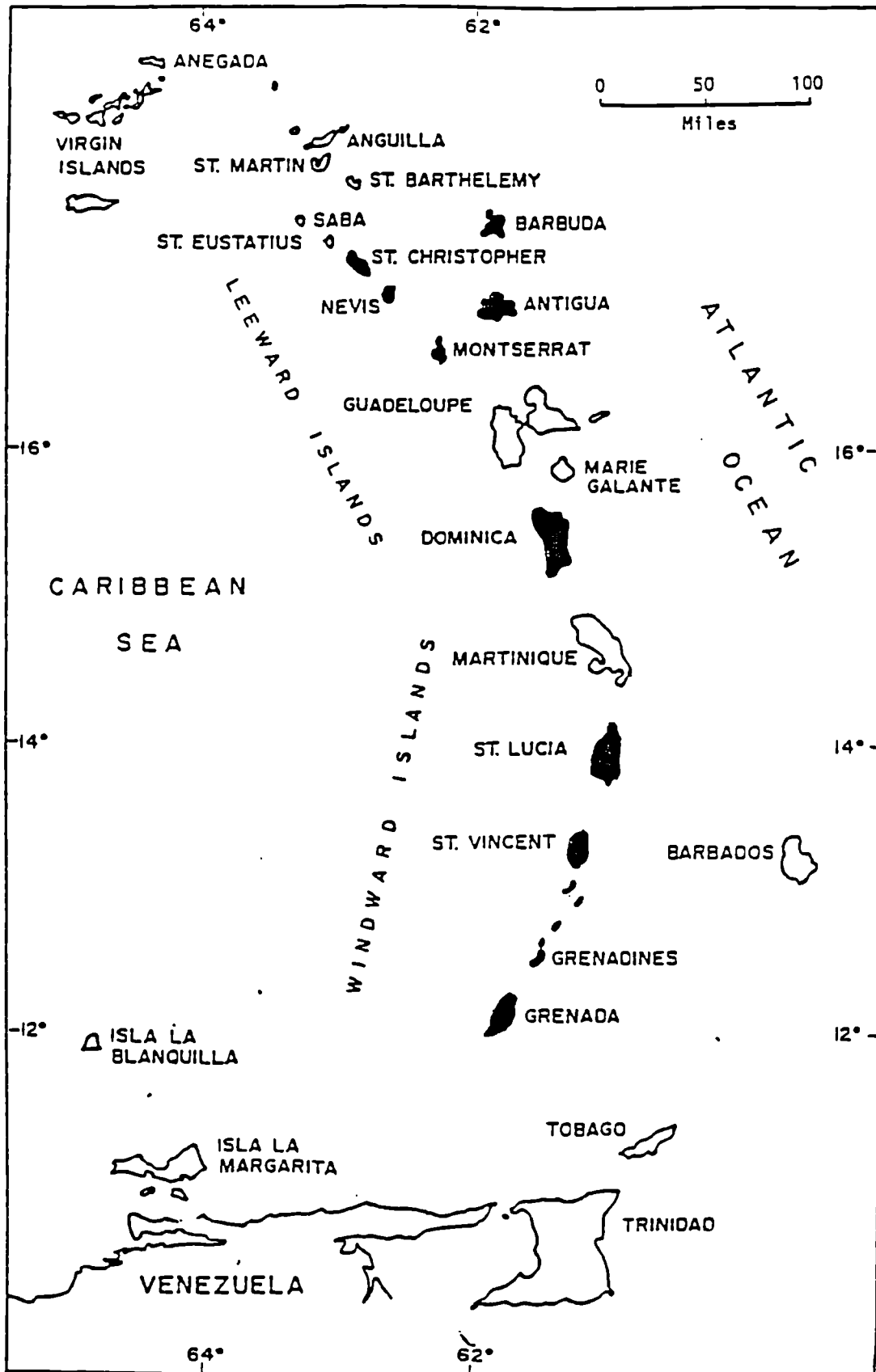
It is perhaps even more axiomatic that the effective planning and management of an education system or of any of its sectors require a consideration of the forces and factors that have shaped the community which it serves, as well as an appreciation of the social, economic, and geo-political environments in which the system is to continue to operate. This chapter therefore examines the context within which tertiary education in St Lucia has evolved and discusses the prospects for its future development. The sections that follow pay attention to the geographical, historical, sociological and economic contexts which impact on tertiary education planning in the island. Tertiary education itself, the purveyor of enlightenment, as Ramphal puts it (Sherlock and Nettleford, 1990: 304), is then discussed with reference to national and regional potential, and in the light of the challenges that these contextual factors pose for the future.

## **Geographical context**

St Lucia occupies a central position in the Windwards Group of islands in the southern Caribbean (Map 5.1). Its 238 sq. mile surface area is characterised by mountainous ranges fanning out from a central ridge which runs along almost the



Map 5.2  
The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States



entire length of the island. The resulting topography has created population clusters concentrated for the most part in the valleys and along the coastline. Territorial compactness therefore is not a feature of this island state, for although it has a population density of 712 persons per square mile, about 53% of the country's population is concentrated in the north-western part of the island - in the urban and suburban areas of the capital, Castries (Appendix D). This distribution has implications for accessibility to, and the provision of, educational facilities island-wide.

### **Historical and political context**

Conflicting accounts of St Lucia's discovery and various name changes over time, reflect its mosaic past. The present population is predominantly of African and Indian descent, as first slaves, and later indentured servants were brought in to replace the Amerindian population which was virtually wiped out during the early days of European colonial expansion. The vicissitudes of war between the metropolitan powers of Britain and France saw St Lucia change hands fourteen times during a two-hundred year period, before it was finally ceded to Britain by the Treaty of Paris in 1814, under the express condition that French civil laws should continue to be the law of the land (Liverpool, 1977). This condition of cession explains why St Lucia was long regarded as a British colony "in little more than name", where the people were French in "language, manners and feelings" (Bacchus 1990:113). The cultural, linguistic and religious repercussions are still very much in evidence today, and each has had a significant impact on the development of the island's educational system. A British colony since 1814, St Lucia negotiated for Associated Statehood with Britain in 1967, joining with seven other islands in the sub-region to form the West Indies Associated States Council of Ministers (WISA) (Compton, 1991). Full political independence was attained in 1979, but the spirit of regional co-operation and integration prevailing among the WISA countries brought the island into a new regional alliance for functional co-operation - the OECS (Map 5.2) in June 1981. However, the Treaty of Basseterre under which St Lucia agreed, among other things, to co-ordinate, harmonise and pursue joint policies in tertiary education with the other

member states may soon be superseded by another as the countries prepare to take the ultimate step in regional interdependence - full political union. St Lucia's political directorate cogently argues the case for the island's commitment to the unity initiative by pointing out that:

*We must now seek a further strengthening of our Organisation to give it the capacity to quickly and collectively adapt and respond to changes that are occurring in our environment (Compton, 1990: 10).*

These changes will almost certainly influence the type of educational provision required, and therefore any future planning for tertiary education will need to take this collective approach into account.

### **Sociological profile**

Contemporary society in St Lucia can be viewed as stratified along economic rather than ethnic lines, the strongest reminder that the practice of forced labour, whether in the form of slavery or indentureship, was a great social leveller, and that social mobility depended on individual effort and entrepreneurship. The importance attached to education as a means of status and economic improvement is as poignant now as it was to the non-white population of the nineteenth century (Bacchus, 1990), "when the stigmata of ignorance and low social status ... plagued the vast majority for some three centuries" (Sherlock and Nettleford, 1990: 288). Miller (1987a) and Buckley (1991) for example, recognise contemporary St Lucian society as one that respects education as the key to advancement but they regard as a neo-colonialist educational issue the measurement of success by the number and quality of ordinary level passes on external examinations be they sponsored by Cambridge or the Caribbean Examinations Council. What seems like excessive concern for external validation of local initiatives, has been attributed to the "perverse indoctrination" of plantation and colonial society (Theophilus, 1988). While St Lucia cannot claim a monopoly on what Theophilus refers to as "the wretched social legacies of the plantation society", he contends that there is an urgent need for a "reverse process of positive indoctrination" to enable St Lucians to "recognise, nurture and foster" their identity and personality (1988). If one accepts the sociological role of education as

the transmitter of the values of a society, then a major role of education in St Lucia could be to help the society define for itself the concept of national identity, self-worth and development, so that "the descendants of ... slaves can better appreciate their current social predicament and attack it at its roots" (Theophilus, 1988). It is argued that St Lucia's history has left serious scars on its people's psyche, and that education must assist in this healing process. Tertiary education in particular is expected not only to improve the people's academic standing, but also to develop and prepare them in an intellectual and cultural sense (Interview BGV-T, 13.08.92). This *cultural role for tertiary education* evokes strong support among those directly involved in the planning and management of the sector, as reflected in the comment that the island's tertiary institution has "a distinctive role to play in helping St Lucians develop their own notions of history, their identity as a people, their own creative possibilities in terms of culture in all its aspects" (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92).

One cultural issue that tertiary education is called upon to address relates to language. Historical circumstances made the island a bilingual country, ceded to a colonial power which did not share the language spoken by the people it governed. The socio-linguistic implications of such a situation are as significant now as they were in 1837 when it was noted with regret that:

*... there is no island in the West Indies archipelago which labours under the same disadvantage with regard to education as the large island of St Lucia where the predominance of the Roman Catholic faith and the French language are doubtless the main causes (Parliamentary Report 1837-38 cited in Bacchus 1990: 219-220).*

It is argued that had the French language, in its standard form, prevailed as the lingua franca, the island's linguistic profile might have been more readily accepted and accommodated. Instead, it is a French-based Creole that has survived, one which the majority of people speak or hear on a continuous basis in their immediate environment, but which has never been considered desirable within the educational policy models selected by the colonial or even post-independence administrators. Louisy (1986) argues that there are academic, social and psychological problems inherent in such a refusal to take into account the native language of the Creole-speaking child. These issues were articulated earlier by Carrington (1980) who saw



one of the consequences of adhering to a policy of monolingualism in a bilingual community as leading to:

*... the creation of a linguistically insecure, inarticulate person who retreats the moment he feels that a particular issue requires a variety of language in which he is deficient. For he has been led to see his own language as having a place in his life that cannot be for the expression of real thought, and hence cannot be used for serious expression. Withdrawal inevitably means no dialogue, and the child develops into an adult to whom someone must dictate what he must feel and do in a particular situation.*

Recent work by cultural activists using Creole as a means of social mobilisation has begun a process of consciousness - raising which should enable those groups whose current "societal functioning is circumscribed by lack of competence in English" (Carrington, 1980) to evaluate themselves in terms which enhance their ability for self-fulfilment. Education planning strategies in St Lucia need to be conceived then, not simply from the perspective of the so-called "hampering effects" (Bacchus, 1990: 219) of the Creole language but from the prospect of the emancipatory influence that acceptance of the language and the culture can have on the development of the human potential. A society which is not at ease with itself cannot be inward-looking, and easily falls prey to all manner of externally-imposed forms of domination - cultural, intellectual or economic. Many within the country argue that there are psychological and intellectual adjustments that must be made in the St Lucian society that education has not catered for. Reversing the limitations imposed by high levels of illiteracy attributed to the uneasy alliance of the native Creole and the official language, and releasing the human potential of the majority of what is already a small population are seen as major developmental challenges facing adult education in St Lucia (Jules, undated). In a context where it is felt that tertiary education must embrace post-compulsory adult education (Interview, NDF-C, 19.08.92), planning and management of this sector call for reflection and careful analysis.

### ***Demographic trends***

The 1990 Census estimates St Lucia's population at 142,000 (National Population Unit, 1991). Recent demographic trends indicate that over the past decade, the

country has maintained an annual rate of population growth of 1.6%, with a reduction in the overall mortality rate resulting in a life expectancy of 69.2 for males and 73.9 for females (Appendix E). Continued high fertility rates and relatively constant levels of out - migration among the youth in particular, has meant too, that the population has not aged significantly. Figures for 1991 estimate the population median age at 17.2, and the dependency ratio at 76.2 (Appendix E). A continuation of the current demographic behaviour therefore will see the population increase by about 22% by the end of the decade. Although there will not be any significant changes in the overall school age population during that period, the turn of the century will see an increase of about 20% in the numbers of those potentially eligible for tertiary education. While the numbers presently pursuing some form of post-secondary or tertiary education are still very low - less than 2% of the total school population, (Table 3), improvements in the quality and type of basic education may see an appreciable increase in the numbers demanding tertiary education. Relatively high migration levels in the past have acted as a safety valve for the island's excess population (Atchoarena and Maynie, 1987), but restrictions already imposed on immigration by the traditional destination countries may favour 'white collar' emigration, and so necessitate an almost continuous outlay of resources to finance tertiary education and training. The search for new strategies to respond to the challenge of a growing population is the task which has recently been assigned to a multi-sectoral National Population Unit whose mandate it is to:

*... create an environment which will bring about a more satisfying future for the forthcoming generations, in a society that is secure and viable and in which individuals can develop their full potential free from inequalities of development and threats of environmental degradation (Compton, 1991a).*

Tertiary education, in its general role as an instrument of social, cultural and economic development in the country which it serves, is expected to play its part in this task of social engineering. In its more specific role of preparing people to take up opportunities "induced by continuing economic development of the country" and to "strengthen the capabilities of personnel in both the public and private sectors" (Lewis, 1987), the tertiary education sector is being strengthened to enable it to respond to the challenge not only of training and upgrading the adult work force,

Table 3  
 Distribution of School Population by Sex and Level  
 1987/1988 - 1991/1992

|                         |     | 1987 - 1988 | 1988 - 1989 | 1989 - 1990 | 1990 - 1991 | 1991 - 1992 |
|-------------------------|-----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total School Population |     | 39,733      | 39,629      | 40,161      | 40,355      | 39,653      |
| Primary                 | M   | 16,943      | 16,852      | 16,852      | 16,661      | 15,809      |
|                         | F   | 15,882      | 15,839      | 15,787      | 15,741      | 15,525      |
|                         | Tot | 32,825      | 32,649      | 32,639      | 32,402      | 31,334      |
|                         |     | 82.6%       | 82.6%       | 81.3%       | 80.3%       | 79%         |
| Secondary               | M   | 2,726       | 2,829       | 2,964       | 3,185       | 3,249       |
|                         | F   | 3,558       | 3,570       | 3,809       | 4,053       | 4,363       |
|                         | Tot | 6,284       | 6,399       | 6,773       | 7,238       | 7,612       |
|                         |     | 15.8%       | 16.1%       | 16.9%       | 17.9%       | 19.2%       |
| Tertiary                | M   | 284         | 249         | 295         | 291         | 257         |
|                         | F   | 340         | 332         | 454         | 424         | 450         |
|                         | Tot | 624         | 581         | 749         | 715         | 707         |
|                         |     | 1.6%        | 1.5%        | 1.9%        | 1.8%        | 1.8%        |

Sources: Statistical Digest 1989/90, 1991/92  
 Economic Review 1989, 1990

many of whom are not trained at the level of skill and capacity that is required of them (Interview, CBG-L. 11.08.92), but of dealing with the training of ever increasing new entrants to the job market.

### **The economic context**

Until recently the economy of St Lucia exhibited all the characteristics of the traditional plantation model based on agriculture, emphasising the production of a limited range of export products. When this model is set against the inherent features of a small country economy - extreme openness to trade and foreign dependency - one can appreciate the problems that the island faces in her efforts to thrust forward into economic growth. Some of these problems have been identified by both local and foreign economic planners and have been the subject of national development plans for almost two decades. There is first of all, the small size of the domestic market both in terms of absolute numbers as well as in terms of per capita purchasing power. In this regard, mention was made earlier of the high dependency ratio of the population which effectively puts the potential labour force at about 57% of the total population. A second feature which is inhibiting economic growth is the high ratio of imports to Gross Domestic Product. This has come under frequent criticism by local economists and planners who, while appreciating the open nature of a small economy, warn against excessive externally-influenced consumerism. Theophilus (1988) for example sees the consumer orientation of St Lucian society reflected in the imbalance between credit to the agricultural and manufacturing sectors compared to the distributive trade and consumer credit.

This imbalance between investment expenditure and consumption expenditure is sustained in part by remittances from overseas which supplement local individual "income" and strengthens the overall purchasing power of what is a "relatively large pool of surplus and unskilled labour" (Government of St Lucia, 1977a: 9). These are real problems indeed, and no one makes light of them or underestimates the challenge of sustaining a viable economy under such conditions. The political and economic administration, in the period immediately preceding independence, set itself the task

of pursuing an economic development strategy based on co-ordinated development drives in the efficient and diversified production of agriculture at every possible level, promotion of industry through local enterprise and small scale manufacture, the "judicious development" of tourism, community advancement and an expansion of economic infrastructure (Government of St Lucia, 1977a).

Accordingly, the economy in 1990 "reflected a diversified blend of strength in agriculture, manufacturing and tourism not found in such balance in any other OECS country" (World Bank, cited by Compton, 1991b: 11). The growth of each of these sectors and their contribution to the island's Gross Domestic Product can be seen in Table 4. While agriculture is still the mainstay of the economy, people are beginning to look to other areas of economic activity to promote development. As one government official put it:

*This trend will continue. With events in Europe and the EEC and the uncertain future of the banana industry, people will have to look at alternative activities to promote economic development: business ventures, manufacturing industries, the service industry .... St Lucia like the rest of the region will have to consider making a switch from the exploitation of natural resources to the development of human resources (Interview, MEC-G, 04.09.92).*

Tourism is becoming the economy's leading growth sector (Compton, 1991b; Caribbean Conservation Association, 1991), prompting the call for emphasis to be placed on the "dynamic area of support services and on the training of people to service the technical aspects of such services" (Interview, CC1-A, 13.08.92). Other areas of the service industry too are showing encouraging signs of positive growth which is again prompting both the public and private sector into recommending a strengthening of banking, insurance and other financial services (Interviews, CCI-A, 13.08.92; EMP-L, 20.08.92; LAB-L, 11.09.82). It is argued that since the specific skills needed to sustain these sectors are not readily acquired at the primary and secondary levels, initiatives must be taken to meet this increase in the demand for tertiary level education (Interview, MEC-G, 04.09.92).

St Lucia's economic performance, yielding a Gross National Product of US \$1,810.00 per head in 1990, has placed it among the frontrunners in the Latin American and

Table 4  
Gross Domestic Product at Factor Cost  
Current Prices  
1985-1991

| Sectors                                  | 1985         | 1986         | 1987         | 1988         | 1989         | 1990         | 1991P        |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Agriculture                              | 72.6         | 104.6        | 82.2         | 114.7        | 107.2        | 125.6        | 119.7        |
| - Bananas                                | 40.8         | 70.8         | 52.3         | 79.7         | 71.5         | 82.9         | 77.0         |
| - Other Crops                            | 21.4         | 22.4         | 22.0         | 22.2         | 25.1         | 32.2         | 32.3         |
| - Livestock                              | 6.5          | 8.5          | 4.8          | 9.3          | 6.4          | 6.1          | 5.2          |
| - Fishing                                | 2.4          | 1.3          | 1.3          | 1.6          | 2.2          | 2.5          | 3.1          |
| - Forestry                               | 1.5          | 1.6          | 1.8          | 1.9          | 2.0          | 1.9          | 2.1          |
| Mining and Quarrying                     | 2.6          | 2.7          | 2.6          | 3.6          | 6.2          | 5.1          | 5.4          |
| Manufacturing                            | 43.4         | 50.0         | 55.5         | 62.2         | 69.5         | 73.0         | 72.8         |
| Construction                             | 32.0         | 36.7         | 40.0         | 53.6         | 73.5         | 61.0         | 73.8         |
| Electricity and Water                    | 16.2         | 15.5         | 16.8         | 17.3         | 20.0         | 23.8         | 24.2         |
| Wholesale and Retail Trade               | 72.8         | 94.7         | 105.2        | 114.0        | 126.0        | 146.2        | 160.0        |
| Hotels and Restaurants                   | 34.9         | 45.8         | 56.7         | 57.1         | 68.8         | 77.4         | 89.0         |
| Transport and Communications             | 84.5         | 97.2         | 117.1        | 128.7        | 133.1        | 145.2        | 155.2        |
| Financial Intermediation                 | 36.6         | 38.6         | 45.2         | 52.8         | 66.7         | 72.9         | 77.9         |
| Real Estate and Owner Occupied Dwellings | 26.9         | 29.7         | 32.5         | 35.7         | 39.4         | 45.5         | 51.3         |
| Producers of Government Services         | 86.7         | 90.8         | 98.9         | 99.9         | 127.1        | 123.0        | 132.0        |
| Other Services                           | 19.0         | 21.5         | 23.1         | 25.1         | 27.2         | 29.7         | 32.0         |
| Less Imputed Banking Service Charge      | (23.3)       | (25.9)       | (28.9)       | (36.0)       | (44.1)       | (52.0)       | (55.3)       |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>504.9</b> | <b>601.9</b> | <b>646.9</b> | <b>728.7</b> | <b>820.6</b> | <b>876.4</b> | <b>938.0</b> |

Source: Annual Statistical Digest 1991: Government Statistics Department

Caribbean region. It has therefore been "graduated" by the World Bank to the middle income group of countries. However this graduation, a little premature in McIntyre's (1988a) opinion, has consequences for the type and level of external assistance which the island can now access, not only for general economic development, but also for the development of education.

St Lucia's economic development seems always to be associated, whether by chance or by design, with its motto. In the days when the island's economy was based on its use as a transshipment port for coal, its motto "Statio haud malefida carinis" - A safe anchorage for ships - was perhaps its earliest investment promotion and marketing drive. In more recent times, the motto adopted upon negotiation of Associated Statehood Status - The Land, The People and the Light - "graphically reflects national awareness of the island's critical resources - the foundations upon which to build a nation" (Government of St Lucia, 1977a: 6). The island's fertile soil, tropical marine climate and natural physical beauty have buttressed the tripod upon which the economy has been built. But like most other small country economies, growth has been sustained in large measure by favourable external conditions. St Lucia's main export crop for example, relies on preferential access to markets in the United Kingdom with which it has historic ties, and the European Economic Community through the Lome Conventions. Preferential access for non-agricultural exports is also available in the United States through the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) and in Canada through the Caribbean Canada Agreement (CARIBCAN). Future growth however will depend on the willingness of those markets to continue to offer such protection given current calls for greater liberalisation of trade. It is the island's recognition of its vulnerability to external economic uncertainties, and the constant threat of the destruction of its economic infrastructure by annual natural disasters, that has prompted the economic directorate to look to the development of the two other "critical resources", represented in the motto - the People and the Light. The development of the human resource through education is seen by Mc Intyre, a leading Caribbean economist and educationalist, as requiring the island's immediate attention:

*We need to give top priority to the development of our human*

*resources, imbuing our people with appropriate skills and values that stress achievement, hard work, discipline. We need to develop precise strategies for dealing with the rest of the world - strategies that will allow us to take full advantage of opportunities in a range of countries to export goods and services competitively, and to mobilise capital and technology (Mc Intyre, 1988a).*

The task of developing these strategies will be assigned to economic planners but their implementation will be consigned to tomorrow's labour force which today must be exposed to a suitable mix of general and vocational education in order to stimulate quick adjustments of skill patterns according to labour market and technological changes (Atchoarena, 1990). It is becoming increasingly clear that expansion of economic activity cannot be achieved simply by educating people at the primary level, and so in educational as well as in economic terms, key policy makers within the country maintain that the 1990s is "the age of the tertiary" (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92).

### ***The labour market***

One of the most worrying features of the St Lucian employment market, and one on which all are agreed, is the dramatic change it is undergoing as it attempts to respond to the demands of what is essentially an export - propelled economy. What is needed for such an economy to survive is flexibility of the work force. In this regard, smallness can be turned to advantage as it allows the economy to interpret and respond to market signals quickly. St Lucia is being encouraged therefore to look to these niche opportunities (small - scale, seasonal, one-off opportunities) to assist not only in the growth of its economy, but also in the creation of jobs, the reduction of unemployment and the creation of export-oriented activity (Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92). The development of its tertiary education capacity is therefore seen as crucial, since this sector can have a particular contribution to make to new orientations which can lead to a closer link between education and employment and entrepreneurship (Charles, 1992).



Assessing the human resource needs of the economy in order to influence the composition of the labour market is, in the words of one private sector official, "like pulling teeth" (Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92). However, stronger political and institutional support for the recently established Labour Market Information System (LMIS) should enable it to provide more reliable and timely information for the education and employment sectors (Interview, LMI-A, 08.09.92). The LMIS, established at both the national and regional level, aims to provide:

*... qualitative or quantitative information concerning the size and composition of the labour market, or any part of it, the way it functions, its problems, the opportunities which may be available to it, and the employment related situations, intentions or aspirations of those who are part of it (Caribbean Community Secretariat, 1990: 9).*

The national system's Consultative Committee, which was constituted within the context of the OECS/CDB/WB Technical and Vocational Education Project, seeks to produce labour market data banks and reports, previews and projections of developments in the employment structure of the labour market, and assessments of occupational outlook in order to inform decision - making related to skill requirements and vocational training (LMI Consultative Committee, 1988). There is as yet insufficient quantitative data to inform the education sector's decisions on training requirements (Interview, LMI-A, 09.09.92), but no shortage of views on the areas which tertiary education in particular should address.

### ***Human resource needs***

It is generally accepted within St Lucia that the country's middle level range of human resource is limited and that this capability needs to be improved (Interviews, PES-F, 30.08.92; MEG-G, 04.09.92; CCI-A, 13.08.92; LAB-L, 11.09.92; EMP-L, 20.08.92). In view of this, it is argued that focus should be placed on preparing paraprofessionals to take up positions at the managerial, supervisory and technical levels. If it is assumed that work permits and certificates of exemption are issued to foreign nationals only if skilled employers are not available locally, then this assessment of human resource needs at these levels is correct. The major occupational categories and the number of permits issued during 1986 to 1988 are

tabulated in Table 5. Although these figures might be considered dated, education planners in the country contend that the situation has not changed significantly (Interview, PES-F, 30.08.92).

Earlier mention has been made of the government's strategy of promoting industry through local enterprise and small scale manufacture. There is increasing emphasis on entrepreneurial skills (Interview, PES-F, 30.08.92), while self-employment is regarded as being of critical importance if employment levels are to be kept up (Interviews, CCI-A, 13.08.92; NDF-C, 19.08.92; EMP-L, 20.08.92, DTE-A, 08.08.92). On the other hand the need to balance training for the world of work with more general and academic preparation for the country's leaders, thinkers, academics and planners is seen as being crucial in ensuring that the factors of production are controlled by nationals (Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92). In this regard, the comments of one educational administrator deserve careful reflection:

*It needs to be recognised that not everyone can benefit from having the same kind of education. Particularly in a small system as small as ours, we will run into problems if we do not preserve an educational system for our academic elite. We have to be growing thinkers. The leaders have to be people who can be trained into a philosophy, who can come up with creative thinking for themselves. If we end up with one of these diluted processes where everybody gets the same thing, we are going to find that we have lost the best potential of our top group (Interview, DSG-H, 11.08.92).*

Many argue that the programme mix offered at the tertiary level needs to address and maintain this balance.

### **Education and employment**

Even in the absence of regular up-to-date quantitative data on the size of the labour market, the rate of unemployment has always been considered as "unacceptably high" with estimates ranging from 14% to 20% (LMI Consultative Committee, 1988; National Population Unit, 1990). It is instructive to note however the views of policy makers in St Lucia concerning the problematic issue of graduate unemployment. There exists among them a strong commitment to giving people the

Table 5  
Work Permit/Certificate of Exemption Issued by Industry and Occupation  
1986-1988

| Sector                           | Occupation               | Nos. issued | Total per sector |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Government                       | Professionals            | 39          | 132              |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 21          |                  |
|                                  | Engineers                | 7           |                  |
|                                  | Teachers                 | 35          |                  |
|                                  | Other                    | 66          |                  |
| Banking/Insurance                | Professionals            | 3           | 20               |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 16          |                  |
|                                  | Other                    | 1           |                  |
| Hotels                           | Professionals            | 18          | 148              |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 49          |                  |
|                                  | Other                    | 81          |                  |
| Construction                     | Professionals            | 13          | 31               |
|                                  | Architects               | 14          |                  |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 4           |                  |
| Manufacturing                    | Professionals            | 10          | 104              |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 41          |                  |
|                                  | Technicians              | 44          |                  |
|                                  | Other                    | 43          |                  |
| Transport and Communication      | Professionals            | 10          | 88               |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 25          |                  |
|                                  | Engineers                | 26          |                  |
|                                  | Other                    | 27          |                  |
| Other Private Firms              | Professionals            | 13          | 42               |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 14          |                  |
|                                  | Engineers                | 6           |                  |
|                                  | Other                    | 9           |                  |
| Others (including Self-Employed) | Professionals            | 25          | 157              |
|                                  | Managers and Supervisors | 42          |                  |
|                                  | Technicians              | 9           |                  |
|                                  | Other                    | 81          |                  |

Source: Labour Market Information Bulletin, 1988

opportunity to develop their potential, to use it creatively and to move into new areas (Interviews PRN-T, 06.08.92; DTE-A, 08.08.92). The rationale for providing as many people as possible with a sound tertiary education is captured in the following comment:

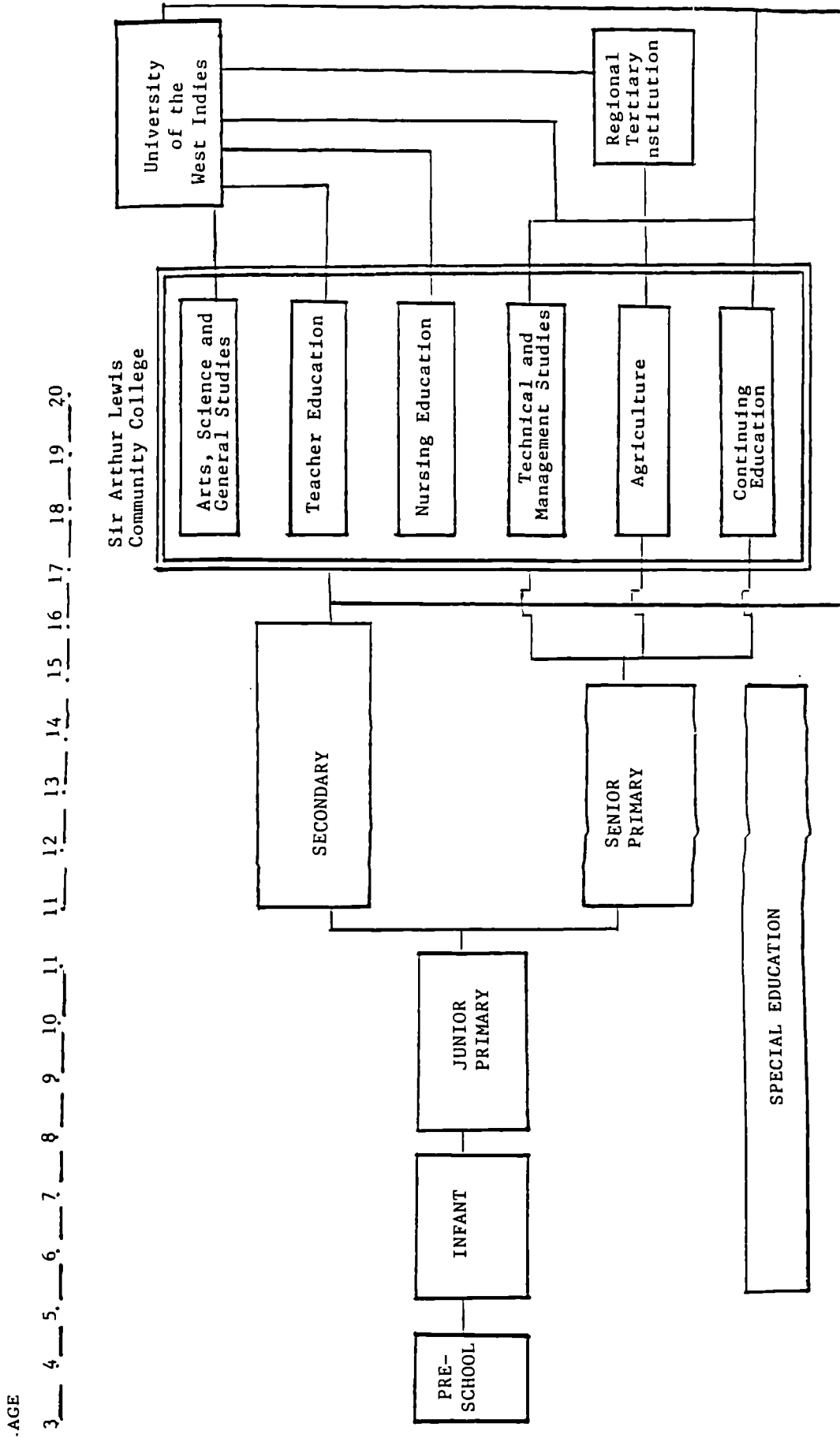
*Education is a value in itself and should transcend the need to prepare people for employment. You educate people not only for jobs, but so that they can make a positive contribution to their society and their country. Education broadens human possibilities, choices and options, so that the educated unemployed are far more mobile, far more capable of adjustment than the uneducated unemployed. The materialistic economic preoccupation devalues the perspective of education as a value in itself, and in small countries like St Lucia, we should try to transcend the economic investment view of education. Small countries are particularly influenced by what is happening in the wider world. We should therefore prepare people for greater adaptability in the wider world, in addition to preparing them for service at home. We do have a history of migration and mobility ... We need to prepare people who are marketable, both internally and externally, people who are citizens not only of our country, but of the Caribbean and the wider world (Interview BGV-T, 13.08.92).*

Tertiary education is being called upon to respond to the needs of the individual as a worker and as a citizen, and, particularly in a small country such as this, it is mandated to play a meaningful role in preparing people for the challenges and opportunities at home and beyond.

### **The education system: structure and characteristics**

The statutory system of public education in St Lucia makes provision for four main sectors of education classified as primary, secondary, further and special (Figure 3), designed "to provide adequately for the planning and development of an educational service related to the changing needs of the community" [thereby] "contributing towards the development of the human, physical, mental, moral, cultural and spiritual resources of the community" (Government of St Lucia, 1977b). The draughtsmen of this "people's charter", could have been influenced by what Nettleford (1990: 260) refers to as the "incurable optimism that has long informed much of Caribbean vision and social action since the late 1930's". The optimism of the 1977 Act is tempered however by the pragmatism of the implementators who are committed to providing

Figure 3  
Structure of the St Lucian Education System



primary education for all, but further training only "for as many students as the resources of the nation can permit" (Ministry of Education, 1985). From a fiscal policy perspective, the Ministry of Education is allocated the largest share of the Ministerial budget (20%) (Appendix F), reflecting an average annual increase of 10.1% over the past five years. It is argued by some that St Lucia may therefore have reached the point where it is not reasonable to expect additional outlays on education unless there are additional inflows in government revenue (Miller, 1991a; Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92).

The Ministry of Education and Culture's National Sector Plan for the 1982-87 quinquennium outlines the government's educational policy:

*The universalisation of primary education and the improvement of the quality of education at that level; significant expansion of secondary education and the offering of appropriate curricula that adequately prepare children for the new technology; reducing the incidence of illiteracy among adults so that such persons adapt to modern society; and the development of tertiary level education to produce the middle level manpower that can manage the organisations in our new society.*

These goals are all aimed at ensuring that the education system provides that degree of relevance which could produce the human resource quality that the country needs to sustain its development thrust. It is argued here that the lack of specificity of such terms like "appropriate curricula", "the new technology", "modern society" and "middle level manpower" is problematic, and could be one of the reasons for the gap between the ideals of policy and the realities of practice. The performance of the education system has to be assessed however, within the social and economic constraints which currently exist.

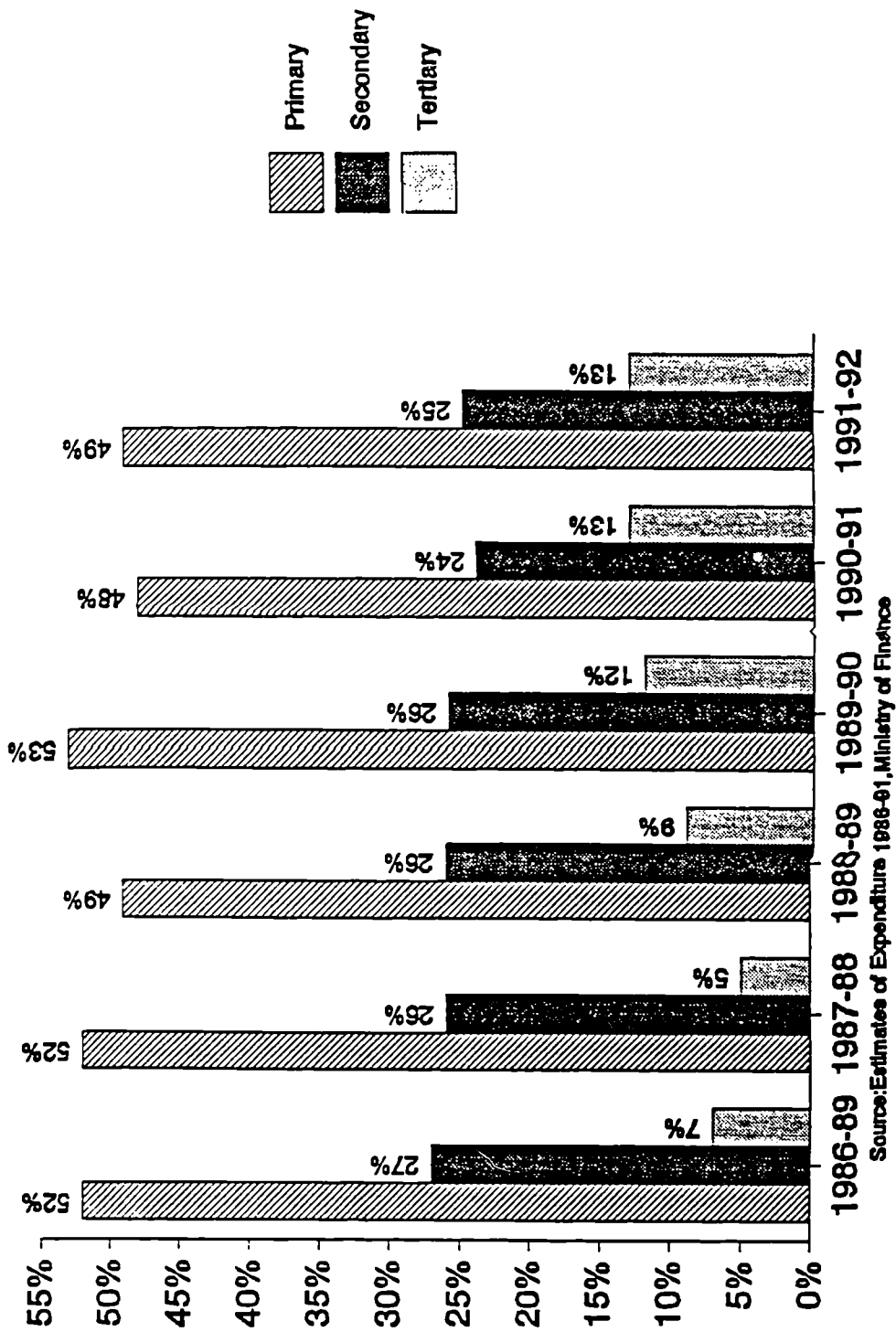
St Lucia has achieved its goal of providing universal primary education for its 5-15 school age cohort. On the other hand, secondary schooling is still highly selective, with the sector accommodating, on an annual basis, only 30%-40% of the 11+ age group (Table 6). Curricular reforms which were meant to provide "secondary type education" in the senior classes of 'All-Age-Primary' and 'Senior Primary' schools (Ministry of Education, 1984) are not yet sufficiently well established or even well-received to enlarge the pool from which the country can draw its skilled human

Table 6  
Secondary and Tertiary Level Admissions  
1988-1992

|   | Primary - Secondary |               |               |               |   | Secondary - Tertiary |            |              |              |  |
|---|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|----------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--|
|   | 88/89               | 89/90         | 90/91         | 91/92         |   | 88/89                | 89/90      | 90/91        | 91/92        |  |
| Nos. writing CEE                                    | N.A                 | 5128          | 5211          | 4950          | Nos. graduating from Sec. School                      | 552                  | 638        | 1089         | 1079         |  |
| Nos. assigned places<br>% proceeding to Sec. School | N.A                 | 1619<br>31.6% | 1629<br>31.3% | 1972<br>39.8% | Nos. gaining places at SALCC<br>% proceeding to SALCC | 218<br>39.5%         | 330<br>51% | 239<br>21.9% | 301<br>27.9% |  |

CEE Common Entrance Examination (11\*)  
SALCC - Sir Arthur Lewis Community College  
Compiled from data - Ministry of Education and Culture Statistical Digests

Figure 4  
Expenditure on Education by Level Institutions





resource. From this relatively small pool of secondary school leavers, less than half proceed to the formal tertiary sector, admission to which is based for the most part on performance in regional examinations set by the Caribbean Examinations Council.

It is worth quoting here the Ministry of Education's 1983 assessment of its own performance in providing for the educational needs of the general population, if only to highlight its dissatisfaction with its own track record and to appreciate its recent efforts at improving quality and access at all levels of the system:

*St Lucia, like many other post colonial societies, inherited structures which did not necessarily fit with either the experiences nor (sic) aspirations of the general population. With its narrow pyramidal structure and rigid examination method, our education system has served less as a system to prepare citizens for a place in the society and more as a sieve through which the few and privileged were filtered to the relatively better opportunities at the other end. Because of this, many of our students in the school system appear to have lost out at a very early age (Ministry of Education, 1983).*

A decade after publication of this Paper, the number of secondary school places has been increased, and more resources have been allocated to the tertiary sector. Despite increased resources allocated to the tertiary sector (Figure 4), the percentage proceeding to that level has not improved significantly, prompting criticisms of the sector's high unit costs and its diseconomies of scale. With current per capita expenditure on domestic tertiary education twelve times that of primary, and six times that of secondary education, St Lucia is beginning to accept the inevitability of introducing user charges to help finance the tertiary sector (Interviews, CBG-L, 11.08.92; CCI-A, 13.08.92; LAB-L, 11.09.92; DTE-A, 08.08.92).

### **Tertiary education: the regional context**

#### ***The University of the West Indies***

The provision of tertiary education in the Caribbean was until recently concentrated within the UWI. Designed initially as a unitary, residential, one-campus institution, this regional university was, to paraphrase Sherlock and Nettleford (1990), founded in 1948 as a place of light, liberty and learning to guide the peoples of the scattered

islands of the English-speaking Caribbean into the deep and safe waters of wisdom and understanding. However, bowing under inevitable pressure from deepening nationalist urges of its fourteen contributing members, UWI has now decentralised into three semi-autonomous campuses. Nettleford (1990) argues that such decentralisation resulted in a vulnerable OECS becoming over-anxious about a future in a university system which could deprive them of their fair share of the services and resources concentrated in campus countries. This anxiety was well-founded and influenced decisions taken by some OECS countries to establish their own tertiary institutions.

### *National tertiary level institutions*

During the 1980s, a number of national tertiary colleges emerged in the non-campus territories (NCCS) of the UWI (Table 7). The growth of these institutions is seen by planners in the region as a response to a series of movements which united to point to the type of institution that could meet individual countries' needs (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). There was first of all, as noted earlier, a feeling of unease and instability on the part of the NCCs at UWI's restructuring process. Secondly, there was the question of national identity. While the NCCs acknowledged UWI's significant contribution to the region, many argued that they needed their own institutions which could respond more quickly to local needs (Interviews, PRN-T, 06.08.92); CBG-L, 11.08.92). There was also growing recognition that a critical constraint on the development process in the NCCs was the limited training capacity for their personnel. At a time when increased emphasis was being placed on human resource development, curriculum constraints at UWI, especially in the area of technical education, were cause for concern. Also of importance was the fact that the cost of tertiary education in the three campus territories was escalating, for reasons that had nothing to do with the NCCs (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92). The islands were facing severe constraints on their finances and could no longer afford to send large numbers of people abroad, at the high costs they had to pay to maintain them. (An indication of these costs is given in Table 8). The case therefore intensified for the establishment of local tertiary institutions.

Table 7  
OECS Tertiary Level Institutions

| Institution                                   | Year Estab. | AL | UWI | TT | TVE | TTT | HSc. | Agr. | ACE | Res. |
|---|-------------|----|-----|----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|------|
| Antigua State College                         | 1977        | x  | x   | x  | x   | x   |      |      |     |      |
| Clifton Dupigny Community College (Dominica)  | 1982        | x  |     |    | x   |     |      |      |     |      |
| Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (St Lucia) | 1986        | x  | x   | x  | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   |      |
| College of Further Education (St Kitts/Nevis) | 1988        | x  |     | x  | x   |     | x    |      | x   |      |
| Grenada National College                      | 1988        | x  |     | x  | x   |     | x    | x    | x   | x    |

AL - GCE 'A' Level  
 UWI - First Year UWI degree programme  
 TT - Teacher Training  
 TVE - Technical/Vocational Education  
 RFS - Research  
 TTT - Technical Teacher Training  
 HSc. - Health Sciences  
 Agr - Agriculture  
 ACE - Adult/Continuing Education

Compiled from Country Data

**TABLE 8**

**UWI Per Capita Student Cost (Economic Cost)**  
**in Eastern Caribbean Dollars**  
**(1983 - 1987)**

| Faculty/Campus         | 1983-84 | 1984-85 | 1985-86 | 1986-87 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Agriculture            | 43,123  | 47,216  | 35,613  | 30,704  |
| Arts & Social Sciences |         |         |         |         |
| Cave Hill              | 25,493  | 16,255  | 14,283  | 17,860  |
| Mona                   | 25,493  | 7,976   | 7,860   | 9,530   |
| St Augustine           | 25,493  | 24,930  | 18,738  | 17,358  |
| Education              |         |         |         |         |
| Cave Hill              | 23,569  | 18,614  | 16,870  | 21,202  |
| Mona                   | 23,569  | 9,277   | 8,715   | 11,020  |
| Law                    |         |         |         |         |
| Cave Hill              | 29,389  | 18,109  | 17,104  | 21,181  |
| Mona                   | 29,389  | 9,754   | 9,365   | 11,175  |
| St Augustine           | 29,389  | 29,964  | 26,649  | 23,451  |
| Medicine-Pre-Clinical  |         |         |         |         |
| Mona                   | 32,208  | 13,729  | 11,500  | 13,590  |
| Medicine-Clinical      |         |         |         |         |
| Cave Hill              | 52,760  | 40,473  | 33,763  | 36,693  |
| Mona                   | 52,760  | 19,168  | 19,083  | 24,125  |
| St Augustine           | 52,760  | 62,550  | 37,467  | 33,041  |
| Natural Sciences       |         |         |         |         |
| Cave Hill              | 32,026  | 22,405  | 19,973  | 25,326  |
| Mona                   | 32,026  | 10,153  | 10,050  | 12,060  |
| St Augustine           | 32,026  | 30,713  | 24,228  | 20,257  |

Source: Paul Parker, "An Evaluation of the Performance of the Office of University Services 1984-88". (p.46).

Note: The low figure quoted in respect of the Mona Campus is due to successive devaluations of the Jamaican Dollar since 1983.

### *Offices of University Services*

Acting on these and other initiatives taken by the OECS countries themselves, CARICOM Heads of Governments instructed UWI to establish Offices of University Services (OUS) to help channel resources to the NCCs to supplement their local tertiary education efforts. The OUS in the Eastern Caribbean is thus mandated to:

*... facilitate the expansion of educational projects and programmes in the non-campus countries at the tertiary level, the co-ordinating and monitoring of these programmes and the initiation of on-going liaison between the University Central Authorities and Ministries of Education, and liaison with the Campus Councils on programmes which the Campus Councils might wish to offer in or for the non-campus countries (Minutes 309-33 4/1985 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, University Council, in Peters, forthcoming).*

In the exercise of this mandate OUS assumes the role of advisor, broker, co-ordinator and negotiator in the interest of tertiary education development in the non-campus countries (OUS, 1985). Its remit has added a new dynamic to the planning and development of tertiary education in the region, giving to the University an inner complexity not found elsewhere (Renwick, 1991; Renwick, Shale and Rao, 1992;). Given this complexity, the UWI recognised the need for serious thought to be given to the development of a regional tertiary education network with the University itself as the main support and feeder institution (McIntyre, 1988b). This was the main impetus for the establishment of ACT1.

### *The Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions*

ACTI has been described as an example of the concept of unity in diversity put into action (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). Its membership constitutes public and private tertiary institutions from throughout the region and through its two Standing Committees, ACTI is committed to resolving issues related specifically to programme accreditation and articulation and to dealing with matters of more general concern relating to institutional development and programme provision (ACT1, 1990). Given the problems that currently exist regarding standards and mutual recognition of programmes and certification, the formation of ACTI is recognised as a valuable first

step (Interview, SAP-E, 07.08.92). The involvement of UWI at the hub of this initiative is particularly welcomed, as it has long been argued that the University should have taken the initiative to ensure a systematic articulation between itself and other emerging tertiary institutions in the region (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). It is recognised that such a regional grouping within the Caribbean Community is necessary, as part of the integration process. This process however does not preclude other sub-regional groupings such as the OECS whose strivings in the field of education have resulted in the elaboration of an education reform strategy to allow for greater harmonisation of the group's education systems.

### *The OECS Education Reform Strategy*

The OECS Education Reform Strategy (OERS) originated with the decision of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the OECS Education Ministers to work towards the preparation of a long-term programme for the reform of education in the OECS sub-region (Charles, 1992). There was prior to this, some measure of collaboration and harmonisation among the OECS countries on a broad spectrum of educational provision, but the OERS gives this collaborative thrust far more energy (Interview, SAP-E, 07.08.92). It is envisaged that the management of the reform at the regional level will be assigned to a Reform Unit within the Central Secretariat of the OECS, whose task it would be to articulate the regional components of the reform strategy with national structures and programmes, and to oversee, co-ordinate and access inputs for the reform process (Charles, 1992).

One of the critical programme areas identified by the member states for regional action is the promotion of Key Development Initiatives in five areas, designed to develop the tertiary sector and hence improve its capability for the planning and delivery of programmes in science and technology, technical and vocational education, entrepreneurial education and multi-lingual education (Charles, 1992; Interview, SAP-E, 07.08.92). The developments being contemplated assume from the outset that member countries are agreed that tertiary capacity is to be interpreted in sub-regional terms, particularly in the context of the Centres of Specialisation

Table 9  
OECS Tertiary Educational Priority Matrix

| Country                       | DCS | TDMC | TTIS | DCAE | PEME | DPF | D'ISS |
|-------------------------------|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| Antigua/Barbuda               |     | 1    | 1    | 2    | 1    | 2   |       |
| British Virgin Islands        | 1   | 1    | 1    | 2    |      | 2   |       |
| Dominica                      |     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1   | 1     |
| Grenada                       |     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1   | 1     |
| Montserrat                    | 2   | 2    |      | 2    |      | 1   |       |
| St Lucia                      |     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1   |       |
| St Kitts                      |     | 1    | 1    | 3    | 1    | 1   |       |
| St Vincent and the Grenadines | 1   | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1   |       |

|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Top Priority                |
| 2 | Priority                    |
| 3 | Interested in Participation |

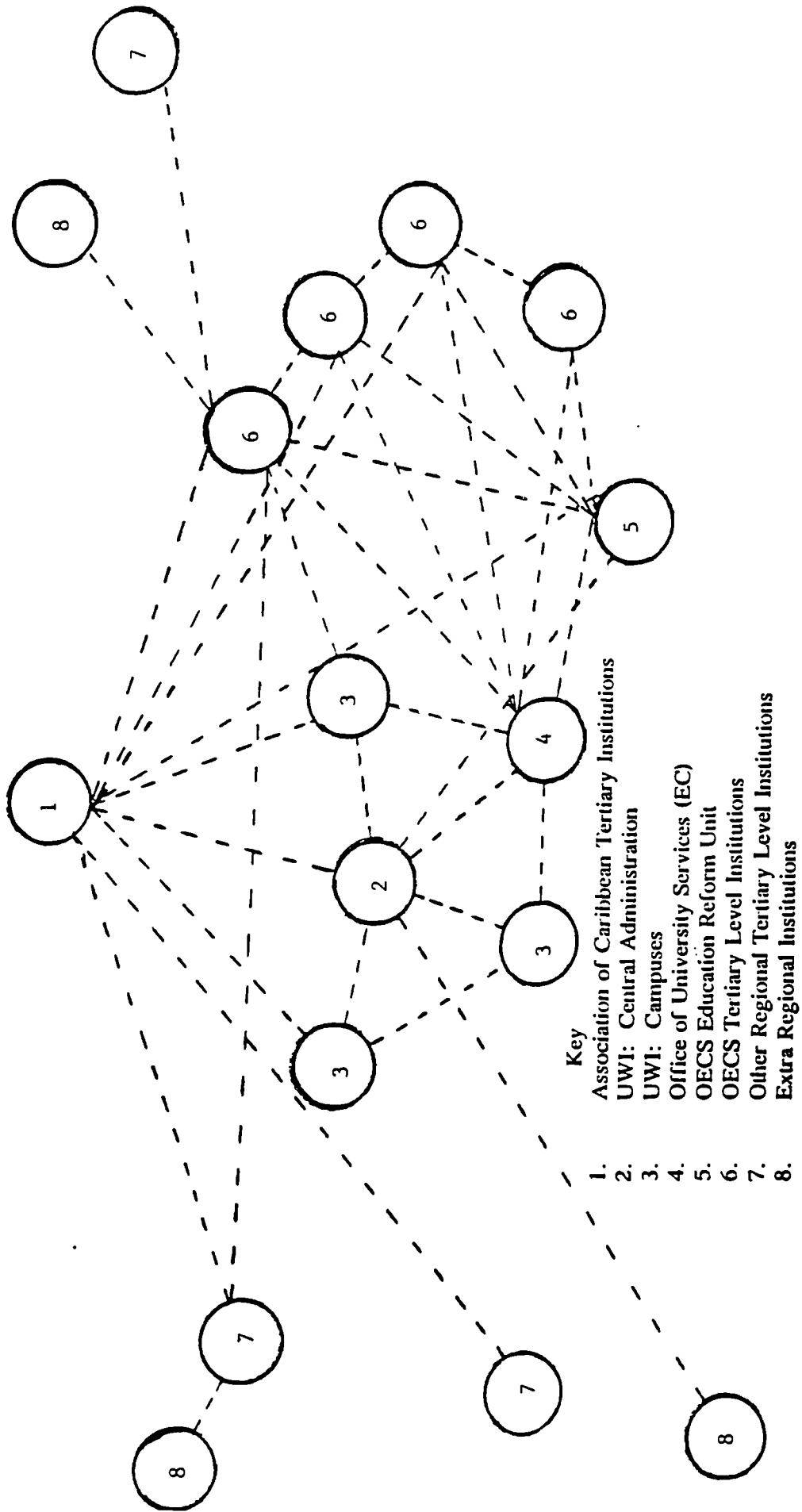
  

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| DCS   | Development of Centres of Specialisation         |
| TDMC  | Tertiary Development and Management Capability   |
| TTIS  | Teacher Training - In-Service                    |
| DCAE  | Development of Adult and Continuing Education    |
| PEME  | Provision of Educational Materials and Equipment |
| DPF   | Development of Plant and Facilities              |
| D'ISS | Development of Teacher Support Services          |

Note: Antigua and St Lucia already have Centres of Specialisation

Source: Charles (1992): Organisation of Eastern States (OES) Education Reform Strategy:  
Report on Country Consultations and Work Plan

Figure 5  
Network of Caribbean Tertiary Level Institutions





concept which some have already adopted. Involved in the process will be dialogue and negotiations between tertiary institutions and Ministries of Education to determine on the distribution, location and management of these regional centres (Charles, 1992). It is recognised that this collaborative approach to the provision of tertiary education calls for compromise on the part of national institutions who may have to limit their own plans and ambitions in the regional interest (Interviews, PES-F, 30.08.92; DAG-C, 07.08.92; CBG-L, 11.08.92; CTP-S, 17.08.92; MEC-G, 04.09.92). Differing priorities in member countries (Table 9) could retard development at the national level. Planning for tertiary education within the OECS therefore requires restraint, national and institutional good will and much tact.

The establishment of national colleges in the OECS has added a new dimension to the planning and management of tertiary education in the region. It is within this context of a regional network of campuses, national tertiary level institutions and co-ordinating Units (Figure 5) that tertiary education in St Lucia must be examined.

### **Tertiary education: the national context**

The call for Caribbean countries to make a switch from a development strategy based on the exploitation of natural resources to one based on the cultivation of human resources, and to develop appropriate education programmes for the promotion of regional competence in knowledge-intensive services (McIntyre, 1988b; Miller, 1991a; Miller et al, 1991; Charles 1992) is leading the island towards a tertiary education culture which emphasises what one observer refers to as "pragmatic responses to the occupational needs of the economy". For policy makers in St Lucia, the tertiary education sector needs to place particular emphasis on technical and vocational education which would make people skilled for opportunities that arise in the modern sector (Lewis, 1987; Interviews, EXS-F, 13.08.92, PES-F, 30.08.92; MEC-G, 4.09.92). However, TVET in St Lucia lacks appeal, though (as elsewhere) not without reason. Policy makers accept that the St Lucian education system itself has not done a good job in making the idea of TVET attractive to the public (Interview, CTE-S, 17.08.92), in not giving uniform credence to the qualifications

of people graduating from the tertiary level sector in the academic and technical fields (Interview, PES-F, 30.08.92). In view of the importance attached to training in the technical and para-professional areas, calls are now being made for the definition of a clearer career path for the upward mobility of people in technical fields (Interviews, EXS-F, 13.08.92; PES-F, 30.08.92), for a change in emphasis and the broadening of these fields (Interview, CEO-L, 10.08.92) in order to uplift people's perceptions about TVET (Interview, DTE-A, 08.08.92). While it is recognised that training opportunities do not of themselves create jobs (Interviews, CEO-L, 10.08.92; CTE-S, 17.08.92), planning to meet the needs of the economy is clearly seen as an important element in the development of the tertiary education sector. To cite Charles:

*... critical new alliances will be established and cemented; between education and communications, between knowledge and economic competitiveness, and hence between education and private sector interests (Charles, 1992: 30).*

### ***Tertiary education planning***

At the national level there is no co-ordinated strategy for the planning of tertiary education activities by the stakeholders and executing agencies. There is instead an unwritten demarcation of responsibility and a respect for areas of responsibility on the part of three main agencies involved in the administration and delivery of tertiary level programmes - the Ministry of Planning's Training Division, UWI's School of Continuing Studies and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (Interview, PRN-T. 06.08.92).

The Training Division of the Ministry of Planning identifies the country's training needs through consultation with public and private sector bodies and small business institutions, and submits a training priority list for the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers (Interview, CTO-P. 30.09.92). The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, as a government statutory corporation, is guided by these decisions, but relies on its board of governors and its advisory committees for decisions on areas of emphasis and on specific programmes. The School of Continuing Studies relates directly to the UWI, so that although it is seen as performing "an important function in the provision

of tertiary education in St Lucia" (Government of St Lucia, 1990: 98), it is not answerable to any authority or educational agency on the island. The original intention to have the School work closely with secondary schools and training colleges, not as a "manifestation of a distant university's interest, but as [an] integral part of the region's system of higher education" (Sherlock and Nettleford, 1990: 185) has not yet been realised. While there is little incompatibility and little conflict among the institutions concerned, it is argued here that more local co-ordination would better inform the decisions of the OECS Reform Unit in its work of joint policy planning, collaboration, and the accessing of donor funding for the development of tertiary level education in the sub-region.

### *Financing of tertiary education*

The financial climate within which these developments in tertiary education are being considered is one which is dependent to a large extent on external funding both in the form of loans and development aid. It has already been pointed out that St Lucia may have reached the point where it may not be reasonable to expect additional outlays for education from Central Government revenue. Local efforts at expansion are currently being supplemented by inputs from a number of international agencies which provide support through the OECS Tertiary Education Project for the strengthening of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College's institutional capacity in the form of new facilities (The European Economic Commission); for staff development opportunities (The Canadian International Development Agency); for curriculum development (The World Bank, The Caribbean Development Bank and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation); and for technical teacher training (The British Development Division in the Caribbean). It is thus becoming increasingly obvious that the regional approach to the financing of tertiary education is a sine qua non of its future development at the national level.

No examination of the financing of education however, can overlook the question of costs to the stakeholders in the system - the providers, the consumers and the beneficiaries. In St Lucia, Government bears most of the cost of providing education

services, even at the tertiary level, whether with funds generated internally or with funds received as development assistance. The majority of students currently receiving tertiary level education are on full or partial scholarships, are in receipt of full salary, or of a stipend, pay either nominal tuition fees, or none at all. A call is *now being made*, for a redefinition and restructuring of the financial obligations of all stakeholders in the education system with more of the costs of tertiary education being shared by the state, students and employers (Miller, 1991a; Miller et al, 1991). The involvement by the corporate sector would add a new dimension to the concept of public participation in education, since they who have benefited enormously from public investment in education have traditionally contributed very little to the costs. There is reason to believe however that the private sector would not be averse to making a more systematic contribution if an appropriate formula were to be proposed (Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92). Proposals for a restructuring of the financing of tertiary education further recommend the introduction of cost recovery schemes, so that students themselves can make a greater contribution towards the financing of their education. The threat that the indiscriminate application of cost recovery mechanisms can pose to equity of access is nevertheless appreciated and caution is recommended to ensure that such cost recovery does not result in greater inequalities (Interviews, BGV-T, 13.08.92; PES-F, 30.08.92).

## **Conclusion**

The foregoing exposé highlights the spatial, demographic, economic, cultural and geo-political contexts in which tertiary education in St Lucia has developed and within which it is expected to grow and to flourish. Each set of factors has brought its influence to bear on current provision and each will have to be taken into account in the future development of the sector. Settlement patterns, for example, raise questions about accessibility and equity of access, and have implications for modes of delivery and time-scheduling. Prevailing socio-economic conditions will influence decisions concerning level of access and allocation of resources. The changing needs of the economy will in large measure suggest the type of tertiary programmes offered and the level and quality of the opportunities provided. Since the island's small

resource base dictates that it cannot meet all its needs from its own resources, the pace at which tertiary education develops will depend on the level and timeliness of external support in a world of tight money and depleting resources (Sherlock and Nettleford, 1990). Such dependence threatens to reinforce the tendency of a people conditioned by years of self denial and foreign domination to look outside for models. Tertiary education, therefore is being called upon to help create an ethos and a cultural climate that can instil in society as a whole:

*... a spirit of national pride and identity, a desire to achieve and excel, a commitment to apply their energies towards nation building and a willingness to work towards the upliftment of .... St Lucia (George, 1987).*

The evidence emerging here, however, indicates that such national imperatives can be more efficiently and successfully addressed through a new regional approach. The strength that St Lucia can derive from its participation in a regional tertiary education network may enable it to provide for its nationals the type of education that will permit them, in the words of a former Chancellor of the UWI:

*... to make discriminating choices with respect to their individual lives, the administration of political power, the determination of their economic destiny and the articulation of their intellectual and cultural heritage (Sherlock and Nettleford, 1990: 290).*

The chapter that follows examines the development of St Lucia's tertiary institution, and the policy options it has adopted to provide tertiary education opportunities at the national level.

***CHAPTER SIX***  
***SIR ARTHUR LEWIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE***

*"All nations have opportunities which they may grasp  
if only they can summon up the courage and the will".  
Sir Arthur Lewis*

## **Introduction**

The "context of culture and circumstance" outlined in the previous chapter provides a framework within which to examine the perceptions of the community of people involved in the provision of tertiary education in St Lucia, the judgements they make and the options they choose. Drawing on these contextual issues, this case study traces the growth and development of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, examining in the process the factors which have contributed to its development, and to that of the tertiary education sector in general. It discusses the College's institutional mission and purpose and examines the governance, financial and organisational structures within which it carries out its mandate of providing for the tertiary education needs of the St Lucian community. The decisions that the institution has taken are examined in the light of issues facing other small-state tertiary colleges, while the final section identifies the strategies that the College has adopted to deal with the "challenge of scale" in the future.

## **Location**

The College occupies the crest of what local historians have called the most important hill in St Lucia (Map 6.1). About three miles from the capital city of Castries, and rising 800 feet above its harbour, Morne Fortune, The Hill of Good Luck, served as a military base for both the English and the French during almost two centuries of bitter struggle for possession of the island. It is in this sense that Francois (1969) regarded this "grand design" as being interwoven into the island's colourful history, and which led others to praise his vision and wisdom in fashioning an educational enterprise out of a military environment (George, 1987). The signs of a military past are still very much in evidence, not only in the architectural structures themselves, but in the cannons that still stand guard at the boundaries of the College grounds, at the Inniskilling Monument on the east and Prevost's Redoubt on the west (Figure 6).

Map 6.1  
 Sir Arthur Lewis Community College: Location

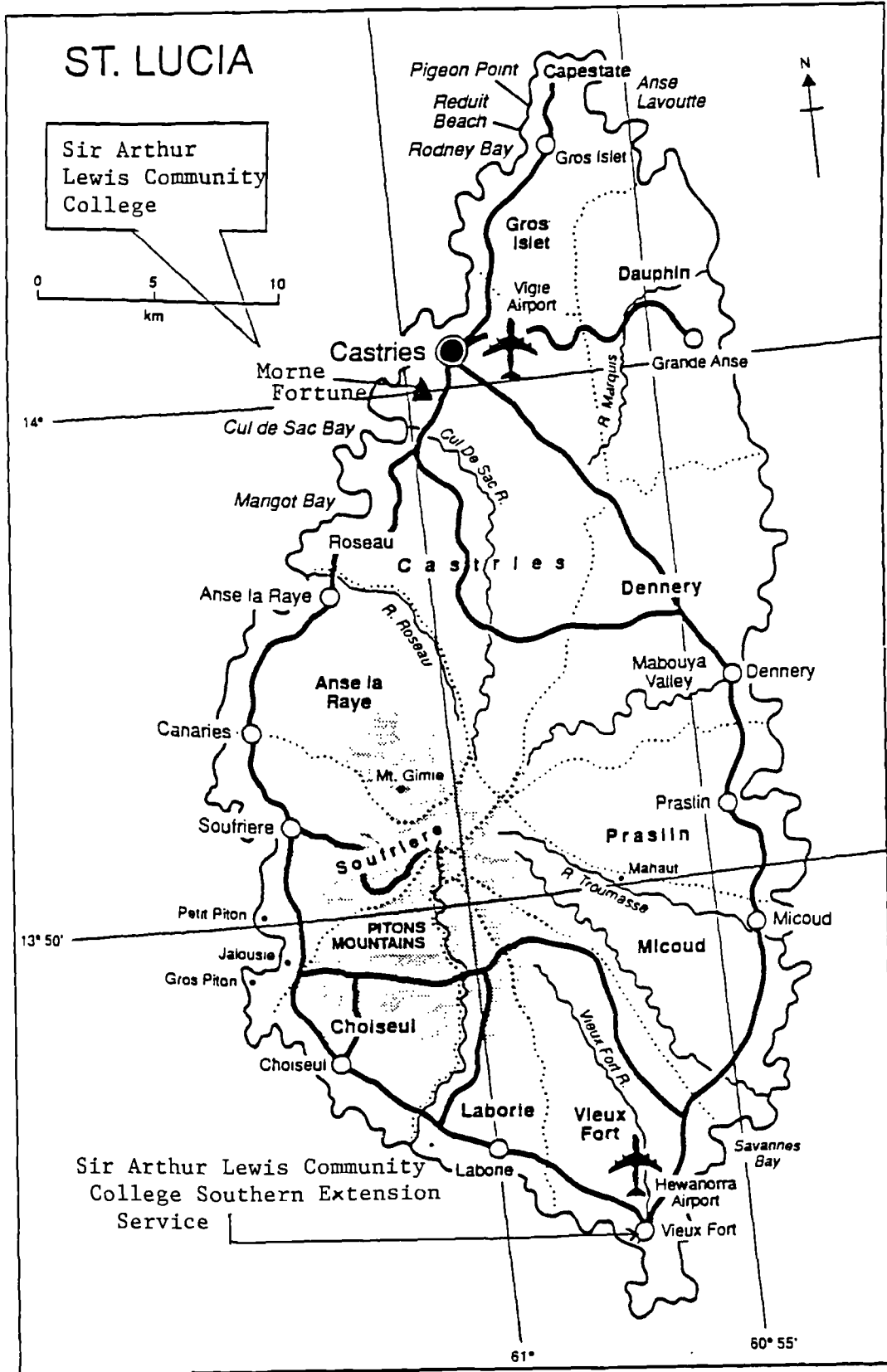
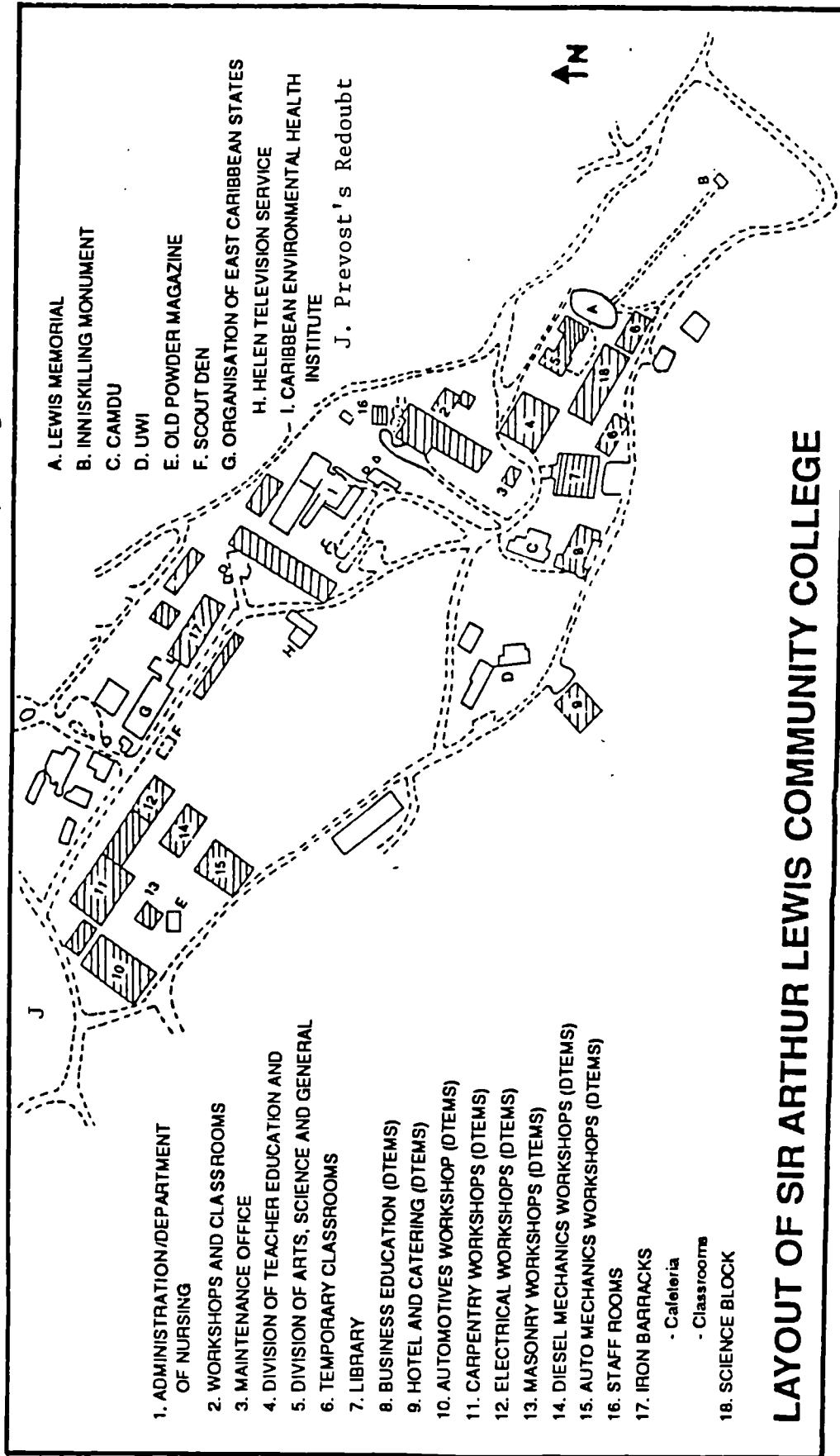




Figure 6  
Layout of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College



Source : Sir Arthur Lewis Community College General Calendar 1991-1992

## The growth of an idea

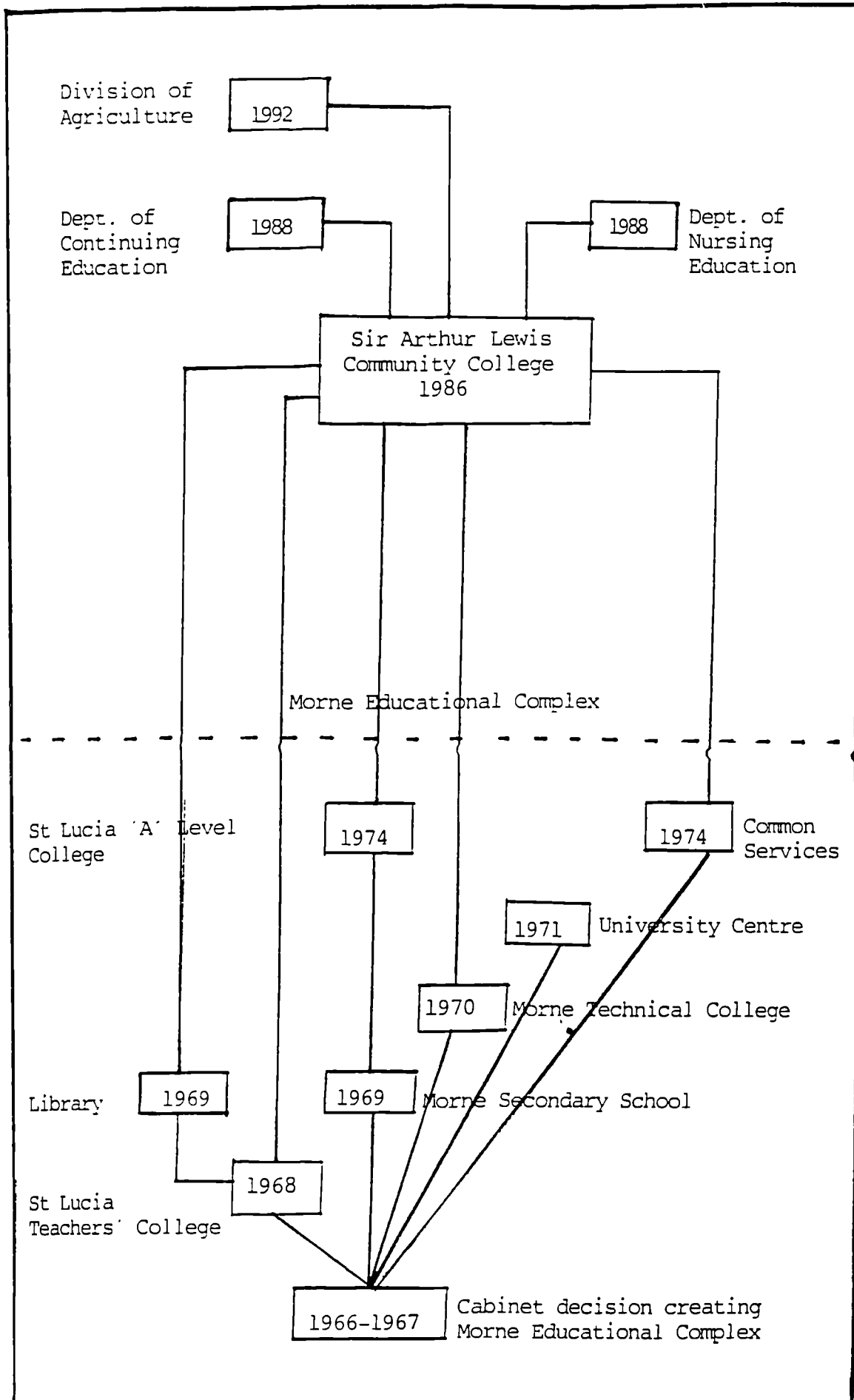
*It began as an idea, the solution to a problem of overcrowding in the L'Anse Road Teachers' College, the response to a need for bigger and better educational facilities. The idea became a dream pursued with careful deliberation, planning and often exasperating periods of apparent inactivity. For the dream to become a reality, a ruined and desolate garrison had to be reconstructed and revitalised at enormous cost in both financial and creative terms (Charles, 1977).*

This idea of creating a complex of tertiary institutions on the ruins of an old military site was officially endorsed with the decision taken by the island's Executive Council on July 13, 1966 to reserve for educational purposes certain buildings and adjoining lands on the crest of Morne Fortune. The Complex envisaged was intended to provide more spacious accommodation for the St Lucia Teachers' College which had outgrown its current home, to provide technical education at both craft and technician level, and to consolidate all sixth form work at one institution. This arrangement would in addition provide a wider range of subjects and ensure more economical use of resources. It was an ambitious plan, and its implementation was regarded as of significant national importance. In the opinion of the Minister of Education at that time:

*A careful look at the perspectives forcefully suggests that the Complex is being treated as a sober and grand design which is inextricably interwoven into our colourful history and which by dint of foresight and imagination can be converted into a national monument for the edification and cultural upliftment of our people (Francois, 1969).*

With substantial financial support from the British Ministry of Overseas Development, five nineteenth century military buildings were refurbished to lay the foundation of the Morne Educational Complex. However, the Executive Council Decision of 1966 was implemented piecemeal, with the opening of the St Lucia Teachers' College in 1968, the Morne Fortune Technical College in 1970, and the St Lucia 'A' Level College in 1974. Charles (1977) reports that from its inception, the rest of the Caribbean region looked to the educational complex in St Lucia as a concept of communal learning facilities which held considerable promise for the development of tertiary education plans elsewhere. Although they shared common facilities, these institutions operated as separate and distinct entities until the coming into effect of the

Figure 7  
 Establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College  
 A Chronological Map



Act which established the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in September 1986 (Figure 7).

The government's decision to appoint a Committee to consider the integration of the Morne Educational Complex into a more cohesive unit set in motion a protracted process of planning the establishment of an institution which would rationalise the provision of tertiary education in the country. Another idea therefore evolved, that of fashioning an institution which would place the major educational resources of the country within easy reach of the total community. The institution to be designed was defined not merely as a place, but as an idea. It was to include in its menu "credit offerings as well as non-credit offerings, day as well as evening, weekday as well as weekend, on-campus as well as off-campus programmes for youth as well as adults" (Lewis et al, 1983a: 20-21). It was planned to become the country's premier educational institution and, in keeping with the status which the government of the day accorded it, was named after an eminent local economist, academic and Nobel Prize Laureate, Sir Arthur Lewis.

### **Factors contributing to the establishment of the College**

In St Lucia there is a tendency to view developments in the education system as efforts at crisis management rather than as conscious attempts at long-term planning. The establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College is a case in point. It is argued here that while the emergence of community colleges in the NCCs is regarded in some quarters as an "unintended benefit" of the gradual fragmentation of the UWI (Jules, undated), and as an expression of frustration at its insensitivity to these countries' development needs (George, 1987; Interview, PES-F, 30.08.92), an examination of the initiatives that led to the establishment of the College suggests that this was more the result of the evolution of an idea, rather than a reaction to a crisis. This is a view supported by Lewis (1987) who sees the establishment of the College as marking another stage in the evolutionary approach to higher education planning in St Lucia in the sense that it has emerged from previous efforts to establish institutions of post-secondary education. Similarly, George (1987) credits the

Ministry of Education for having been a step ahead in planning for the institution even before the need for it became critical, while Charles (1977) reports that early expectations were that the Morne Educational Complex would eventually become a campus affiliated in one way or other with the UWI.

During the 1960s an appraisal committee set up by the UWI to look into the development of higher education in the NCCs, suggested that the university centre to be established in St Lucia should be an integral part of the Morne Educational Complex which should eventually develop into a full university college offering teacher training, vocational training, sixth-form courses, extra-mural programmes and first-year degree work. A decade later, the Committee on Educational Priorities set up by the Government to prescribe an educational philosophy and policy for St Lucia also recommended the establishment of a junior university college:

*A Junior University College is introduced in order to provide facilities for students to do undergraduate studies in certain subjects locally before proceeding to one of the campuses of the University of the West Indies. There is room, at the post-secondary level, for institutions to be merged into a "Community College" or an institution of a similar nature. The course combinations offered at that level where (sic) students may also do the higher technician course, a higher teachers' certificate course .... and the traditional academic courses (Edmunds et al, 1980 : 133).*

These proposals were subsequently discussed during a national consultation on education in 1980. In this forum an advisory team drawn from academics in the region, endorsed the earlier proposals, but recommended a wider framework to incorporate agriculture and the health disciplines (Goodridge et al, 1982).

The evidence thus points to a conscious process of consultations and appraisals from local, regional and extra-regional perspectives, in an attempt to arrive at a consensus on what was considered the most suitable tertiary education thrust for the country. In some sense, the long gestation period was understandable. The small size of the country leaves little room for mistakes in any planning exercise as such mistakes are costly in financial as well as human terms (Government of St Lucia, 1977a). Educational planning is no exception. But the evidence shows that the inertia which plagued the pre-planning process was not all due to caution on the part of a small

state to get it right the first time around. First of all, there were dissensions at the Morne Educational Complex itself; "the usual thing about people protecting their turfs, their kingdoms and their power structures" (Interview, NDF-C, 19.08.92). Secondly, it was difficult for the idea to develop in what one interviewee described as an "educationally hostile" environment (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92). Thirdly, there was little support for the development of a domestic tertiary education sector from external funding agencies. An education sector survey carried out in 1981 for the Government of St Lucia under a co-operative agreement between the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the World Bank did not encourage the growth of the tertiary sector. Commenting on the "relatively favoured position of the Morne Educational Complex", the report was critical of what it considered the system's top-heavy recurrent expenditure level, and advised against any substantial growth in the tertiary sub-sector, arguing that:

*... while it is desirable for good educational and economic reasons, and in the interest of regional co-operation for St Lucia to support strongly higher-level education, it is at least debatable whether the level of commitment should rise much further (UNESCO, 1982 : 7).*

When it is recognised that this report was meant to identify areas of education and training which could be incorporated in financing arrangements with external funding agencies, it is debatable whether this could have advanced the cause of tertiary education development in St Lucia. Its effect has to be seen in the context of a small country's dependence on external assistance for the development of its economic, social and educational infrastructure. It is also ironic that in the position paper prepared by the Government for the UNESCO exercise, the country's policies were articulated in the language favoured by funding agencies - the language of economics; policies that were very much in the spirit of the rationalisation measures being advocated:

*St Lucia is anxious to rationalise provision of tertiary education and is considering the establishment of a Community College or College of Further Education. The chief motivation behind the proposal is recognition of the fact that a pooling of resources of the existing colleges would lead to greater economy and increased use of the facilities. (Emphasis added). Students currently limited to pursuing 'A' Levels as pre-requisites for university entrance, might combine such studies with professional training in accounting, secretarial work, commerce etc. Conversely, student teachers and students of the Technical College would be able to complement their professional training with advanced academic study (Appendix 1, UNESCO Sector Survey, 1982 : 67).*

There were compelling reasons why the country pressed on. In retrospect, it can be argued that there was in fact a combination of factors whose emphases shifted from time to time, so that it is difficult to isolate them or to measure the extent to which one factor predominated or became the basis for action (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). It is clear however that local circumstances dictated the direction of the tertiary education thrust while regional developments accelerated the process.

### *Local factors*

Perhaps one of the main local factors was the need to cater for the projected increase in demand for tertiary education. The economics of this situation coupled with the decline in the number of scholarships available for tertiary education abroad, heightened the need to ensure that there was some level of tertiary education available locally, and that the sphere of that teaching continued to widen (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). There was also a heightened awareness of the urgency to develop the country's human resource particularly at the managerial, supervisory and technical levels to give the country's economy the competitive edge that it required (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). To do so called for the development of strategies and the provision of opportunities to reduce the outflow of trained personnel (Lewis et al, 1983a; Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). The decision to amalgamate the facilities of the existing institutions was not due to their failure to fulfil the purposes for which they were established, as a paper prepared by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges seems to suggest (ACCC, 1982), but to the need to achieve greater internal efficiency and so maximise tertiary education output given the resources at its disposal. The experience of concentrating all sixth-form work in an 'A' Level College had shown that there was some economy of costs to be derived from consolidating tertiary education in a single institution (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). It was argued that the experience could be duplicated with similar results (Interviews, CBG-L, 11.08.92; EXS-F, 13.08.92).

In deciding to establish this type of tertiary education facility, there is evidence to suggest that Government was also influenced by the benefits that can accrue to a

country by virtue of the location of infrastructural, technological and intellectual capital (Interviews, BGV-T, 13.08.92; CEO-L, 10.08.92). It was envisaged that the presence of such an institution would help curb the flight of intellectual capital by providing an environment in which the sizeable core of qualified people remaining in-country could flex their wings. This resident pool of expertise could then make a contribution to the social and intellectual life of the country (Interview, CEO-L, 10.08.92). There were arguments against the high capital and recurrent costs of establishing such an institution, but stronger arguments for training larger numbers of St Lucians more economically at home prevailed.

From the local perspective the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College was thus inevitable, and a propitious set of circumstances combined to shape the final product. There was first of all, the vision of one man who had the foresight to reserve a valuable piece of real estate for educational purposes. Secondly, there existed a cadre of local professionals with experience in the management of tertiary level education and who could assume leadership for tertiary level institutions (Interview, PES-F, 30.08.92). Finally, and very importantly, there was strong support for tertiary education by successive political administrations.

### *Regional factors*

The local move to establish the College was accelerated by the restructuring exercise of the UWI during the early years of the 1980s. As noted elsewhere, St Lucia, like the rest of the NCCs, was persuaded that the campus territories were out to make the university serve their own needs (Interview, CEO-L, 10.08.92). Despite their disenchantment, the NCCs found something positive in the exercise. The local response to the establishment of a campus at Cave Hill-Barbados for example, confirmed the view of educational planners in St Lucia that in some respects, the only way to open access to the large number of people seeking higher education opportunities was to make it available on the spot, however limited such opportunities might be (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92).



The development of the tertiary education sector in St Lucia and the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College were thus influenced by three main considerations - the need to meet a growing and pressing social demand for tertiary education; to accelerate the development of the human resource to meet the manpower needs of an increasingly modern economic sector; and to provide a "vibrant environment in which people would be content to live" (Interview, LBR-F, 30.07.92).

### **The planning process**

It has been noted that the establishment of the post-secondary colleges that have emerged in the small states of the Commonwealth is characterised by an invariably long gestation period followed by a relatively short active planning period (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988). In the case of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, the two periods were equally lengthy; a nine-year gestation period followed by seven years of active planning.

The task of planning the establishment of the College was entrusted to a succession of individuals and committees. An examination of the reasons behind these appointments points to an attempt to strike a balance between getting the task done expeditiously and ensuring participation and involvement of as wide a cross-section of people as possible in what was considered a major educational undertaking. Whatever the actual reasons may have been, it is clear that the authorities turned to Committees, for the consensus of views which would inform the decisions to be taken, but to individuals for the actual implementation of the recommendations. The amount of time spent on each planning phase was often criticised. However, this criticism should be examined against the fact that none of the people involved were specialists in educational planning, and none were very familiar with the details of the community college concept in practice. Neither did the authorities consider study tours to similar institutions in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America a priority (Ministry of Education, File 11/13). They were left to draw on their own resources and initiative and to set up a structure which would reflect the views expressed, and the needs articulated by, those whom they had consulted. In

retrospect, this could be regarded as one of the strengths of the institution, for it can truly be described as home-grown and relatively free of the methodological and theoretical influences that are so often indiscriminately transferred to educational projects in small developing countries. This strength was recognised by Parker who saw the College as "having the potential to be a model as to how to develop an indigenous community college, not one which blindly follows a US, Canadian or British model"(1988: 38).

The long planning period was also occasioned by what has been referred to as the lack of spare capacity in a small system. With but one exception, it was not possible for the members of the various committees to have been released from their normal substantive posts to work full-time on the planning exercise. They were all multi-functional administrators in the areas from which they were drawn - the Ministries of Education, Health and Finance, regional organisations and institutions, the Chamber of Commerce, and the UWI. In some cases, the same individuals served on all the committees in one capacity or another. While some committee fatigue may have set in, their membership provided the continuity which was needed to sustain the process.

The main processes and procedures that led to the establishment of the College are outlined in Table 10. The first Committee which was set up by the Cabinet of Ministers in 1979 was invited to set out the objectives of the proposed tertiary education institution, and to describe the administrative arrangements which would facilitate the total integration of the Morne Educational Complex. Its report submitted two years later, recommended the appointment of a full-time officer to effect the integration of the institutions. A subsequent review of the integration effort resulted in the constitution of a task force comprising noted academics, researchers, practitioners, administrators, scientists and educators to devise a plan of action for the establishment of a tertiary level institution (Ministry of Education, File 11/13). Following the submission of this second report work began on the implementation of

TABLE 10  
ESTABLISHMENT OF SIR ARTHUR LEWIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
THE PLANNING PROCESS

|  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
| October 24   | <u>1979</u> | Appointment of Committee to consider the integration of the Morne Educational Complex institutions. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 417)  |
| October 31   | <u>1980</u> | First meeting of Committee.   |
| August<br>October 19   | <u>1981</u> | Submission of Committee's Report.<br>Appointment of Chief Executive Officer to prepare plans for the integration of the Complex institutions. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 604)  |
| December 29  | <u>1982</u> | Ministry of Education's request to Cabinet to set up a Task Force to make recommendations for the integration of the Complex institutions.  |
| January 20   | <u>1983</u> | Cabinet Approval of Task Force. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 42)   |
| January<br>May 5<br>May 10<br>July-October<br>August 14<br>October 29-November 5<br>November | <u>1984</u> | Submission of Task Force.<br>Cabinet Approval for establishment of Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 431)<br>Cabinet Decision to integrate existing institutions under one Administrative Structure. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 435 (b))<br>Discussions between Ministry of Education and The Teacher and Public Service Commission and the Ministry of Health regarding re-definition of duties of staff to be attached to the College.<br>Cabinet directive that Co-ordinator commence immediately the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 573(b))<br>Discussions with UWI regarding programme development at the Proposed College.<br>Ministry of Education appointment of expanded Committee to direct the process of integration and to implement the recommendations of the Task Force. |
| January-August<br>June 1<br>July 9<br>August 6<br>December 4                                 | <u>1985</u> | Modification and adaptation of proposals contained in the Report of the Task Force.<br>Passage in Parliament of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Act.<br>Submission of proposals for the transfer of the Victoria Hospital-based School of Nursing to the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.<br>Implementation Committee's submission of Working Document to commence the actual process of implementation.<br>Cabinet Approval of guidelines regarding the appointment of the Board of Governors, the Standing Committees and members of Senior Administrative Staff. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 1478)   |
| January 23<br>June 1<br>June 5<br>June 12<br>July 11<br>August 25<br>September               | <u>1986</u> | Cabinet Approval of appointment of the Board of Governors for the proposed College (Cabinet Conclusion No. 74)<br>The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Act takes effect.<br>Cabinet Approval of the conditions of appointment of Deans as Senior Administrative Staff (Cabinet Conclusion No. 509)<br>Cabinet Approval of posts of Senior Administrative Staff. (Cabinet Conclusion No. 546)<br>Inaugural Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.<br>Appointment of Principal.<br>Commencement of operation of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.   |

the recommendations. Finally, legislation establishing an autonomous tertiary level institution was passed in the Houses of Parliament, and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College began operations as a statutory corporation in September 1986.

### **Institutional model**

The decision to amalgamate the Morne Educational Complex institutions was influenced in part by Government's perception that the Complex as it currently operated was a "very high-cost institution with significantly under-utilised resources" (Lewis et al, 1983b: 7). It was intended that the new institution should respond to the local demand for tertiary education - a demand which some argued was created:

*... not ... as in some developed countries by the expansion of the general academic streams of secondary schools which traditionally prepare for university study, but by the silent cries of thousands of persons unable to function effectively in a modern world (Lewis et al, 1983b: 21).*

In the opinion of the planners, only an institution with a flexible admissions policy offering "multi-mode, integrated, purpose-designed programmes" (Lewis et al, 1983b: 20) could adequately respond to that demand. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College was thus conceived as an open comprehensive community college:

*Open in the sense that it will have a very flexible admissions policy in keeping with the available resources at each period; Comprehensive in the sense that it should cater for a wide variety of students; Community in the sense that it should cater for needs that are identified within the community, and set in motion strategies to design curricula to meet those needs (Lewis et al, 1983a: 16).*

It was recommended that the College's programmes be relevant to the environment and to learners' needs, flexible as to duration, time and location of instructional arrangement, and diversified as far as curriculum and teaching and learning methods were concerned. It was to be so organised as to provide "quality life-long education to all persons in keeping with the available human and physical resources, for the purpose of improving the quality of life of the individual and communities within the country, of creating global awareness and openness and of generating understanding and respect for all peoples" (Lewis et al, 1983a: 17).

### *The multi-purpose college*

With its emphasis on service to the community, the American community college has been regarded as the prototype of the multi-purpose institution which has evolved (Lewis et al, 1983b). Established in every American metropolitan area, these colleges reached out:

*... to attract those who were not being served by traditional higher education, who could not take the time to attend a college on a full-time basis, whose ethnic background had constrained them from participating, who had inadequate preparation in the lower schools, whose educational progress had been interrupted by some temporary condition, who had become obsolete in their jobs or who had never been trained to work at any job, who needed a connection to obtain a job, who were confined in prisons, physically handicapped, or otherwise unable to attend classes on a campus, or who were faced with increased leisure time (Cohen and Brawer, 1982: 21).*

Unlike its American counterpart, the College is national in scope, designed with the needs and aspirations of the entire population in mind. It is also the national dimension of the multi-purpose college model which has emerged in small states like St Lucia, that has set it apart from the British tertiary college defined by Terry (1977) as a single institution in the maintained sector of education providing all or nearly all the full - and part-time education for the sixteen plus cohort in a given locality.

In requiring the College to respond to the needs of the community and the individual, the planners shared the universal view of tertiary education institutions as instruments of cultural and economic development. Another factor that distinguishes the community college model from others in the tertiary education sector is its clientele, and the curricular functions to which it is committed. It was the entire St Lucian community and the comprehensive range of functions - collegiate, vocational - technical education, continuing education, remedial education and community service (Cohen and Brawer, 1982) - that the planners had in mind when they designed the College on the open comprehensive model.

Even so, the model has lent itself to a range of interpretations. On the one hand, there are those who would like to see the institution sufficiently flexible to take into

account the varying needs of the community, both academic and employment - related so that it is not seen as concentrating on its collegiate function of preparing people for higher level studies (Interview, DTE-A, 08.08.92). In this regard, there are already criticisms that the College has allowed itself to be pressed too hurriedly into offering university - level programmes. It is argued that this could lead to the College channelling too much of its energies and its resources into this area at the expense of other programmes and priorities (Interview, EXS-F, 13.08.92). The general view of the Administration however is that the institution should:

- cover a range of academic and non-academic skills, accessible to everyone with the qualifications for a particular course, irrespective of age (Interview, DSG-H, 11.08.92);
- provide people with the opportunity to acquire the necessary qualifications that are needed to pursue programmes in which they are interested (Interviews, CNE-L, 31.08.92; LBR-F, 30.07.92);
- meet the learning needs of the community with regards to community organisations and institutions, business groups and individuals (Interview, CNE-L, 31.08.92);
- provide all these services to a diverse community who cannot all take advantage of full-time attendance at a facility located in one main area (Interview, CCE-S, 05.08.92).

While the College has opted for an open admissions policy, the Board of Governors recognises that there has to be a limit to the openness and comprehensiveness of the institution. The College will as far as possible seek to be responsive, but only where the demand is seen to be sufficiently great as to warrant a response. In attempting to be responsive, it is to aim at being "inclusive" rather than "exclusive", affording as many people as possible the opportunity of a tertiary education without itself becoming financially extravagant and imprudent (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92).

In planning the development of the tertiary education sector it was recognised that it would not be cost-effective to maintain a diversity of tertiary level institutions in a country as small as St Lucia (Interview, PES-F, 30.08.92). Hence the idea of a

single, integrated, multi-functional institution to service various sectors. It was to be a short-cycle institution integrated into a state master-plan, operating at relatively low cost, charging relatively low tuition fees, offering to a heterogeneous student body a comprehensive curriculum that would provide mobility within itself and between other post-secondary institutions (Lewis et al, 1983b). The extent to which the College has been able to develop in that direction is examined in subsequent sections. It must be noted however, that the institution was allowed time in which to evolve, and find its level. Its current performance is to be viewed therefore in the light of the grace period which the planners catered for:

*It is not expected that all of the programmes .... will be implemented simultaneously or in the immediate future, nor is it being suggested that from the inception of the College anyone who applies will be admitted. The Board of Governors and the Management Committee will be responsible over time, on the basis of statistical evidence or otherwise, to ensure that serious attempts are made to utilise the available resources to meet the needs of the country in keeping with the underlying philosophy of an Open Comprehensive Community College (Lewis et al, 1983b: 28).*

### **Institutional mission**

In a sense the philosophy that underlies an open comprehensive community college forces such an institution to be eclectic in its approach and universalistic in its orientation. Its mission and purpose, would therefore bear this hallmark. As noted earlier, the College is a statutory corporation established to fulfil a public purpose and thus its function is to be seen within the Act which created it. The mandate given to it has been interpreted to imply a dynamic approach to planning, organising and accelerating the development of the country's human resources (General Calendar, 1988). It is expected to do so by:

- catering for students wishing to pursue a two-year programme of middle level professional, administrative or vocational courses; to prepare for a higher education course; or to pursue part-time special interest courses relating to occupational advancement or leisure time activities;

- providing diversified programmes to meet community needs and a wide range of abilities, interests and ages;
- ensuring flexibility regarding duration, time and admission policies; and
- widening relationships with the community and maintaining support through outreach activities.

Its "mission", the conditions on which its existence is tolerated, approved and even extended (Lockwood and Davies, 1985: 80), is described as the:

*... provision of good quality preparation and training of students in an atmosphere where learning, teaching and action research can contribute significantly to their personal development and to the development of the country, and which stimulates and enhances life-long education and training coupled with service to the community (Thomas, 1991: 17).*

The College interprets the mandate given to it by Government by:

- preparing middle level persons for the world of work;
- increasing the opportunities for higher education;
- fostering the personal and continuing development of its students;
- being a resource to the St Lucian community.

These are the goals that the College has articulated in its Mission Statement, which, to paraphrase Lockwood and Davies (1985: 81), serves as the banner under which the academic troops are duly inspired and uplifted. This Statement suggests that the institution is universalistic rather than elitist, comprehensive in terms of its disciplinary coverage, committed to the intellectual, physical, career and moral development of its students, and committed to a strong public service orientation. The College sees itself then as a learning community committed to excellence, responsive to the needs of learners and to the emerging problems of society (Thomas, 1991). Quite apart from the expectations that the government has of the College, the St Lucian community has its own vision of what the institution's mission should be. It is expected to take the leadership role in shaping the future of the country (Interview, LAB-L, 11.09.92) by popularising education and training (Interview, CCI-A, 13.09.92), breaking down the barriers to access to such training- be they



geographic, financial, racial or psychological - eventually making the shores of the island the walls of the College (Interview, CTP-B, 12.08.92).

### **Governance structure**

*The governance of an institution involves a complex set of relationships depending upon the nature of the institution, its size, history and traditions, present circumstances and personalities involved (Karol and Ginsburg, 1980: 102).*

A preliminary examination of the College in the light of the above parameters identified by Karol and Ginsburg serves as an introduction to the discussion of its governance structure. In earlier sections of this chapter, the College was presented as a statutory corporation established by Government from a group of existing autonomous institutions to cater for the diverse educational needs of the community. To this need to be added the fact that the College is a small institution with a small administrative staff called upon to function in a variety of positions. Its current financing arrangements make it entirely dependent on central government for funding and therefore unable to exercise complete control over its budget (Interview, SAF-F, 18.08.92). The members of the body selected to manage its activities are all required to be "persons of proven capacity in matters relating to the aim of the College" as set out in the Act ( Government of St Lucia, 1985), and are expected to bring to the institution their educational, professional, and management sensitivity and acumen. The interplay of these parameters has resulted in a management structure which combines legal and resource constraints with bureaucracy and expediency.

The Act which established the College provides for the appointment of a Board of Governors which "shall be a body corporate"; the appointment of committees and, the delegation of powers by the Board, acquisition of funds, borrowing powers, auditing and accounting of funds, and the issuing of directions by the Minister for Education after consultation with the Board. A Schedule to the Act outlines the constitution, functions and procedures of the Board of Governors (Government of St Lucia, 1985).

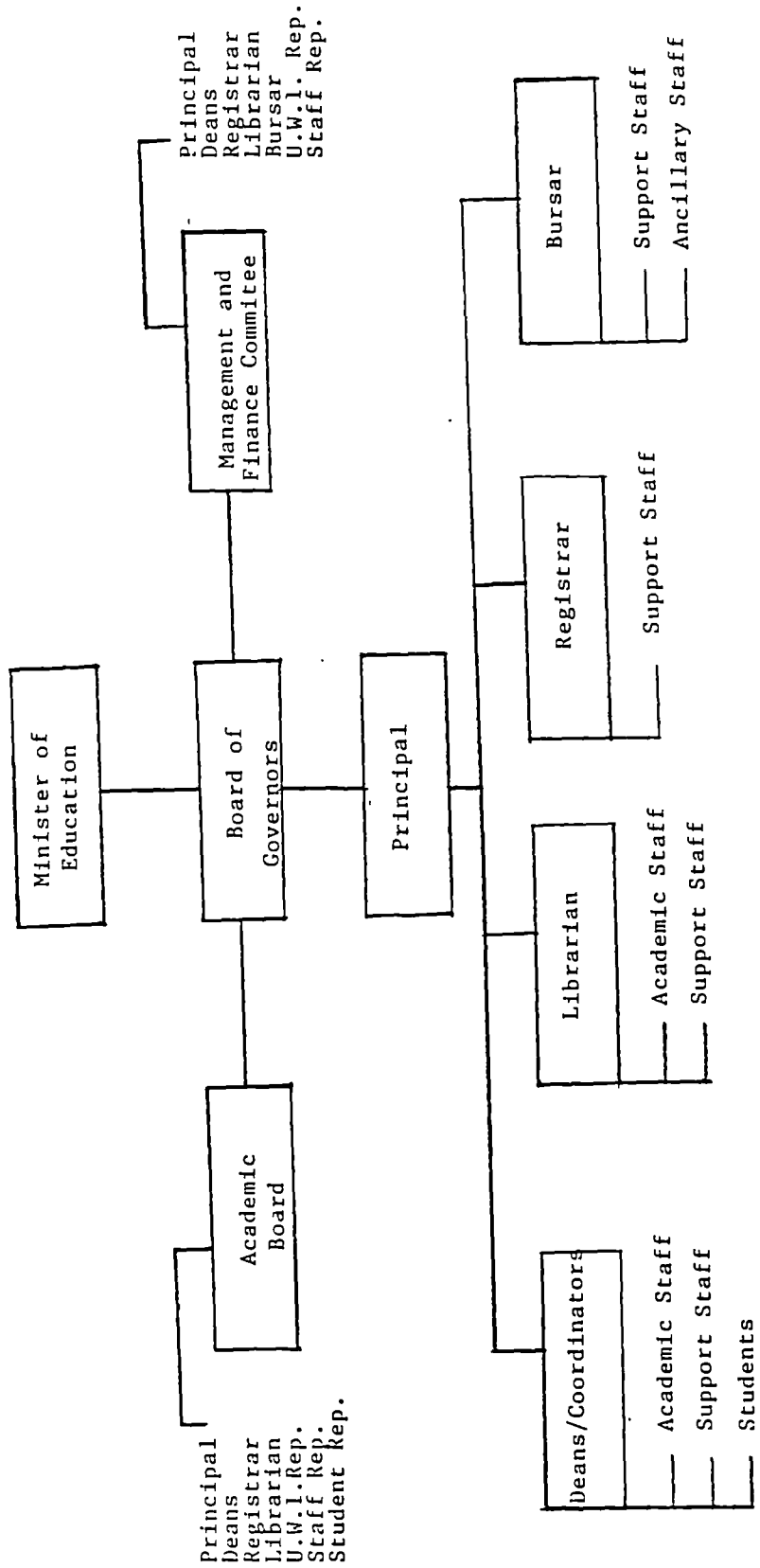
The Act therefore created an institution relatively free of ministerial and bureaucratic control and interference by conferring operational autonomy on the Board of Governors. Lewis et al recommend that this autonomy is to be interpreted as the:

*... authority delegated by the Minister of Education to the Board of Governors to determine after consultation with the Minister, the post-secondary education needs of the country; to establish objectives to meet those needs; to set policies to work towards these objectives within the limits of available resources; to organise the College in a manner best suited to implementing these policies and to develop acceptable procedures for internal evaluation and accountability (Lewis et al, 1983b: 18).*

As a statutory corporation, the College has not been granted policy autonomy, and needs therefore to remain responsive to the dictates of Parliament. The operational autonomy which it enjoys however, allows for flexibility and continuity of operation within the safeguards provided by the Act itself, which requires reports of its activities, audited statements of its accounts, and estimates of its revenue and expenditure to be submitted annually to the Houses of Parliament (Act No 8, of 1985, Sections 14 and 15). The twin issues of autonomy and accountability are therefore accommodated in this joint enterprise in which it could be said that the payer calls the tune but leaves the piper to decide on its orchestration.

The College's governance structure is represented in Figure 8. The overall management of its activities is entrusted to a Board of Governors whose members, not less than five and not more than nine, are appointed by the Minister of Education. Provision is also made in the Act for two Standing Committees to assist the Board in managing, conducting and supervising the activities of the College - the Academic Board charged with the task of regulating and superintending the academic work of the College, and the Management and Finance Committee assisting the Principal in the maintenance of discipline, and in matters of finance, budgeting and staff selection. In what is a relatively uncomplicated and uncluttered governance structure, authority for decision taking devolves then from the Board and its Committees to the Principal and then on to the Heads of the divisions that make up the institution.

Figure 8  
 Sir Arthur Lewis Community College:  
 Governance Structure



One of the features of this management structure, and one that can be seen particularly in the composition of the Standing Committees is a blurring of the traditional divide between policy making and policy implementation. This may well be due to the small size of the administrative staff and consequently the small pool from which potential committee members can be drawn. However, small states have learnt to make virtues out of necessities (Jones, 1989), and some have read into this type of management structure an attempt to democratise the decision - taking process (Jules, undated). It is argued too that there is an increase in the degree of responsibility brought to bear on decision - taking when the policy maker is also the implementer. Thus the flexibility and the internal cohesion that such a structure allows have been seen to facilitate the development and implementation of the new programmes which the College has mounted to meet pressing community needs and requests.

### **Organisational structure**

The strategy of amalgamation is identified in the international literature as one widely adopted by small countries in the development of their post-secondary sector (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988; Packer, 1989; Bray, 1990; Atchoarena, 1991b). What has not been so widely discussed however, is the administrative structure and operation of these merged institutions. Repeated references have been made in earlier sections of this Chapter to the fact that the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College grew out of existing specialist institutions each with its own administrative and accounting structures. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Act in many ways reinforced this divisional structure when it directed that:

*The Board shall cause the College to be organised in Divisions corresponding as nearly as practicable with the fields of education specified in Section 3(2) (Act No.8 of 1985).*

The fact that the fields of education specified, namely:

- Agriculture
- Arts, Science and General Studies
- Health Sciences
- Teacher Education and Educational Administration, and
- Technical Education and Management Studies

corresponded exactly with the specialisations already offered by the St Lucia College of Agriculture, the St Lucia 'A' Level College, the Victoria Hospital School of Nursing, the St Lucia Teachers' College and the Morne Fortune Technical College respectively, points to an attempt to effect as smooth a transition as possible. Yet it is this concern for safeguarding subject specialisations that has hindered the full integration of the institution, and the building up of the consensus and the ethos needed to shape it into the corporate entity and the community that it was meant to be. It is one of the weaknesses of the organisational structure that is not lost on Management itself. A member of the management team admits:

*It has not been all smooth sailing. Bearing in mind the history of the College where we have had to bring together people from different institutions, this consensus and this ethos will be more difficult to achieve unless there is greater integration .... The College also needs to find a way of restructuring its programmes, and this is what is being attempted through the Associate Degree Programme (Interview, PRN-T. 06.08.92).*

One of the first steps in the amalgamation process was the integration of the existing institutions under one administrative structure (Cabinet Conclusion No.431 of 1984), and the consequent transfer of certain functions from the individual divisions to one central administrative unit. But integration has proliferated the administrative work of the divisions themselves, without giving the centre the management capabilities it needs to direct and oversee the academic work of its constituents. Those currently leading the college argue that there needs to be this fundamental change in the administrative structure of the institution if it is going to grow and change, and if it is to achieve the internal efficiency that was anticipated (Interview, DSG-H, 11.08.92).

The pre-amalgamation institutions were criticised for offering their students "choices that were narrower than overall facilities allow because of the rather artificial boundaries set by the various institutions" as they operated then (Ministry of Education, File 11/13). It is debatable whether integration has brought any significant changes, since it is proving difficult to break down these boundaries which

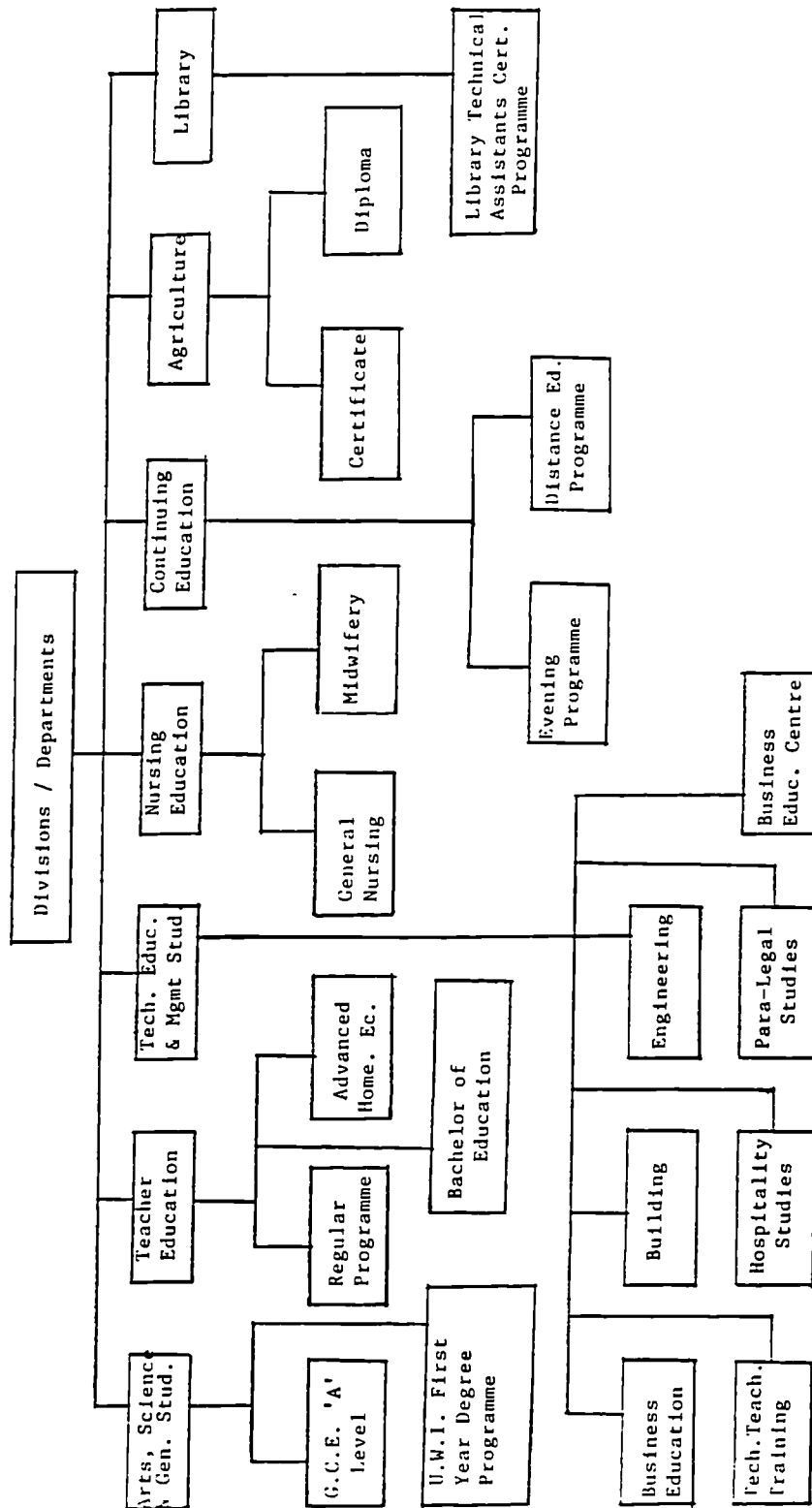
have turned out to be less artificial than they at first appeared. The current organisational structure has so far not allowed within the College itself the "openness" which it has espoused. By one account, the task of fully integrating the divisions has been so massive that at times the philosophy of the College has escaped the Management and "things have just happened" (Interview, DSG-H, 11.08.92). However, as the integration effort strengthens, the Commonwealth Secretariat's advice seems well worth considering:

*Close attention should be given to determine what is good, and should be kept, and what, by virtue of the objectives of the new college, requires re-definition. Special attention will need to be given to the administration of the College and to the provision of its common services (Emphasis added) (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988: 14).*

If the organisational structure of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College were to be examined in the light of Bray's (1990) typology of small-state higher education institutions, then the College could be described as multi-faceted, multi-level and multi-mode. Figure 9 shows the divisions and departments which constitute the College. The programme organisation is in keeping with the College's mandate to offer a diversity of programmes to a wide variety of students within a flexible framework which takes into consideration time, duration and instructional arrangements. While the main divisions concentrate on the College's full-time programmes, the Department of Continuing Education has been assigned responsibility for its community outreach activities.

Among the reasons suggested by 'small-state specialists' for this strategy of amalgamation is "the search for economies of scale" (Atchoarena, 1991b: 553). Discussions during the initial stages of the establishment of the College however, centred more on the question of how to bring a diversity of post-secondary education opportunities to larger numbers of people at a limited cost and with limited facilities (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). The main pre-occupation was, and still is, a question of meeting national needs, even in cases where low-level enrolment raises issues of

Figure 9  
 Sir Arthur Lewis Community College:  
 Organisational Structure



viability. The rationale for this is expressed in the view that:

*... while scale is indeed a factor, the economic concept of cost-effectiveness which relies heavily on quantitative data should not be the sole consideration. There are qualitative aspects which need to be taken into account when dealing with the issue of cost-effectiveness (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92).*

This view is borne out by the efforts of the government to develop the institution even in the face of rising per capita costs; its chief concern being the "need to ensure that people develop confidence as quickly as possible in the College's capacity and its potential" (Interview, MEC-G 04..09.92). It is recognised that its divisional structure has imposed professional constraints which limit the sharing of staff among the divisions. The anticipated savings on staff costs have not been realised, as interdisciplinary programming has fallen short of expectations. The modularisation of courses and the development of joint and core courses however, are seen as efforts at integration which would make it possible for students to register in one division and pursue a course in another (Thomas, 1990), thereby obviating the need to duplicate subject specialists across divisions.

Restructuring at the level of programmes point to another phase in the continuing process of amalgamation and integration. The College is, in its own words, "hastening slowly" towards the establishment of an Associate Degree Programme which would expand curriculum offerings and promote inter-divisional mobility. Essentially, the programme incorporates three strands: (i) a set of core courses of national and regional relevance; (ii) a set of option courses to be chosen from any of the divisions and (iii) a set of specialised courses based in particular divisions. This programme structure will allow students to take advantage of a broader range of courses, while at the same time allowing them access to internationally recognised certification and educational institutions, so striking that balance between national relevance and international credibility to which Packer (1991) refers. Commenting on curriculum issues, Packer argues that small nation states face difficult choices which derive from an unavoidable tension between national relevance and international credibility:



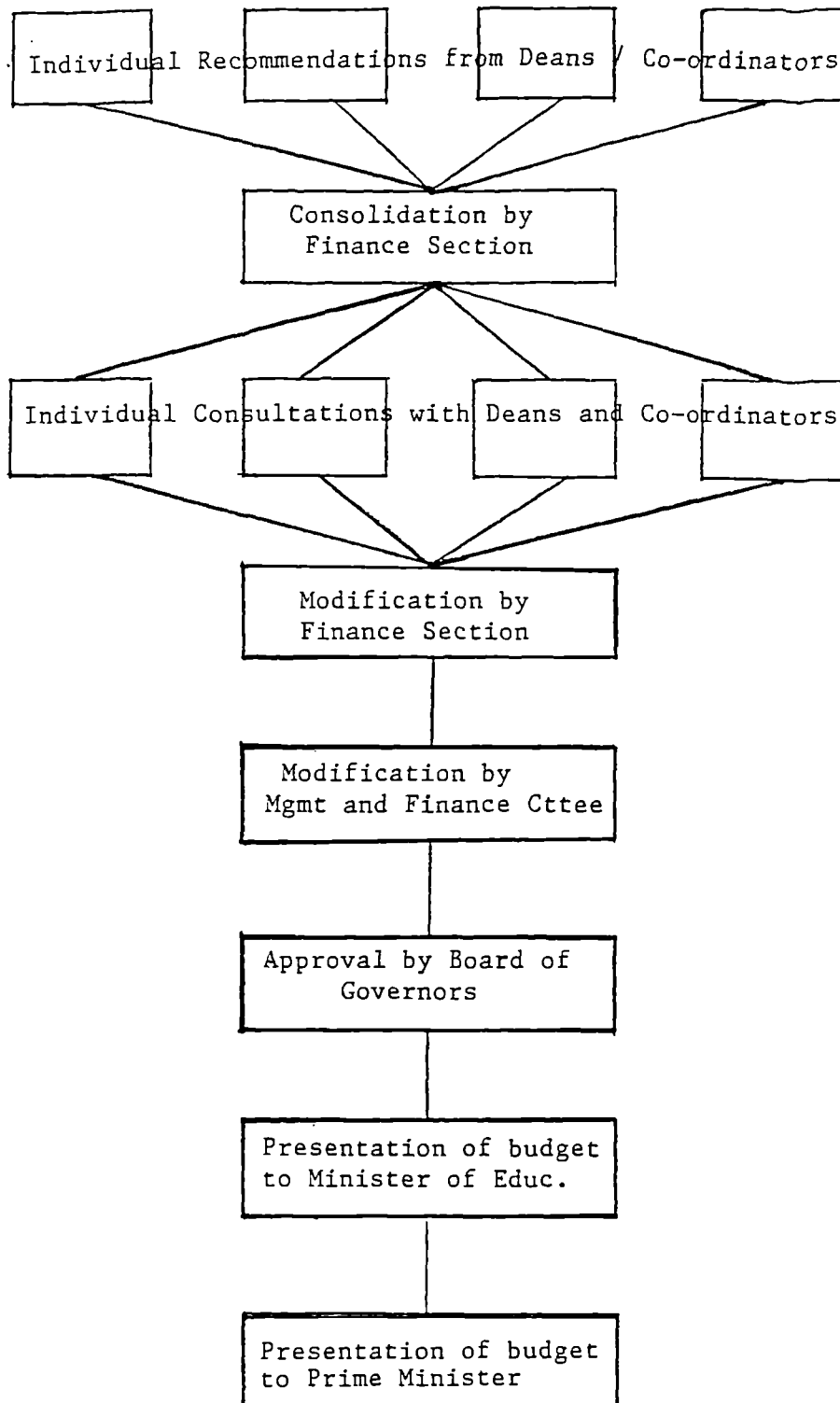
*On the one hand there is the search for relevance, identity, local values and national control of what is on offer in the state's education institutions .... On the other hand, there is the need to develop judicious interdependence with a much wider education network (Packer, 1991: 519).*

This is an interdependence that the College welcomes and which it wants to capitalise on, if only to dispel the idea that some people have of small states being helpless by virtue of their economic vulnerability (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). The Associate Degree structure is thus seen as an attempt to put into practice on a national scale the idea of academic mobility and interchange. The lessons learnt from this experience can be of invaluable help in the broader framework of regional networking and programme articulation within the context of ACTI, for example, and in networking with extra-regional institutions and scholars. These alliances are seen as important, as a community as small as St Lucia needs to "internationalise itself" (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). It is recommended that the College should strive to be eclectic in its approach, cultivating "far-flung international associations", drawing on a pool of metropolitan experience and expertise (Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92), but also establishing channels "so that what we are creating can more easily flow out" (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92).

### **Financing mechanisms**

As noted earlier, the College relies almost entirely on Government for funding. This funding takes the form of an annual subvention paid to the College in quarterly allocations, to cover staff salaries, the operations of the divisions and capital expenses. The level of subvention is based on the estimates of expenditure submitted to the government following a budget process outlined in Figure 10. This procedure reflects a consultative approach which focuses responsibility on the individual divisions to consider some overall budgetary constraints on a basis consistent with that of all the other divisions. The estimates that are finally presented to the Prime Minister are thus deemed by the College to be "realistic and reasonable". In the final analysis however, it is the Minister of Finance who decides on the amount to be

Figure 10  
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College:  
The Budget Process



approved. A secondary source of funds is derived from revenue - generating activities which include tuition fees, administrative charges on bilateral and regional training agreements, and surpluses accruing from continuing education programmes.

An examination of receipts from these two sources of funding in the 1990/1991 academic year, brings out two features of the College's financial operations commonly associated with small systems - a slender revenue base and the large proportion of funds allocated to the payment of personal emoluments (Table 11).

With its emphasis on teaching and community outreach, the College has no great revenue - generating capability. Although the revenue base from fees is slender, it is recognised that any substantial increase in tuition fees needs to be carefully considered, as this will have implications for the level of access to tertiary level education (Interviews, CBG-L, 11.08.92; BGV-T, 13.08.92; SAF-F, 18.08.92). Even a reasonable increase is not expected to make any dent on the situation (Thomas, 1991; Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92).

The cost of operating the College has soared over the past years (Figure 10). The level of annual increases can be attributed to the fact that the College is still in its developmental stage. Thus it is expected to incur heavy costs in its capital programmes (upgrading and expansion of its physical infrastructure and provision of equipment), in its programme development and its staffing. It is expected that there will be some plateauing eventually as physical expansion decelerates and as the College consolidates its new programmes (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). However, the current level of increases calls into question one of the reasons for integrating tertiary level provision in one institution - the search for greater economy - though it is too early to determine the type of saving that can accrue from this rationalisation effort.

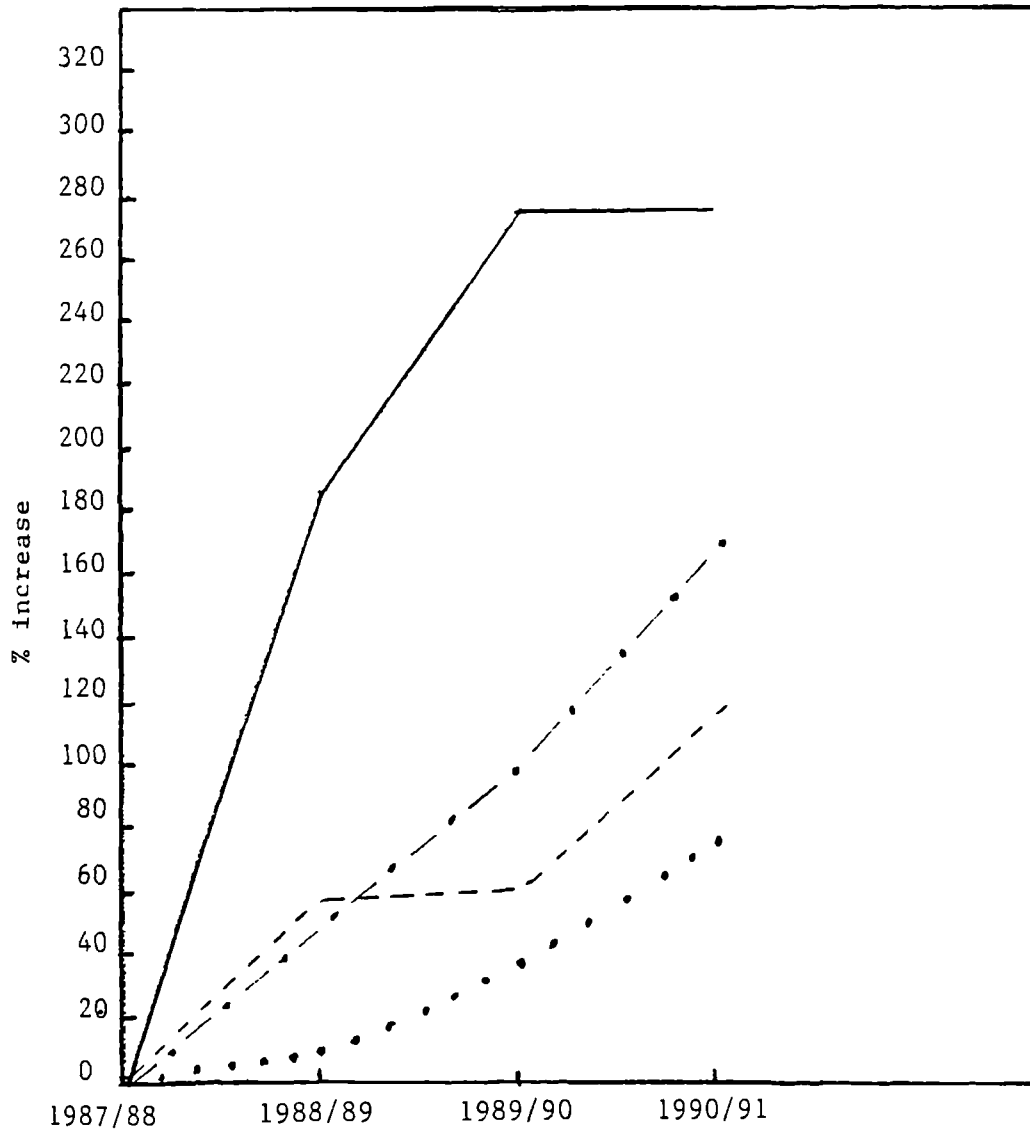
Much has been said about the high unit costs of operating tertiary level institutions in small systems, as the level of increases in Figure 11 confirms. It should be pointed out however that unit costs are usually computed in terms of the institutions'

Table 11  
Sources of Funding  
1990/1991

| Revenue-Generating Activities                      |                  | Government Subvention |                   |
|--|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Administrative Charges for Programmes and Projects | \$ 52,912        | Personal Emoluments   | \$5,368,370       |
| Tuition and Facilities Fees                        | \$177,165        | Operational Services  | \$1,481,490       |
| Surplus from Continuing Education Programmes       | \$ 53,351        | Capital Expenses      | <u>\$ 650,000</u> |
| Miscellaneous                                      | <u>\$ 64,163</u> |                       |                   |
| Total  | \$347,593        | Total                 | \$7,499,860       |

Source: Sir Arthur Lewis Community College

Figure 11  
 Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Operational Costs  
 Level of Increases 1987-1991



Base Year - 1987/1988

- Capital Expenses
- - - Unit Costs
- . - . Personal Emoluments
- • • Operational Expenses

Source: Sir Arthur Lewis Community College  
 Annual Reports

full-time enrolments only. If the College is to be a resource to the entire St. Lucian community as the Government means it to be, then there needs to be a reconsideration of the manner in which unit costs are arrived at, to take into account the College's significant part-time enrolment. In its first year of operation for example, the Department of Continuing Education recorded an enrolment of 637 compared with that year's full-time enrolment of 597 (Annual Report, 1989).

The Management argues that the current mode of financing seems more suited to an institution concerned simply with fulfilling a maintenance role rather than to one involved in developmental activity as the College is required to be. While it is recognised that the College receives a fair slice of the country's education budget, it is argued that Government may not yet have come to terms with its commitment to sustain the type of institution it established (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). The College's ability to attract financial and technical assistance from various international sources has however, reduced considerably the burden of costs to the institution and to the government (Thomas, 1991). Nevertheless, with the tendency of international and financial agencies to associate "aid" with cost-recovery, cost-sharing and sustainability, the College has embarked on measures to strengthen its financial base, through a rationalisation of its fee structure for full-time students, the provision of self-financing programmes for its part-time and outreach activities, and joint ventures with industry and commerce.

### **Range and level of programmes**

In discussing the College's institutional mission reference is made to the characteristics that reflect the institution's ethos, expectations and aspirations; namely, its universalism, its comprehensiveness, and its commitment to the personal development of its students and to a strong public service orientation. In the sections that follow, the programmes through which these are operationalised are examined in the light of the mandate which the College has been given. In examining these programmes there will be some overlapping, since education is rarely discrete, and since, as Cohen and Brawer (1982) point out, community college programmes do not

stay in neat categories when the concepts underlying them and the purposes for which students enrol in them are scrutinised.

### *Middle-level education and training*

The argument for placing emphasis on human resource development has been articulated by development planners in small nation states on both sides of the equator (Throsby, 1987; Bourne, 1988). Education planners concur. For Jules (undated), the economic constraints emanating from small size and small population call for the creation of a highly educated work force and the provision of sophisticated skills in areas in which the small state can enjoy a comparative advantage. There is need then for them to raise the managerial and technical proficiency levels of their nationals (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988); a task which Bourne (1988) sees as being the preserve of the tertiary education sector. Commenting on the main deficiencies of this sector in the Caribbean, he expresses concern at the relative absence of "practical orientation" or work components in the academic programmes of the tertiary institutions, arguing that:

*... this ... concern is fundamental for it not only exposes the absence of a bridge between educational institutions and the human resource employing community, but it signals a less well articulated and clearly understood view that the human resource needs are not for university - type training but for para-professional training and education. In other words, if one conceives of the ideal education system as a pyramid with university education at its top, and primary and secondary education as its base then the middle segment of the actual Caribbean system is too slim and needs to be expanded (Bourne, 1988: 50-51).*

It is the expansion of this middle segment that national institutions like the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College seek to address.

The critical human resource needs of St Lucia were examined in Chapter Five. In essence, they pointed to a need for middle level training of professionals and paraprofessionals to take up positions at the managerial, supervisory and technical levels in the Public Service, the service industries, and agriculture; for entrepreneurial

training to promote local enterprise and small-scale manufacture; and for the academic preparation of those destined for top management positions as the country's future leaders, thinkers, planners and academics.

An examination of the full time offerings at the College indicates that for the most part programmes aim at providing middle level education and training (Table 12). With the exception of the Division of Teacher Education, they are predominantly pre-service programmes, so there is a sense in which they can be regarded as preparation for the world of work. For students enrolled in the 'A' Level programme, the course is academic in nature. Graduates will enter the job market as executive cadets in the public service and the private sector, and function as teachers, research assistants, trainee accountants and economists, and service sector personnel. Even those preparing for university transfer will often enter the job market before going on to higher - level studies, as work experience is increasingly becoming an important criterion for eligibility for a government training award (Interview, CTO-P, 30.09.92). The Division of Teacher Education however, caters for the practising "professional". Both the regular training programme and the Advanced Home Economics programme are normally open only to practising teachers and could more accurately be described as in-service and career-enhancing. Similarly the primary focus of the Bachelor of Education is to "provide principals and senior teachers with the theoretical understandings as well as practical skills of school management" (General Calendar 1991-1992: 45). The Department of Nursing Education is dedicated to the pre-service training of people who are expected upon completion to "function effectively" as professional nurses, and also to the in-service training of the professional midwife; while the Division of Agriculture has targeted its diploma programme to people who will function as farm managers, agricultural extension officers and supervisory personnel in the Ministry of Agriculture.

It is in the Division of Technical Education however, that middle level training is at its weakest. Two-thirds of the Division's programmes are offered at the "craft level" and do not go beyond providing students with a "sound knowledge and understanding of the [relevant] techniques and procedures, and the various skills required to go with



Table 12

## Programme Offerings and Level of Training

| Division   | Programmes  | Programme Type                 | Level of Training   |
|--|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Arts, Science and General Studies                | G.C.E. 'A' Level courses in the Arts, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences                                      | Pre - Service                  | University Transfer<br>Para-professional  |
|  | U.W.I. First Year Degree Programme-Faculties of Arts and General Studies, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences. | Pre - Service/<br>In - Service | Part I - Higher Education   |
| Teacher Education and Educational Administration | Regular Teacher Training Programme  | In - Service                   | Professional<br>Professional<br>Professional/Managerial/Supervisory   |
|  | Advanced Home Economics Programme<br>Bachelor of Education Degree Programme.                                    | In - Service<br>In - Service   |   |
| Nursing Education                                | General Nursing Programme   | Pre - Service                  | Professional<br>Professional  |
|  | Midwifery Programme   | In - Service                   |   |
| Agriculture                                      | Diploma in Agriculture  | Pre - Service                  | Managerial<br>Supervisory<br>Para - professional  |
|  | Certificate in Agriculture  | In - Service<br>Pre - Service  |   |
| Technical Education and Management Studies       | Business Studies  | Pre - Service                  | Para - professional<br>Technical<br>Craft<br>Craft<br>Craft<br>Craft<br>Technical/Professional<br>Technical/Supervisory<br>Managerial/Supervisory/<br>Para-Professional |
|  | Building Technician   | Pre - Service                  |   |
|  | Secretarial Studies   | Pre - Service                  |   |
|  | Building Trades/Plumbing/Carpentry and Joinery  | Pre - Service                  |   |
|  | Diesel Mechanics/Motor Vehicle Mechanics  | Pre - Service                  |   |
|  | Electrical Installation/Electronics/Refrigeration and Air Conditioning  | Pre - Service                  |   |
|  | Technical Teacher Training  | Pre - Service                  |   |
|  | Hospitality Studies   | In - Service                   |   |
|  | Para - Legal Studies  | Pre - Service                  |   |
|  | Library Technical Assistants Programme  | In - Service (part-time)       |   |
| Library  | Library Technical Assistants Programme  | In - Service                   | Para - professional   |
| Continuing Education                             | Short-term technical and general interest Courses   | In - Service                   | General Interest<br>Career enhancement<br>University Transfer   |
|  | Business Studies Programme<br>G.C.E. 'A' Level Courses  | In - Service<br>In - Service   |   |
| Computer-based Learning Centre                   | Computer Applications   | In - Service/<br>Pre - Service | Career enhancement<br>General Interest  |
|  |   |                                |   |

Source: Sir Arthur Lewis Community College General Calendar 1991-1992

that knowledge" (General Calendar 1991-1992: 50). While this is a legacy from the pre-amalgamation era, the recommended transfer of the Technical College's craft programmes to the senior secondary schools (Goodridge et al, 1980) has not been effected because of the costs involved in equipping their technical departments. The low level of technical training at the College is causing concern. As one official put it:

*It is a bit of a waste, given the high unit cost of training at that level (EC \$10,000) to offer artisan and craft level programmes at a tertiary level institution. It encroaches on space that might have been utilised for more advanced training. The tertiary level sector should do what its name suggests ... concentrate on post secondary training and reduce the need to import skilled personnel (Interview, PES-F, 30.08.92).*

While this recommendation would ward off criticisms regarding the under-development of tertiary TVET in the OECS (Wilson, 1991), it would leave the institution in a quandary as far as its own policy of open-ness and comprehensiveness is concerned. Perhaps the solution lies in the suggestion that the College adopt a "two-tier technical system which would offer both up-market courses for students who are academically able and craft level courses for the least able (Interview, DSG-H, 11.08.92). The debate surrounding the subordination of technical education to the academic at the higher education level is not specific to the OECS or even to small states, but the College recognises the need to strengthen the engineering and higher technology side of its programming (Thomas, 1990; Interviews, DTE-A, 08.08.92; CBG-L, 11.08.92).

Notwithstanding the weakness identified in the Division of Technical Education, there is conclusive evidence to show that the College's overall programming does offer the middle level training that it was mandated to provide. What is not so conclusive however is whether College graduates are ready to function in managerial and supervisory positions upon entry into the world of work. The average age range of students graduating from the pre-service programmes lies between 20 and 21. This suggests then that the average College graduate is more likely to be a paraprofessional available for further training to take up positions at the middle management level.

### *Higher level programming*

Perhaps one of the major preoccupations of tertiary institutions in small nation states is the development of a capacity to provide the type of higher level studies which was previously the preserve of overseas or regional institutions. Commenting on the future of these national colleges Packer notes:

*A major challenge for small countries over the next decade is to strengthen and develop their national Colleges, including their infrastructures, the professional, teaching and administrative skills of their Staff, and more generally their capacity to respond to national human resource development needs at various levels (Packer, 1989: 53).*

While many institutions appreciate the urgency of the situation and some like the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College are "hastening slowly" to respond to this variety of needs, there is an equally pressing need to build up their higher education capability. Bacchus calls on small states to:

*... try and improve their development prospects by 'skilful manipulation of the control variables' within which they have to operate. Such manipulation would call for greater flexibility in their approach to development and one of the key elements of such a strategy would be the proper training and husbanding of their own human resources, especially at the post secondary level .... They would have to develop among their own population a high degree of flexibility, by virtue of the skills and knowledge with which they are to be provided, and which would serve them in good stead in a variety of circumstances (Bacchus, 1989: 16).*

It is clear that the ability to skilfully manipulate variables controlled for the most part by people on the outside with "superior education, superior resources, superior access to capital, and superior linguistic skills for international trade" (Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92) calls for more than technical proficiency. St Lucia recognises the need to move cautiously into the area of higher level studies, aware that it cannot afford the luxury of a purely university - type institution at this stage of its development (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92), anxious not to "become engulfed in the more idealistic, theoretical, higher - level initiatives" (Interview, MEC-G, 04.09.92), but keen all the same to develop a College which emphasises scholarship, excellence and humanity (Thomas, 1987; Interview, BGV-T, 13.08.92). It is a question of balance,

and the College has addressed its goal of increasing opportunities for higher education by opting for a strategy of institutional linkages, staff development initiatives and regional collaborative efforts.

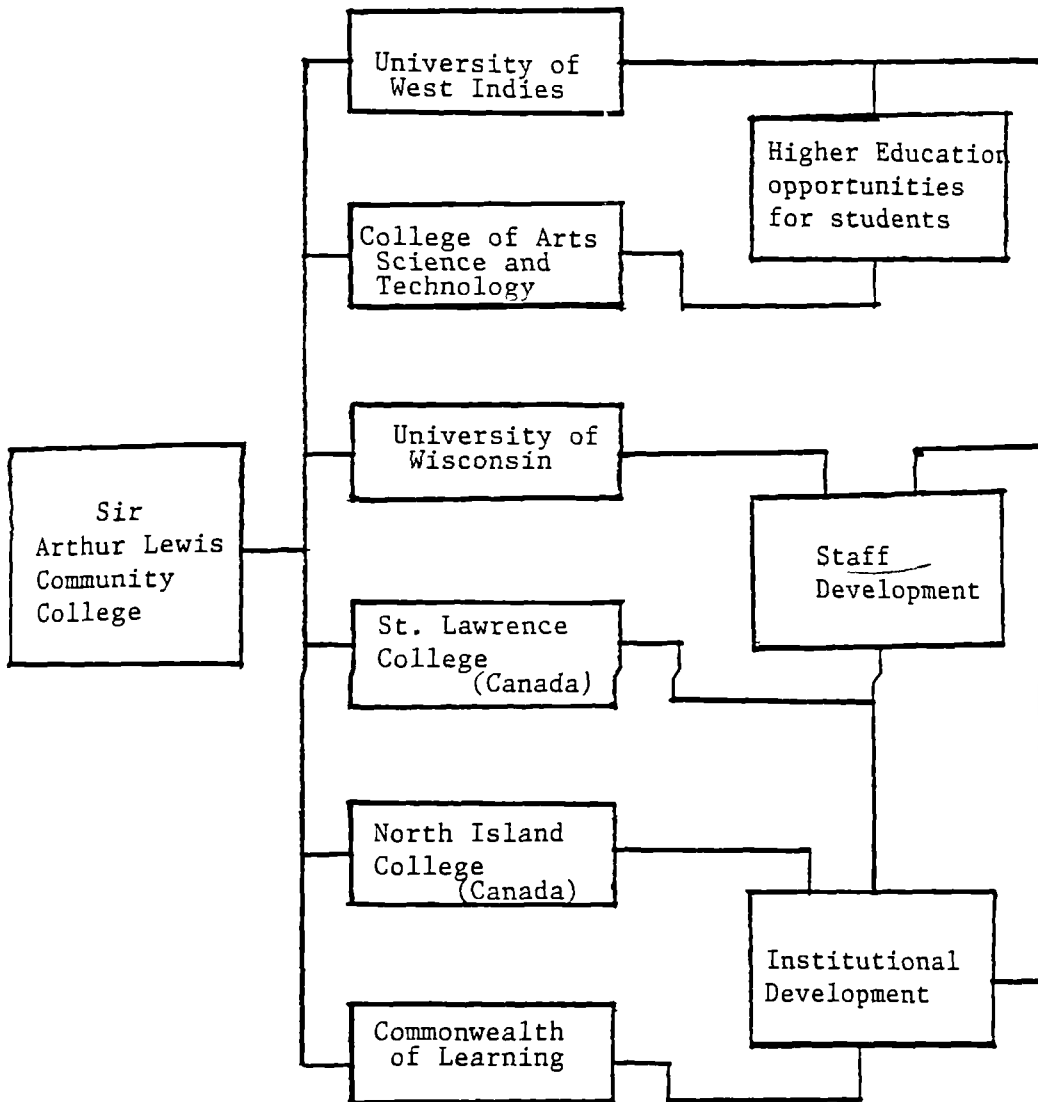
### *Institutional linkages*

By virtue of their size, small states have traditionally looked towards external linkages for many aspects of higher education, acknowledging that a small state cannot easily provide the full range of post secondary opportunities characteristic of larger countries (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988). As already noted, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College recognises that it needs to expose its staff and students to a diversity of methods and institutions (Interview, CBG-L, 13.08.92) and to this effect has strengthened its links with regional and extra-regional institutions. The importance to the College of institutional links is confirmed in its admission that:

*Co-operation with institutions like CAST and UWI for example, has had an enriching effect on the College. It has helped in the development of better and richer programmes, allowed for easier programme articulation, helped to maintain standards, improved staff development. Had the College not had this co-operation, it would not have been able to make the kind of progress that it has ... The College's connection with the St Lawrence College in Canada has given it a capability to take on certain things that it could never have dreamt of doing on its own (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92).*

These links shown in Figure 12, have provided the College with the institutional capacity, the staff development opportunities, and the type of programme expansion that have opened up opportunities for both students and staff to pursue higher level programmes to degree level or equivalent. An examination of the relationship between the College and three of the main external institutions, and the programmes resulting from these relationships serves as illustration.

Figure 12  
 Sir Arthur Lewis Community College:  
 Institutional Linkages



### *The St Lawrence College/Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Linkage Project*

The St Lawrence College/Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Linkage Project is a country focus project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to assist in the programme consolidation, institution - building and staff development efforts of the College. Through its programmes of staff fellowships, co-operants and brokerage (providing access to the resources of other Canadian institutions), the project fills a gap in the resources and experiences of the College, and has proven to be an innovative and effective mechanism for enhancing the human resource development capabilities of St Lucia (Salassan Associates, 1988). The relationship provides the College with a different perspective and an opportunity to break out of a potentially secluded intellectual environment, while it provides St Lawrence College with a broader international perspective and exposure to new experiences, so that the relationship is seen as a real partnership, "not a relationship between an institutional mentor and protégée (Salassan Associates, 1988: iv). The involvement of the College at all levels of planning, implementation and operation of the project means that it can direct its course, change its emphasis and decide on its priorities as St Lucia's human resource needs change. Since the project's inception in 1982, the focus has been on programme expansion and staff development in the area of technical education. The College is now looking towards the establishment of cross-accreditation with St Lawrence College which would lead to recognition of local courses and their acceptance as credits towards professional designations, and for transfer to higher education programmes in Canadian institutions. This new human resource development format which combines the traditional twinning relationship with the more aggressive institutional development of a multi-source project (Salassan Associates, 1988) has given the College a latitude which its small size could not have so easily and readily offered.

### *The UWI*

The contribution of the UWI to the provision of tertiary education in the Caribbean, and its new relationship with national tertiary institutions in the NCCs were discussed

in Chapter Five. With its upgraded infrastructure in place, the College applied for, and was granted permission to offer the first year of the UWI's degree programme in the Faculties of Arts and General Studies, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, and the two year Bachelor of Education degree programme. This new capability has not only opened up opportunities for students to read for the University's degree programmes, but also for the strengthening of colleague relationships between the lecturers at the College on the one hand, and the lecturers in the respective campus faculties on the other. It is expected that College lecturers will want to improve their academic qualifications and enrol for higher degrees. This it is argued will increase possibilities for research done as part of such degrees and for other purposes, to have its focus in St Lucia where College staff live and work (Renwick, 1991). Not only does the institutional linkage increase the College's higher education offerings, but it has one very important spin-off - escape from the intellectual isolation that is associated with higher education teaching in a small system.

### *The College of Arts, Science and Technology*

Another important link exists with CAST, the only institution in the region that offers degree-level programmes in technical subjects. By continuing to make its staff available for developing and moderating specialist programmes in Home Economics and Industrial Arts, CAST has enabled the College to maintain standards as a regional Centre of Specialisation in technical teacher training (Annual Report 1989, 1990; Sabaroche and Withington, 1991). With technical assistance from CAST, the College has adapted these programmes to allow its graduates to access its Bachelor of Education programmes, providing a window of opportunity not previously available for higher level studies in the field of technical and vocational education and training.

### *Staff development initiatives*

The foregoing discussion has shown that staff development constitutes an important component of institution building, no less than programme expansion and upgrading.

From the start, the development of the tertiary education sector was seen as giving staff the opportunity to discover "latent possibilities" and providing them opportunities for growth (Interview, FME-A, 23.09.92). Quite apart from the personal benefits was the need to perceive staff development within the overall framework set by the mission, sense of purpose and objectives of the tertiary institution (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988). It was to ensure staff capability to sustain the College's expanding programme offerings, that the Board of Governors instituted the College Staff Awards Scheme. Thus over an initial five-year period, Government has undertaken to meet the costs of training five staff members annually to pursue first degree and post-graduate study and research in areas identified by the College as a priority. These awards, supplemented by others offered to the College by external agencies interested either in institutional development (Fulbright-Latin American Scholarship Programme of American Universities) or development studies (Canada - Caricom Award) have already given the institution the capability to sustain its UWI degree programmes at a level of performance which compares most favourably with that achieved at the University's three campuses.

#### *Regional collaborative efforts*

Institutional links with UWI and CAST incorporate some collaborative components which increase higher education opportunities by enabling students to access programmes offered in these institutions. In addition, the College looks towards its membership of ACTI to facilitate student mobility, as together the tertiary colleges in the region come to grips with the issues of accreditation, articulation and equivalency. Regional collaboration with other members of the OECS will also in time improve the College's ability to deliver higher education programmes particularly in the context of the Centre of Specialisation concept which the College has already embraced.

The provision of higher education opportunities and the maintenance of standards is leading the College to widen its net and adopt structures which can give it the flexibility and adaptability it requires. The Commonwealth Secretariat's comment on



post-secondary provision is confirmed by the College's approach to meeting its higher education needs:

*The watchword for post-secondary colleges and the countries they serve is flexibility; flexibility in seeking sources of assistance in institution building and flexibility in accessing a wide range of opportunities regionally and further afield, both to increase opportunity and to tap sources of skill and expertise (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988: 28).*

### ***Programming for the cultural and aesthetic***

The relationship which is seen to exist between human resource development and economic growth has increasingly been leading tertiary education to pre-occupy itself with meeting countries' economic, technological and occupational demands and neglecting the cultural and aesthetic. The tendency to do so is perhaps tempting to small states given their economic vulnerability and their need to survive, but even large countries are sacrificing the notions of idealism, morality and integrity to the demands of the technicists (Watson, 1992). In what Watson fears as the possible triumph of the technocrat, higher education seems to be in danger of subordinating moral and philosophical issues to economic and technological imperatives. It would be a tragedy, he warns, if "in the uncharted waters of the last decade of this century, concern for technical solutions to immediate problems ignored the need for la culture générale" (Watson, 1992: 322). His concern for the possible adverse effects that this course of action could have on the smaller countries of the world who have traditionally looked towards the developed world for models is well-intentioned and welcomed, and Taufe' ulungaki expresses the position of small states on this issue:

*Post-secondary training is not just about training and meeting market demands and developmental demands. It is also about the development of skills, attitudes and knowledge that promote integrity, self-reliance and self worth (Taufe' ulungaki, 1991: 583).*

Extending this view further, and applying it specifically to the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, Thomas describes the environment in which he sees post-

secondary education and training taking place:

*We cannot limit our role at the Community College to the traditional concept of transmitting knowledge and skills. In our enthusiasm for science and technology, we must ensure that our students do not lose sight of other branches of learning, such as the arts, literature, religion, music, of which we have a rich heritage .... The College must create an intellectual and moral atmosphere in which members of the entire Community can grow, achieve, extend their skills and perceptions, and in the process that of the entire community (Thomas, 1987).*

This is in a sense the College's "hidden curriculum". Its philosophy of education, emphasising self-actualisation, is to so permeate its programmes that students, in following a course of study, can begin to develop confidence in themselves and build up that self-worth which must inevitably precede development of a social conscience (Interview, FME-A, 23.09.92). It is this cultural role of tertiary education which the College hopes to be in a stronger position to fulfil as it consolidates its programmes, so that in the long run, it could succeed in getting its students to recognise and live out what one of the College planners refer to as the principle of self-community-world (Interview, FME-A, 23.09.92). Advocates of a cultural view of higher education have emphasised the need to go beyond purely utilitarian roles. Kazem (1992) for example, sees the role of the Arab university as preparing specialists with a strong sense of social responsibility, while Watson (1991, 1992) makes a plea for increased international awareness and cross-cultural sensitivity in the United Kingdom. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College looks to its students benefiting from the ripple effects of the principle of self-community- world (Interview, FME-A, 23.09.92).

Such principles are however, more easily articulated than operationalised. While admitting that it has to date concentrated efforts on developing academic programmes (Interview, RGS-P, 30.09.92), the College has taken the first steps towards establishing a Division of Creative, Performing and Fine Arts to cater for the cultural and aesthetic development of the community. Through active participation and systematic training in the disciplines of dance, theatre, music, design and the fine arts, this programme is directed towards the development of "the creative imagination and sensitivity to moral, philosophical and social issues with specific reference to the

Caribbean environment" (Thomas, 1991: 49). Similarly, the core course in Caribbean studies to be introduced as part of the Associate Degree programme looks at issues in Caribbean development from an ethical, moral and philosophical perspective. As in other areas of endeavour, the College's ability to make an impact on its students' personal development depends on the prevailing social and economic climate. The community in which it operates is sufficiently small to feel the ripple effects of any course of action and its statement of intent is a starting point.

### *Community education initiatives*

The idea of a community college for St Lucia was a difficult one to sell to the authorities (Interview, EXS-F, 13.08.92). It is reported that the task force on the integration of the Morne Educational Complex thought it unreasonable to recommend an institution where only a small percentage of the age cohort drawn mainly from the north-western part of the island would be able to benefit from tertiary education. The members argued instead for the provision of services for a wide range of people at different levels in the technical and vocational area (Interview, EXS-F, 13.08.93). There were also reservations about the choice of the term "community college". In a memorandum to Cabinet, the Ministry of Education argued its point:

*The name does not .... take into consideration ... the institution's intention to offer university diploma programmes as well as part of the university degree courses. Further it does not consider the possible long-term evolution of the College into a full degree - granting institution. The Ministry therefore believes that it would be desirable to select a more all - embracing name which would make alternative names unnecessary in the long term. We are therefore proposing the adoption of the name "Sir Arthur Lewis College of Higher Education" (Ministry of Education, File 11/13).*

The Cabinet of Ministers accepted the suggestion but later reconsidered, and adopted the original recommendation. The reservations were probably influenced by the traditional focus of community college programming in which community education is regarded as the dominant component; a focus which it was believed would have strained the College's credibility as a tertiary institution. In the light of Cohen and

Brawer's definition of community education as embracing adult education, adult basic education, continuing education, community services and community - based education (1982), concern over the name was probably justified. The wish of all parties concerned however was that the institution develop into a College with a national mandate, responding to needs as they emerged and attending to priorities as they shifted.

The College's history influenced its focus of attention in the early years - expansion and consolidation of programmes for which a foundation already existed. However, a Department of Continuing Education was established to address the continuing learning needs of the general public, so as to assist adults to broaden their knowledge, skills and attitudes through the provision of structured, learning experiences (General Calendar 1991-1992). But not all are agreed as to what the level and the extent of these learning experiences should be. The College has so far resisted the call, for example, to offer corrective courses in the subjects offered by the island's secondary institutions, on the grounds that there are other agencies providing that type of compensatory opportunities; but this argument is regarded in some quarters as "facetious". This issue however is part of a larger one concerning the role of the College in the provision of tertiary education in the country. The question that needs to be answered is whether the College is expected to be the sole provider of tertiary education, or whether it is to play a leadership role, co-ordinating the programmes of other smaller and private institutions, and collaborating with other formal and non-formal agencies in meeting the wide range of post-secondary educational needs. The involvement in continuing education of such agencies as the Guild of Graduates, the UWI's School of Continuing Studies, the National Research and Development Foundation, the St Lucia Industrial and Small Business Association and the Chamber of Commerce suggests the latter. In this role the College becomes a resource to the entire community, uniquely qualified to develop, in the words of a strong advocate of the American community college idea, into the nexus of a national learning system, relating organisations with educational functions into a complex sufficient to respond to the population's learning needs (Gleazer Jr; in Cohen and Brawer, 1982: 252).

There are also concerns that the programmes mounted by the Department are still very traditional in content and mode of delivery. The College intends both of these concerns to be addressed within the framework of its outreach programme dedicated to the establishment of learning centres in main towns around the island, and to the development of its outreach capabilities in general. But learning centres established away from the main facilities in geographically difficult terrain require distance education capabilities. The effectiveness of a distance learning system in expanding access to people all over the island is recognised. Moreover, the small size of the system that would be needed could be turned to advantage, as it would be easier to maintain a learner focus (Interview, CTP-B, 12.08.92). On the other hand, it has been established that in general large numbers of students are required to provide viable and affordable distance education programmes (Guthrie, 1990, 1991). Small countries with small populations and small resource bases may therefore need to enter into collaborative initiatives to benefit from the economies of scale that make distance education financially viable (Jones, 1989). One such initiative that the College has entered into and taken full advantage of, is the institutional link, established through COL, with North Island College, (NIC) an open - learning institution in Canada. Using NIC courses which have been found suitable for St Lucia, this linkage has helped the College design and set up a non-traditional system offering access to tertiary level programmes to people in the scattered communities of the southern half of the island. The distance education centre of the College's Southern Extension Service enables individuals to access higher education while remaining at home, working full - or part-time on programmes, avoiding the total dislocation of the move to the main campus, and at the same time support the growing industries and businesses of the southern region (Commonwealth of Learning, 1991a). The institutional capacity which this link has given the College has opened up possibilities for other distance education programmes to be administered from the main campus and other learning centres, helping it to fulfil its mandate as a resource to the entire St Lucian community.

Service to the community is generally recognised as one of the functions of higher education especially of institutions with a development mandate (Avalos, 1991; Saint,

1992). In his address at the College's Inaugural Exercises, Hunte (1987) drew attention to the contribution which could be expected from the growing body of resident professionals, national and non-national, as their expertise became available via consultancies, or service on committees and boards of management. Indeed that potential of intellectual capital was already identified as one of the benefits that would accrue from developing the island's tertiary education sector (Interviews, CEO-L, 10.08.92; BGV-T, 13.08.92). As a community college, the institution is specially mandated to respond to the needs of the community at large, planning activities, conducting research and assessing needs (Interview, DTE-A, 08.08.92). But viewed from this particular perspective, service to the community is still very much peripheral to the College's teaching activities, and is likely to remain so unless additional resources are made available to co-ordinate and administer these non-instructional services. Initiatives such as the Business Education Centre point to the type of service that the College has the potential to provide. Here the College offers individual business owners and managers a consultation service aimed at developing and strengthening their abilities, skills and knowledge in the management of organisations. In a context in which entrepreneurial training has been identified as one of the critical human resource development needs, the establishment of this centre is timely, and an indication of the College's potential as a resource for the community at large.

### **Conclusion: challenges, strategies and prospects**

The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College is St Lucia's response to the challenge of meeting the island's tertiary education needs. Its performance over the past six years has led one evaluator of tertiary provision in the region to describe it as "a leader ... in moving towards viability and academic credibility" (Parker, 1988: 38). It has had to face challenges associated with tertiary education provision in small nation states - a small resource base, low level of enrolment, problems of staff recruitment, high staff turn-over, limited institutional capability and a potentially restrictive intellectual and professional environment. The College recognises the limitations of scale, but has worked within these limits, believing that there is no need to "make a song and

dance about it" (Interview, PRN-T, 06.08.92). These challenges are seen not so much as constraints, but as hurdles, "because you can jump over them or go around them, or sometimes crawl under them, or go through them, but you just get them out of the way" (Interview, CTP-B, 12.08.92). In this regard, it is argued that the College's apparent success, in spite of under-funding and frequent cuts to its operational budget has lulled the Government into complacency and into believing the institution capable of financial sleight of hand (Interview, SAF-F, 18.09.92). But in planning for and managing tertiary education, the College has had to adopt and adapt, to prune and to graft; there have been some losses but many gains. It has had to turn to international institutions for technical assistance to support its programmes, and to international agencies for the development of its infrastructure. It has had to recruit staff both regionally and internationally, increasing in the process the proportion of its budget allocated to staff salaries. There have been "virtues" emerging from this type of dependence in terms of the cross-fertilisation of ideas, the enrichment of people coming into a new situation, and the dynamics of that contact that have produced new ideas and new thinking. The College has invested in staff development programmes to curb the high rate of staff turnover, and has reaped the benefit of a more highly qualified staff to sustain its new and expanding programmes. It has initiated and nurtured institutional links to strengthen its own institutional capability and to expose staff and students to a wider intellectual and professional environment. It has diversified its programme delivery techniques to increase enrolment, not merely to achieve economies of scale, but to expand access to tertiary education opportunities.

It is recognised that institutions do outgrow their original mandates and the College will need to evaluate its performance and review its mission. Already there are those who have begun to think of the institution developing into the "fourth campus" of the UWI (United Workers Party, 1992). Bearing in mind Bourne's (1988) prescription for the human resource development ills of the Caribbean, many argue that it is premature to think in terms of a university-sector institution for St Lucia when there are so many other levels of tertiary education that the society urgently requires (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92), and when the College itself still needs to provide craft

and artisan level training for its technically-oriented student. Perhaps the idea of the OECS' TLIs collectively constituting "the fourth campus" (Interview, RST-F, 12.08.92), is a more realistic route to follow. This idea itself is a novel one and it would give new meaning to the concept of a regional integrated system of higher education for the Caribbean. Whatever the outcome, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College would no doubt need to seek more creative strategies to respond to the 'challenge of scale' either as a single national institution or within the framework of a larger political union of the OECS.

The foregoing has traced the development of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and examined the mechanisms by which it plans, administers and manages the provision of tertiary education in St Lucia. The need for this type of study was discussed in an earlier chapter when reference was made to the benefits that small states could derive from in-depth case-studies of individual educational institutions and systems in context. An examination of the context within which tertiary education in St Lucia must be viewed, and an analysis of the College in the light of issues which have dominated the literature on tertiary education in small nation states are important in this regard. A critical and comparative discussion of such issues as they are dealt with by Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and other tertiary institutions in the Caribbean and the South Pacific is the focus of the next chapter.



*CHAPTER SEVEN*

*TERTIARY EDUCATION IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC*

*"Men are truly brothers not when they sing  
in union but when they sing in harmony"*  
James Maraj

## **Introduction**

Recent developments in the tertiary education sector of the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific can best be described as challenges to traditional approaches to tertiary level provision within a framework which is both academically and economically realistic. This chapter critically examines the factors that have influenced these developments. It identifies some of the policies and strategies adopted, and assesses their implications for the future development of the sector in these and other small states. The final section of the chapter discusses the issue of co-operation and collaboration in the light of recent tensions and disillusionment with the traditional regional approach to the provision of tertiary education and suggests options that could be considered at both the national and the regional level to strengthen this new collaborative thrust.

## **The development of the tertiary education sector in the Caribbean and the South Pacific**

As already indicated the emergence of national institutions is the most significant development in tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific during the past two decades. This upsurge in activity in post-secondary provision is not an isolated phenomenon, as policies and strategies for education and training at that level have been on the international agenda (UNESCO, 1989). Also on the agenda have been the particular circumstances of countries with small populations, a factor described as "complicating immensely the possibility of setting up their own system of post-secondary education on account of the high cost it [entails]" (UNESCO, 1989: 9). Over the past two decades small countries have been grappling with the major issues in tertiary education reform identified by Henchey (1991) as the expansion of the tertiary education sector, the diversification of institutions and programmes, the development of the non-university sector, and issues related to the investment in

human resources development. The individual and collective responses of the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific show a similarity of approach in the development of their tertiary education sectors, suggesting not only a similarity of needs, but also a similarity of policy options through which these needs are being addressed.

It is generally accepted that the regional provision of tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific was based on the premise that no one territory could realistically hope to found and sustain a university from its own resources (Braithwaite, 1958; Honeybone, 1985). The increase in national institutions has not so much nullified that premise, as it has pointed to a new perception of the different forms that tertiary education provision can take. In this regard, the establishment and development of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and the emergence of other national colleges in the OECS region have been hailed as a credible alternative in the context of tertiary education in the Caribbean (Parker, 1988). Speaking on the region's efforts at diversification and on the efforts of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in particular, Maraj observes:

*A regional university cannot meet all the needs and should not be expected to do so. We must enable it to do what it is best equipped and fashioned to do, and at the highest levels, its teaching and research must predominate. The University of the West Indies has done us proud; let us not require of it more and more, however great our needs; for there are alternatives and this College is an example (1989).*

Similarly, the emerging national focus in the South Pacific is seen not as negating the significance of regional initiatives but as emphasising the importance of additional nationally - based facilities (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1989).

What is now at issue is the level and type of tertiary provision that these national institutions should provide. In the case of the Pacific Islands, Jones (1989) finds no economic rationale for university-type teaching except on a regional basis, but accepts that national institutions can develop viable programmes at the middle and lower levels. That argument has had the support of aid donors but has evoked strong

criticism from some national authorities who regard the suggestion that they concentrate only on so-called appropriate training for the lower strata of the work force as designed to perpetuate dependence (Taufe 'ulungaki, 1991). This tension however seems to owe more to the region's political and economic circumstances than to the viability of the national institutions themselves. Notwithstanding the particular nature of the Pacific region, there is evidence to support the view that the development of small national tertiary facilities is constrained by the political interests of donors, their lack of faith in the economic or academic viability of these institutions and their own perceptions of the countries' priority needs (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1989; Maglen, 1990).

The development of the tertiary sector in small states is seen in some quarters as an expression of the will to have full control of a decisive means of shaping ideas about development, asserting countries' identities and training their top-level personnel (Atchoarena, 1991b). Others see it as being motivated by concerns regarding cost, relevance and retention (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988, 1989); or have identified issues relating to external example, pressure and influence, and to the evolutionary nature of a country's education system (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988). In a sense, it is all these combined, and it is to a great extent the interplay of all these factors that has given the sectors their distinctive national and regional characters. Concern about control and self-reliance for example, are more to the fore in the Pacific, possibly because of what Jones (1989) refers to as its more than usual structural dependence on aid. Thus Taufe' ulungaki is moved to affirm:

*The point that Pacific countries wish to underline is that they must have some control over their own development and that they must be allowed to make their own decisions about the directions they wish to pursue ... In-country provision [of tertiary education] is an admission that aid, however benign and propitious, is not an adequate basis for national development. It is a choice for increasingly assuming the full responsibility for all education and everything that entails (Taufe' ulungaki, 1991: 582).*

This may well explain why the Pacific countries have moved towards the establishment of national universities, while St Lucia and the OECS countries have

concentrated on the expansion and consolidation of multi-functional colleges working in concert with the regional university.

### *National identity*

There is a strong concern in many small states to increase the level of commitment among their citizens to the concept of national identity, and the national tertiary institution is seen as being able to assist in this process. However, differing historical and cultural circumstances underpin the expectations that Pacific and Caribbean people have of the role of their institutions in the promotion of that identity. It is important to note here that whereas the countries of the Pacific have their separate indigenous cultures firmly rooted in the past, the Caribbean has had to cope with the criticism of having a hybrid culture born out of slavery and colonial domination. The search for the true Caribbean identity has thus long engaged the hearts and minds of the peoples of the region. This may explain why Pacific countries look to post-secondary institutions to assist in the maintenance and preservation of their indigenous identities and heritages, while St Lucia and the other OECS countries look to their national institutions to create an ethos and a cultural climate that will help their people "recognise, develop, nurture and foster their identity" (Theophilus, 1988). In both cases however, there is a concern for balancing national integrity with international interaction (Crocombe and Crocombe, forthcoming). It is not a question of which of the two, but what mix. Small states' concern for internationalism, and the strategies that their institutions have adopted to ensure a universal dimension do not negate their desire to develop what each sees as an institution which would respond more quickly to its own community and societal needs. It is in this respect much more so than in the purely cultural and political sense that concerns of national identity can be said to have been a direct factor in the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. The institution was conceived as a national resource which would instil in its "students" a feeling of national pride and an awareness of national identity through its ability to respond to the particular socio-economic needs of the community. Its establishment is to be seen not so much as an assertion of national identity as the provision of an instrument through which the nation can assert itself. A review of

the authoritative policies of Ministries of Education of the other OECS countries in relation to tertiary education at the national level points to similar preoccupations. Despite their cultural differences, the authorities in both regions see the creation of a local capacity to respond to human resource development needs as leading to the development of a national consciousness, and of a collective national confidence which can help their people to assert themselves in the wider community of nations.

### *Relevance*

The issue of responsiveness leads to the examination of relevance as a motivating factor in the development of the national tertiary education sector. Concerns about relevance and appropriateness often come to the fore when the merits and demerits of external training are discussed. It is often argued that the curriculum to which small states' nationals are exposed during their course of study in metropolitan countries holds little relevance to their own local realities. Perhaps this is too harsh a criticism of the programmes of external institutions, for to dismiss these as completely irrelevant outside their own contexts is to deny the existence of what Shaw (1982) refers to as "inviolable universals", and the possibility of a judicious transfer of knowledge, ideas or methods. Thus, if pressed into taking a position on the issue of relevance articulated in these terms, Crocombe and Crocombe (forthcoming) would put much greater emphasis on the importance of an education of the highest possible quality rather than on adaptation to the context, important though that is. This however does not release external institutions from the responsibility of incorporating an international component in their programmes, or of exposing students to a more global perspective. The approach that small states have adopted, in espousing the principle of internationalism particularly in their provision of tertiary education, suggests that their concerns about relevance are of a different order.

The analysis of their response to the issue of relevance should ideally be based on what international organisations and policy makers regard as relevance in higher education, given that this is the yardstick by which their efforts are likely to be measured and assessed. To cite the Director of UNESCO's Division of Higher

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*Relevance concerns for example, the role of higher education within societies, and deals with matters linked to democratisation, to the world of work and to the responsibilities of higher education in relation to the whole system of education (Dias, 1992: 127).*

Relevance then embraces issues of access, quality and employment prospects in higher education, issues related to the investment in human resource development, and to the co-ordination and integration of national education systems.

### *Access, cost and human resource development*

The major factor accounting for the emergence of national tertiary institutions in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific has been the significant growth in demand for tertiary education and the consequent need to facilitate access to some form of provision at that level. In the Caribbean, the pattern of access for students from the NCCs, has been one of limited opportunity, due mainly to the inability of qualified students to meet the costs of this level of education and to the insufficient number of student places available to them. In the 1983-84 academic year for example, the seven countries which make up the OECS accounted for only 3.7% of the total full-time enrolment at the UWI, (down from 11.9% in 1960), with the other seven countries accounting for the remaining 96% (Peters, forthcoming). The gap between real opportunity and potential demand was therefore clearly a major factor behind the decisions taken by governments to pursue the routes they took in respect of the development of their own local tertiary education institutions. It was a recommendation that had been made much earlier by Williams (1975) who envisioned some additional form of post-secondary education for the Caribbean, to take care of the larger numbers that would be generated by the expansion of secondary education. His proposal for junior colleges "affiliated to the university, but financed by individual governments and using university teachers as far as possible" (Williams, 1975: 98) is prophetic and is an indication of how slowly grind the mills of progress. A similar situation is in evidence in the South Pacific. Crocombe and Meleisea (1988, 1989) report that in the face of the significant growth in demand, few other countries or institutions would accept the increasing numbers of students wanting

higher education. Moreover, financial constraints in 1987 had led the USP's University Grants Committee to recommend limiting each country to a quota of students. In the face of such uncertainty, a local capacity for providing tertiary education becomes an attractive option.

The effect of a campus within a nation on student enrolment makes in-country provision all the more attractive as countries recognise that equity and access is best achieved by teaching in-country to the extent that this is feasible. It is argued that the response to the establishment of UWI's Cave Hill campus in Barbados influenced educational practitioners in the small islands into acknowledging that, in some respects, the only way to "mop up" large numbers demanding higher education opportunities was to make it available *on the spot* (Interview, CBG-L, 11.08.92). Similarly, the increase in enrolment in Western Samoa and Vanuatu as a result of in-country provision of university courses sent a clear message to other Pacific countries (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988). According to Baba (1991), deepening centralisation of the facilities of the USP, coupled with the growing demand for higher education and associated political pressures led to the development of other tertiary institutions in the Pacific. On the other hand, decentralisation of the facilities of the UWI and increased campus autonomy accelerated the establishment of national colleges in the NCCs. National concerns over access therefore, whether in the face of centralisation or decentralisation of regional provision, is a major determinant in the development of the national tertiary sector in the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

Associated with the issue of access is the question of costs. Even in the Pacific where almost all tertiary education and training is funded through external assistance (Taufe' ulungaki, 1991), cost is invoked as a reason for the decision to establish national institutions. Savings on airfares and living allowances are cited as the main benefits (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988). In the OECS, where external assistance for tertiary education has been on the decline, and where governments have had to meet the increasing cost of training their nationals abroad, the decision to provide for greater access at home also seemed to make financial sense. A national institution which could provide some of the higher level programmes at greatly reduced cost,



while at the same time responding to the need for middle and even lower level tertiary education represents a tremendous saving not only for the providers but also for the students, many of whom are privately funded. Sir Arthur Lewis Community College offers UWI degree level programmes in Education, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Arts and General Studies at a tuition fee of EC\$600.00 a year. In comparison, the annual economic cost to a student for enrolment at UWI, exclusive of airfares, living expenses and educational supplies, ranges from EC\$17,860.00 for the Faculty of Arts to EC\$25,326.00 for the Faculty of Natural Sciences (See Table 8, Chapter Five). Even at the 40% discount rate available to contributing NCCs, the difference in cost is quite significant. The implication of such a difference to access and expansion of tertiary level opportunities explains the island's determination to provide in-country education, and Government's new requirement that the first year of UWI's degree programmes be undertaken at the College whenever such programmes are on offer (Interview, CTO-P, 30.09.92).

In his overview of trends and prospects in higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean up to the year 2000, Gimeno (1979) associates access with quality and employment opportunities, regarding these as the main issues raised by the world-wide "massification" of higher education. The small states of the Caribbean were among the member countries of UNESCO which approved the 1979 Mexico City Declaration calling on countries in the region to give "special attention to the formulation of objectives and programmes for the quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of higher education" (Gimeno, 1979: 104). Delegates at that regional conference of Ministers of Education and those responsible for Economic Planning considered the role of higher education in promoting endogenous development, social integration and social and cultural progress arguing for improvements in the quality of the education and training available. There was therefore a need for the Caribbean to establish more tertiary institutions to provide that efficiency and the human resource quality which would fuel the endogenous development process. As noted in Chapter Two, economists like Bourne (1988) considered the deficiencies in relation to tertiary level education in the smaller countries to be so large as to require special concentrated attention on domestic

institutions to ensure that the quality of the human resource proved adequate for the task of development. The type of institution as well as the type of training required depends on the countries' development needs. The priority needs which he identified for the Caribbean were not for university-type training but for paraprofessional training and education, requiring an expansion of the middle section of the education systems. It is this course that St Lucia and the rest of the OECS countries decided to follow.

The small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific are part of the international community; not merely observers but full participating members of international organisations, expected therefore to implement decisions taken and recommendations adopted by the organisations to which they adhere. The emergence of their national institutions and the development of their local tertiary capacities are thus appropriately to be viewed in the light of the international call for the democratisation and diversification of tertiary education.

### *Retention*

In-country provision of tertiary education is often assumed to favour retention of trained personnel. In many ways it does, as it avoids dislocation and reduces the incidence of students opting to remain in the host country after completion. However, certain features of small state economies also favour migration, and recent surveys indicate that the high rate recorded in the past is unlikely to change (Miller et al, 1991, Caston, 1993), despite efforts to provide tertiary education locally. Comparative economic prospects and limited opportunities for personal growth have been considered as the major determinants of migration in the OECS, for example. A recent survey also attributed the high level of net migration from these countries to North America, in part, to limited education provision at the tertiary level for people who had benefited from the expansion of the primary and secondary school sectors (Miller et al, 1991). Interviews with OECS migrants, student visa records, and enrolment of OECS migrants in higher education institutions immediately upon arrival in North America all corroborated the conclusion that OECS nationals migrate

to seek education opportunities at the tertiary level. In fact, OECS migrants to North America had significantly higher levels of education than the norm of the populations in their home countries (Miller et al, 1991). On the other hand a noticeable decline in migration has been recorded in OECS countries with a strong economic performance, and it may well be that there is a closer link between levels of economic activity and educational development than is usually thought to exist. This is illustrated in the case of St Lucia where the increased level of economic activity has necessitated the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills not readily acquired at the primary and secondary levels. As we have shown, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College was established to assist in the provision of trained technicians, middle managers and qualified professionals to service the increasingly complex economic sector. The relationship between economic activity, educational development and emigration might be well worth examining further in this particular case, as it is reported that St Lucia's migration rate is the lowest in the OECS (Miller et al, 1991).

On the other hand, the expansion of the local tertiary sector favours emigration, since the more educationally marketable they are, the more attracted are small state nationals to better opportunities for personal advancement outside their immediate environment, and the more welcome they are in the receiving countries. Nursing, and to a lesser extent teaching, in the OECS, have already begun to feel the pressure of such pulls from the North American continent. The claim therefore that the search for retention was a significant factor in national authorities' decision to develop their tertiary education sector may not always stand up to close scrutiny. Some countries have in fact looked to their local institutions to increase the marketability of their nationals overseas. The case for further expansion of tertiary education in the Pacific for example, is justified not only in terms of meeting the demands of labour markets, but also in terms of maintaining the flow of foreign-currency-earning emigrants, and of satisfying individual and family aspirations for expansion of personal capabilities and vision (Caston, 1993). When there is free access to the labour markets of the receiving countries, as is the case for some of the Pacific countries, the case for retention is significantly weakened. No significant difference in retention was found,

for example, between Cook Islanders who studied at the regional university and those who studied in metropolitan New Zealand to which they have free access (Crocombe and Crocombe, forthcoming). It is argued here that the real impact of domestic tertiary education provision has less to do with retention than with broadening local access. Sir Arthur Lewis Community College has since its inception provided an opportunity for upward mobility in the education system, and in this sense it can be said to delay the outflow of qualified personnel. However, the staff shortages repeatedly experienced in some sections of the institution suggest that retention is still very problematic.

The practice by some authorities to award non-transferable qualifications with limited marketability outside their own region has enforced retention to some extent. However, as a rule, people prefer qualifications which are internationally negotiable, and given access, they emigrate. Access to internationally recognised qualifications in-country accompanied by countervailing measures such as opportunities for personal growth and bonding might therefore do much more to reduce the outflow of human resources. At the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, students working towards professional qualifications receive salaries while on training, but are also required to serve the country for a period usually equal to twice that spent in training. The level of education and training available in-country needs to be taken into account as well when considering the capability of a tertiary sector to reduce the flow of persons to larger metropolitan countries. An institution offering degree level programmes will be much more attractive and will predispose more people to remain home than one offering only sub-degree levels. This explains why some national authorities are anxious to provide some, if not all, of the higher level programmes which are available outside the country. The decision therefore to provide some type of university-level teaching should also be seen in that light.

The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College has been criticised for moving into higher level studies when there are more basic priorities to be addressed. However early indications are that the government's decision to require students to do part of their degree programmes in-country, has had a positive impact on retention. In the South

Pacific, there is external support available for national institutions, but only if these agree to cater specifically for middle level and lower level needs (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988, 1989; Jones, 1989; Taufe' ulungaki, 1991). The ability of these institutions and their governments to reduce the flow of qualified people from their shores under these circumstances needs to be assessed in that light.

### **The provision of tertiary education: strategies and policy options**

The most common type of tertiary education institution established by the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific has been the comprehensive model offering a diversity of programmes at various levels ranging from upper secondary to degree level. While many bear the name "State", "National", or "Community" College, some have a broader vision of their role and have established themselves as universities. In what amounts to a re-structuring of the tertiary sector, the two island clusters under study opted almost independently of each other for consolidation of existing institutions into new combinations each eventually providing a different configuration of academic, technical and vocational, university and non-university instruction (Table 13). In the OECS, programmatic thrusts show a bias in the direction of the "world of work" in keeping with their governments' policies of developing their capacity to meet the range of technical, managerial, supervisory and entrepreneurship needs of the economy. These institutions are seen by the UWI as partners in the task of providing greater opportunities for human resource development in each country by addressing the variety of higher educational and adult educational needs which are not appropriate to the University, and/or which they are capable of addressing in collaboration with it (Hunte, 1987). Available literature on the small states of the Pacific show no clear institutional policies for their tertiary sector, though Short and Short's (1991) articulation of Pacific Island leaders' dream to make education the common property of their people, and to give them the right of access to progressively higher levels of educational instruction in-country, suggests a broader ambit than that envisaged for OECS institutions.

Table 13  
Tertiary Education Provision in the OECS and the South Pacific

| Institution  | Country                      | Control  | Levels offered                         | Schools/Divisions/Departments/Faculties  |
|--|------------------------------|----------|--|--|
| Antigua State College (1977)                           | Antigua                      | National | Diploma Certificate<br>1st year Degree | Commercial, Engineering, Teacher Training, Arts, Science and General Studies   |
| Clifton Dupigny Community College (1982)               | Dominica                     | National | Certificate/Diploma                    | Arts, Science and General Studies, Technical Education   |
| Grenada National College (1988)                        | Grenada                      | National | Certificate/Diploma                    | Arts, Science and General Studies, Technical and Professional Studies, Adult and Continuing Education, Research and Consultancy  |
| Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (1986)              | St Lucia                     | National | Certificate/Diploma/Degree             | Arts, Science and General Studies, Teacher Education and Educational Administration, Technical Education and Management Studies, Nursing Education, Agriculture, Continuing Education    |
| St Kitts/Nevis College of Further Education (1988)     | St Kitts/Nevis               | National | Certificate/Diploma                    | Arts, Science and General Studies, Health Sciences, Teacher Education, Technical and Vocational Educational and Management Studies   |
| University of the West Indies (1948)                   | Jamaica<br>Trinidad/Barbados | Regional | Certificate/Diploma/Degree             | Agriculture, Arts and General Studies, Education Engineering, Law, Medicine, Natural and Social Sciences   |
| National University of Samoa (1984)                    | Western Samoa                | National | Sub-degree/Degree                      | Education, Arts, Science, General Studies  |
| Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (1985)     | Solomon Islands              | National | Diploma                                | Finance and Administration, Education and Cultural Studies, Nursing and Health Studies, Industrial Development, Natural Resources, Marine and Fishery Studies, General Studies Education |
| Tonga Community Development and Training Centre (1988) | Tonga                        | National | Certificate/Diploma                    | Education, Engineering, General Studies, Marine Studies  |
| University of the South Pacific (1968)                 | Fiji<br>Western Samoa        | Regional | Certificate/Diploma/Degree             | Agriculture, Humanities, Pure and Applied Sciences, Social and Economic Development  |

The viability of these institutions is enhanced not only by their flexibility and adaptability in responding to needs and in accessing sources of external support, but also by their ability to meet prospective students where they are at. Between the two poles of face-to-face "campus" interaction and the distance education mode are many configurations which small states have used to advantage. Examples from St Lucia and the Cook Islands serve as illustration.

The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College's request for permission to offer UWI's degree programmes was granted upon approval by the University of an infrastructural capability and a delivery system which, while respecting the College's autonomy as regards enrolment and costs to students, ensured comparability of standards with the main campuses, quality teaching staff, and involvement of University personnel.

Delivery of the programmes involve:

- 1) full-time face-to-face interaction with staff whose qualifications have been approved by the University and who have received orientation to course materials and assessment procedures;
- 2) supplementary lectures and tutorials when necessary, via the University's distance teaching network;
- 3) visits, on a semester basis, by senior campus lecturers and Heads of Departments for purposes of assessing practical laboratory work and for delivery of supplementary lectures on areas identified as priority or under-resourced areas;
- 4) periodic visits by College staff to campus facilities for consultation with counterparts, and for resourcing library material;
- 5) examinations set by the relevant campus faculty, first-marked by College lecturers and second-marked and moderated by campus lecturers; and
- 6) joint co-ordination of the monitoring exercise by the College and the OUS.

This multi-mode collaborative delivery system thus releases the College from some of the constraints imposed by small size: inadequate specialist staff, modestly-resourced departments, problems of accreditation and intellectual isolation.

The Cook Islands has successfully implemented an apprenticeship scheme for training in the technical and trades fields which it argues illustrates a mode that can be utilised by small states as a vehicle for providing tertiary education (Short and Short, 1991). Called the "Mixed Mode", it employs a four-pronged approach. First is the practical, on-the-job training requiring the apprentice to work with an employer or qualified tradesman to complete designated workshop hours. A second theoretical component involves completion of assignments set by the New Zealand Technical Correspondence Institute. The third part of the programme takes the form of a two to three week block course at a designated technical institute in New Zealand where students are exposed to modern machines and equipment and where their theoretical and practical knowledge is assessed and tested. The fourth part is the examination which is set by the New Zealand Trades Certification Board, and the issue of the relevant Trade Certificate.

These two examples demonstrate the type of flexible approach that is possible in the delivery of a programme in a country with modest resources, while taking into account some important considerations in the provision of education particularly at the tertiary level. Short and Short (1991) identify four of these as: credibility, cost, commitment and co-ordination. Small states recognise that in providing for tertiary education, credibility must be maintained, and thus programmes need to be of a high standard, recognised and accepted internationally. This is important particularly in the initial years of programmes not directly certified by a recognised institution or professional body. Sir Arthur Lewis Community College's Associate Degree programme for example, is structured around specialised courses certified by the Cambridge University International Examinations Syndicate in the case of the Division of Arts, Science and General Studies, by the Caribbean Regional Nursing Council in the case of the Department of Nursing Education, and by the UWI in the case of the Division of Teacher Education. In a small-state situation cost, in relation



to the support infrastructure, needs to be carefully considered and can be offset by the utilisation of existing resources and facilities. The degree-level students at the Community College for example, share science and computing laboratory facilities with GCE 'A' Level students, while staff teach in both degree and sub-degree programmes. In-country provision of tertiary education can be a partnership arrangement, requiring commitment on the part of all stakeholders. In view of the high costs of providing for tertiary education, in a small system, an opportunity is presented for the principle of cost-sharing. The apprenticeship scheme in the Cook Islands thus provides an avenue for private sector involvement in tertiary education. The suggestions usually proposed for such involvement are direct taxation of the sector for the benefits it derives from public sector funding of education and training. However, in a small-country context where public sector employment outstrips that of the private sector, this suggestion has usually been resisted and considered myopic (Interview, CCI-A, 13.08.92). An involvement in which the private sector employer gets immediate returns for money spent on training as well as the potential for improved workmanship and professionalism could be a more attractive proposition. Lastly, the co-ordination of the different components of joint programmes is a vital factor, requiring an efficient and responsive administrative mechanism to facilitate activities within and outside the country. In the examples illustrated above, such co-ordination is provided, on the one hand, by the College in association with the OUS, and on the other, by the Cook Islands Department of Education and the New Zealand Trades Certification Board.

The strategies that have been adopted by the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific to meet their tertiary education needs, point to a similarity of context between these two groups of states. Since their geographic distance from each other has allowed for very little contact between them, the similarities between the policies through which they have addressed their tertiary education needs are all the more striking, supporting Watson's (1984) observation that educational ideas and practices have a universality about them which transcends purely national barriers. More to the point, these similarities confirm the view, noted in Chapter Two, that smallness of size suggests particular clusters of strategies through which the developmental

needs of small states can be met. In the case of tertiary education, the consolidation of facilities has been a major option pursued, as has been the strategy of accessing courses and programmes from larger external institutions. Regional co-operation and institutional linkages have also provided new national institutions such as the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College with other avenues to expand their tertiary education capabilities. A further examination of these two key options is the focus of the following section.

### **Collaboration and co-operation in tertiary education**

The evolution of tertiary education in small states is characterised by both a determination to enhance national provision as well as by a search for a range of more flexible linkages with educational partners at the sub-regional, regional and international levels (Packer, 1989). Regional co-operation in the form of a regional university is no longer the only option for the provision of tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Such a strategy is now being complemented by an approach based on national institutions working with each other and with the regional university in a relationship which allows each the flexibility to respond to national needs as it perceives them to be. Thus the way is being cleared for a move away from a unified approach to higher education towards an integrated system of provision (Maraj, 1989). This flexibility allows individual institutions to collaborate also with others outside the regional system in a search for eclecticism, and for the comparative experience that such associations can offer. Through their efforts to develop their tertiary education capabilities these small states are therefore re-considering co-operation and collaboration, organising themselves into networks of interacting institutions (Atchoarena, 1991b), releasing themselves in the process from some of the constraints of scale.

### **Regional co-operation**

It has been argued that regional solutions to national problems are less popular today than they were a decade ago (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988, 1989), and the

emergence of national institutions is cited as evidence of the gradual weakening of the regional ideal. Developments in tertiary education in the two regional groupings studied here however do not bear this out. Despite the obvious desire of small states to meet as much as possible of their societies' educational needs, there is no evidence to suggest that they are attempting to pursue in-country tertiary education provision to the exclusion of sub-regional, regional or even metropolitan co-operation (Taufe' ulungaki, 1987). What is happening is a turning away from the business-as-usual relationship with the main regional university, in favour of more mutually beneficial initiatives either with the institution itself, or with other national institutions. The national and political interests of participating states, and concern over the inequitable distribution of costs and benefits have, as already noted, generated tension within the regional universities. Reactions to successive crises have thus shaped the newly emerging pattern of regionalism that is evident today.

### *Regional universities*

The relationship between the UWI and the governments of the Commonwealth Caribbean is characterised by an adaptive approach, one based on compromise and bargaining, the University having learnt that it cannot afford the "rigidity and deadness of uniformity" (Sherlock and Nettleford, 1990: 172). In fact, Bird (1984) recommends that UWI's restructuring and increasing decentralisation be seen as one of natural growth and development as it adapts to meet a multiplicity of needs in a period of great political, economic, social and ideological change in its region. Its response to the challenge of change and to the insistent demands of its fourteen constituents over the years has been a series of often complicated agreements and arrangements aimed at offering "something to all the interests involved" (Payne, 1989: 489). The agreement establishing its Faculty of Law and a programme of legal education for the Commonwealth Caribbean is a case in point. While first-year teaching for the degree of LL.B. is conducted at all three campuses (in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad), second and third-year teaching and work for research degrees take place at one campus only where the Faculty has its administrative headquarters. The post LL.B. two-year programme of professional training leading

to a qualification to practise law is not the responsibility of the University, but of a formally constituted council of legal education consisting of the head of the judiciary and the attorney-general of each participating country, members of the legal profession in the region, and two representatives from the University. The post-degree training is therefore undertaken at two professional law schools, established in each of the other two campus countries and administered by the Council of Legal Education.

Another arrangement, which changed the University's relationship with the NCCs was the establishment as noted earlier, of the OUS as a mechanism through which the UWI could channel resources to supplement their local tertiary development efforts. At its establishment the OUS was seen as a substantive means of preserving the historical, unitary and regional character of the University, and a demonstration of its commitment to the non-campus countries (Parker, 1988). The Eastern Caribbean Office has facilitated and monitored the institution and development of UWI programmes at the national TLIs, by providing the type of support, and by setting up the type of administrative machinery which removed co-operation from the realm of policy and intent to one of tangible action at the institutional and faculty levels. A new dynamic was created. Thus from a position of dependence and waiting on the University's good pleasure, the TLIs acquired the capability to initiate and influence the pace and course of co-operative efforts. It is this newly acquired national confidence and capability which has given a fresh orientation to the concept of regional co-operation and which may well prove to be the spark that will re-ignite the wider regional integration movement that the region itself accepts as the way forward. Higginson (1991: 537) defines co-operation as a dialectical interaction between not so much equal as consenting parties, each ascribing to and agreeing to exercise differential leadership functions in a joint co-operative undertaking. The establishment of national tertiary institutions in the NCCs provides these small states with something to contribute to the co-operative provision of tertiary education in the region, enabling them to exercise some level of leadership - within the limits of their resources - in the development of tertiary education. A new pattern of regionalism is thus emerging, one based on independent, potentially mutually - supporting

institutions operating at different levels, articulating with each other within an interdependent integrated system of tertiary education. The current Vice Chancellor of the UWI assesses the potential of this emerging co-operative thrust in tertiary education and the contribution of the TLIs, when he speculates on the University's position within such an integrated system:

*In the perspective of the next forty years, who knows whether the UWI might not emerge as principally a "topping-up" and graduate institution at the apex of a network of associated undergraduate colleges? (Mc Intyre, 1988b).*

The possibility of the USP playing such an integrative role in the South Pacific is seen by some to be hampered by excessively centralist policies of the regional university (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988; Wendt, 1989). For such critics, past regional approaches to university education have not achieved their objectives because of the failure of centralised systems to share benefits equitably. NCCs have thus reacted by establishing their own national institutions. For others, USP has been most successful and *has enhanced the region's capacity to forge a new regionalism capable of preserving its member states' sovereignty and interests* (Jones, 1989). The emergence of national institutions is seen to have prompted a variation on regional co-operation in tertiary education, one that requires closer collaboration between USP and participating states. Thus, at the heart of the Pacific debate lies a search for the type of mechanisms by which such co-operative efforts can be implemented. While Crocombe and Meleisea (1988) see regionalism as gaining strength only if it is based on a policy of decentralisation of physical plant and facilities, for Caston (1993), a recent Vice Chancellor of the USP, the way forward for regional co-operation lies in the development of university distance education and outreach activity, maintained, increased and improved from the basis of a strong academic, administrative and technological centre located in one campus territory - Fiji.

The adaptive approach taken by the UWI has not yet been possible for USP to achieve to the same extent. Criticism about the proliferation of uneconomic national institutions of low quality (Caston, 1993) however, is not likely to impress the political directorate of the constituent countries pressured into asserting their

nationalism at home; and in a stand-off between nationalism and regionalism, there is no doubt as to which will prevail. Payne (1980) argues that politically there was no real alternative to decentralisation in the case of the UWI. There was first the need to take into account the growing economic strength and influence of the countries that successively laid claim to a substantial physical presence of the University on their shores. However, the subsequent decline of the economic fortunes of two of the campus countries brought the whole region to a realisation that their own investment in tertiary education was tied to the preservation of the regional character of the University. In small-country settings with small, open, externally - driven economies, the merit of such interdependence is not to be treated lightly.

Regional co-operation in the South Pacific has been described as selective and pragmatic rather than integrated or ideological (Udagama, 1987). The same could perhaps be said of the Caribbean where the term "functional co-operation" seems to be more palatable than "regional integration". The reluctance to embrace integration is understandable if one accepts that successful integration depends on mutual respect for the contribution of the parties involved in the co-operative venture, and on a willingness by all to assist in the further development of all constituents. In Higginson's definition of co-operation cited earlier, leadership is seen as the process which is invested in the combined total of all parties involved and not simply in the one party strong enough to impose its will on others (Higginson, 1991: 537). It is the synergy thus created that forms the foundation of real co-operation. Without this synergy the relationship is reduced to that of donor and recipient. The failure to strike that chord with the USP is therefore leading national institutions to look to other partners in the region, as evidenced by the establishment of the Consortium on Pacific Education (COPE) which brings together tertiary institutions in Hawaii, Western and American Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands. Regional solutions are therefore no less necessary today than they were a decade ago. Instead, they are perhaps even more important, as small states take on new commitments, and, as their systems evolve and develop, straining their domestic resources.

Udagama (1987) raises the question as to whether nationalism will increasingly get in the way of regional co-operation, but Taufe' ulungaki (1987), counters by questioning the *raison d' être* of regionalism if not as an instrument for the achievement of individual national goals. Early regional initiatives in tertiary education in the Pacific and the Caribbean tend to be criticised as having been externally imposed; the implication being that a more locally inspired regionalism would be more relevant and sustainable. Jones (1989) detects that new regional thrust in the Pacific as a whole, and in the collaboration that exists between USP and the national tertiary institutions. If this new regionalism is to be seen as furthering the individual and collective interests of sovereign states, however, each will have to be willing to forego some national interests for the common good. Crocombe and Meleisea's criticism of the centralist policies of USP calls that relationship into question. It is argued here that the increased capability which national tertiary institutions have provided the small states of the two regions is leading them to think more and more in terms of "co-operation between" rather than "co-operation for", and the two regional universities will need to keep re-assessing their role within the education systems of their respective regions, and consolidate their relationship with national institutions.

### *Sub-regional collaboration*

Regional co-operation has been and will continue to be a central component of educational development strategies for many small states. But as Bray and Packer (1993) point out, it is an intensely political activity which goes well beyond the realms of purely pedagogic concerns. It requires a mixture of vision and leadership which transcends purely national interests whilst recognising that it is specific national interests that have to be met.

It is their specific national interests which have led the OECS to formalise structures aimed at promoting the harmonisation and the integration of their education systems, while continuing to operate within the larger regional network. As a more homogenous group within the region, their similar circumstances have engendered a

kind of dynamic which to date has produced results (Interview, SAP-E, 07.08.92). The OERS for example, should thus be interpreted not as fostering fragmentation of the regional reform movement, but as enhancing the regional effort, contributing to and benefitting from on-going initiatives and structures (Charles, 1992). At the tertiary level, the sharing of expertise, joint delivery of instruction across national borders, co-operation in materials procurement and instructor training, and other actions designed to augment tertiary capacity generally are being conceived within the framework of the Centres of Specialisation concept which accepts a division of labour among the national colleges. The concept has so far been applied only in the area of technical teacher training (Sir Arthur Lewis Community College offers a Home Economics and an Industrial Arts programme, while Antigua State College offers Business Education), but it has considerable potential (Sabaroche and Withington, 1992; Sabaroche and Hogan, 1992) for the other four Key Development Initiatives in Science, Technology, Entrepreneurial and Multi-lingual Education which the OECS has identified as areas designed to contribute to their economic competitiveness on the world market.

The Centre of Specialisation concept illustrates the idea of regional co-operation transcending purely national interests. What began as local initiatives developed to meet national needs was expanded and developed into regional programmes as a regional need was identified. As indicated in Chapter Five, this development has meant that national authorities have had to compromise; in some instances by reducing the number of locals in the programme in order to accommodate the regional clients (Interviews, DTE-T, 18.08.92; MEG-G, 04.09.92), and in others, by handing over to other institutions some of the programmes they would have liked to offer locally (Interviews, PES-F, 30.08.92; DAG-C, 07.08.92). But such an approach has helped alleviate some of the constraints of smallness. National institutions and Ministries of Education have been able to access higher level teacher training programmes from sister institutions, while individual institutions have been able to sustain viable programmes in their respective areas of specialisation. The Centre of Specialisation concept is not completely new, as the original intention behind the development of technical colleges in the region in the 1970s was for each college to



concentrate on one main teaching area. The idea was dismissed at the time because the islands felt that there was a basic level of skills required in each area in sufficient numbers to justify offering all the programmes in each country (Interview, DTE-A, 08.08.92). However, the high cost of providing technical training at the tertiary level, and the small numbers requiring such training in the individual countries are leading the islands towards a re-consideration and a greater appreciation of the wider regional benefits, combined with a suppression of immediate national interests. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College experience has shown that the Centre of Specialisation idea has potential (Interviews, CTE-S, 17.08.92; SAP-E, 07.08.92; PRN-T, 06.08.92) not only for co-operation within OECS institutions themselves, but for closer and more structured collaboration with other tertiary institutions in the region. The input and involvement of CAST in the development of the College's specialisations is a case in point. What is needed to bring the concept to full fruition is more regional planning to establish common sets of guidelines and policies for the planning, management, delivery and evaluation of the programmes identified.

Parallel mechanisms for sub-regional collaboration are also developing in the South Pacific. COPE, noted earlier, is described as:

*... an exercise of sharing resources through strengthening indigenous institutional capacity; exchanging data, procedures, information, research findings, students and faculty; reducing cost through shared training and technical assistance programmes; identifying specific institutions for selected areas of specialisation ...; reducing administrative overheads by centralising support services; collectively seeking assistance from funding agencies (Packer, 1989: 60).*

Based on autonomous institutions voluntarily sharing facilities or responsibilities, COPE is seen as incorporating the elements around which the new type of regionalism can develop (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988).

### ***Regional networking***

Regional collaboration in the Caribbean and the Pacific operates at different levels simultaneously. The support given by the UWI and the wider Caribbean community for "sub-regional strivings" such as the OERS, points to an attempt at opening up the

system and to a search for greater institutional flexibility and manoeuvrability. Approaches like these could result in the type of integrated system of tertiary education which Udagama (1987) and Maraj (1989) recommend for the small states of the Pacific and the Caribbean respectively. It is the type of integrated system that Williams (1991) envisages for the wider international academic community, when he calls on it to view post-secondary provision in the round, and to move towards creating multiple systems of higher education. In Williams' view:

*The task for countries in today's world is to construct well - articulated systems of higher education, whose different parts relate to each other in a coherent way (Williams, 1991 : 1).*

This perception of post-secondary education as an integrated system calls for mechanisms not only for bringing together policy concerns at sectoral and sub-sectoral levels, but also for linking tertiary level institutions together and bringing them into some kind of relationship with one another. This, in turn, calls not only for structured articulation among different levels of the system, but also for networks and links among the institutions themselves. Such mechanisms allow small tertiary institutions to overcome some of the limitations associated with smallness, enabling them to do in a co-operative way what each is unable to do by itself. Small states can thus use institutional linkages both as a strategy and as a network to develop and expand their individual tertiary education capabilities. COPE and ACTI were established to provide that type of network for co-operative programmes and services. Although the mechanism set up in respect of each is different (COPE operates outside the USP system, while UWI itself is a member of ACTI), the relationship between the institutions in each case is characterised by principles which recognise the need to handle diversity while stressing the essentiality of co-operation. The Consortium/Association operates in the main on the basis of respect for the autonomy of all the institutions involved, and seeks to define goals and objectives which reflect the tasks that can bring benefit from working together. By taking into account the fact that member institutions are responding to differing national, sub-regional and regional mandates, ACTI for example, allows institutions the freedom to align themselves with any tertiary institution to make possible particular programmes and

services. The importance of ensuring equality of status between institutions and among participants is also seen as vital to the quality of participation (Sir Arthur Community College, 1990) and to the viability and cohesiveness of the co-operative mechanism.

The strength of networking lies in the opportunity and flexibility it affords the small institution to decide on which programmes it will access, with which institutions it will co-operate in solving a problem, developing a programme, providing a service, or facilitating an exchange. In a small-country context where adaptability in the face of shifting demands is of the essence, and where the high cost of tertiary level installations and the limited numbers involved militate against over-concentrating on programme - specific infrastructure, the contribution of that type of network to the development of the tertiary education sector cannot be overestimated. The experience of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in developing a co-operative approach with other institutions has shown not only that it is myopic to view co-operation solely in terms of bricks and mortar (Interview, PRN-T,06.08.92), but also that the strategy provides a much more flexible and adaptable instrument for responding to immediate and purely national needs.

### **International collaboration**

The provision of tertiary education on a co-operative basis has also been extended to relationships with individual institutions outside the region. The art and science of the relationship, Packer (1989) observes, is to ensure that it genuinely relates to the institutional development of the small state, that there are benefits for both institutions, and that it is well managed and properly monitored. This note of caution is not out of place or alarmist, as King (1985) for example, notes the tendency for North-South academic collaborative ventures to be seen very often in terms of aid relationships, with open-ended co-operative relations becoming quickly converted into tightly-run projects. Higginson, in considering the experience of co-operation in education for and between the small states of the Pacific, also draws attention to the many factors that undermine the building of a truly co-operative relationship, arguing

that:

*Smallness and in particular scale, isolation and dependence unquestionably aggravate the already difficult task of establishing a truly co-operative relationship. Even with the best of intentions, the realities of strong-weak, large-small, rich-poor relationships may hijack the dream of the co-operative decision - making process and hold it hostage for the duration of an entire project (Higginson, 1991 : 537).*

With this in mind, Helu (1991 : 59) advises that co-operation and collaboration between institutions of higher learning should be pursued "with a clear sense of the conflict of interests which is the foundation for the whole fabric of social process, and full awareness of the dangers inherent in the type of co-operation that brings together institutions with very different interests and of vastly different political leverage". One of the strategies that is being adopted to minimise the effects of this imbalance is the drawing up of a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the responsibilities and the contribution of all involved, so that each recognises the benefits that can flow from the relationship.

For the third phase of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College/St Lawrence College Linkage Project, a Memorandum of Understanding sets out the responsibilities of the St Lucian and Canadian governments and the nature and value of the contributions of the two parties:

*Article V Section 5.01*

*The contribution of Canada shall consist of the provision of funding for the professional services of a Canadian Executing Agency, ... the required learning materials and equipment, technical expertise for educational programme development and consolidation, monitoring and evaluation. The total value of Canada's contribution shall not exceed two million eight hundred thousand dollars.*

*Article VI Section 6.01*

*St Lucia's contribution shall consist of the provision of : qualified personnel as counterparts to Canadian advisors, the required financial, human and physical resources to support the delivery of the Project's goals, purpose and outputs. The value of St Lucia's contribution shall not exceed one million dollars.*

*(St Lawrence College, 1990).*

Another Memorandum of Understanding between the Community College and the Canadian Executing Agency, St Lawrence College, in which the two institutions undertake to work together within their own budget limitations even if project funding ceases, gives a degree of permanence to the relationship. This type of collaboration which has a momentum of its own outside the purely international aid relations aspect, has possibilities as a model of the kind of partnership that could be developed between small-state institutions and those of larger countries.

It is essential, in such co-operative ventures, for the small institution to make some kind of contribution if it is to be seen as a partner and not simply a protégée or beneficiary, and if it is to be in a position to exercise the type of leadership to which Higginson refers. If external relationships are to be regarded not as mere adjuncts to national policy and practice, but as significant components of the national education system (Packer, 1991), then the small state and its institutions must be able to influence decision - making, programme delivery and implementation. National commitment, not only in philosophical but also in material terms, is an important factor in the successful co-operative undertaking, as the absence of such commitment could reduce a potential partnership to a purely collaborative arrangement. The different types of linkages which small institutions have contracted point to a subtle yet significant difference between co-operation and collaboration. The link between the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and the University of Wisconsin or between the National University of Samoa (NUS) and the United States International University (USIU) for example, are collaborative arrangements rather than co-operative ventures. In neither case is there small-state involvement in programme planning. Staff from the University of Wisconsin have been contracted to teach in the College's B.Ed. programme, while staff from the College are facilitated in their graduate study at the University through credit transfers, accelerated programmes and graduate assistantships. The arrangement between the National University of Samoa and USIU is a commercial operation with nine of the twenty courses offered in NUS's B.Ed. programme being taught entirely by visiting USIU staff (Bray and Packer, 1993). On the other hand, the relationship between the St Lawrence College and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, noted earlier, has been described as

the most productive and successful of its type in the Caribbean (Packer, 1989). That this is so is due in large measure to the participation of both institutions at all levels of the planning and implementation of the programmes. Membership of senior administrators and the chairpersons of the college boards on the Project Co-ordinating Committee has in addition proven to be an effective strategy for promoting institutional development, while the integration of the Canadian co-operants within the College staff structure ensures joint implementation of the programmes.

### **Distance education**

As noted elsewhere, the strategy of accessing programmes from other institutions is a viable means of expanding the range of options open to students of the small tertiary institution. While in many cases the programmes are delivered in-country by local staff, distance education is also becoming a major growth area at this level. Already it is one of the key mechanisms through which the UWI and the USP serve their member countries (Monsell-Davis and Naidu, 1989; Sherlock and Nettleford, 1990; Renwick, 1991; Caston, 1993).

The UWI's recognition of national tertiary institutions as providers of courses or part of courses for students whom it will register and examine for its degrees and certificates, and its commitment, through its policies for outreach and institutional relations, to work co-operatively with them, has led it, on the one hand, to re-appraise its distance teaching capability and to consider proposals for becoming a dual-mode institution (Renwick, 1991; Renwick, Shale and Rao, 1992). On the other hand, the beginning of consultative processes for the validation of qualifications of national institutions in the region for accreditation by regional institutions is accelerating the move by these national institutions to make use of the distance education mode to access regional programmes. The combination of these two centripetal forces is a major impetus to the development of an integrated system of tertiary education for the region. Distance education, in its various expressions, is being increasingly accepted as a viable option for achieving this goal, and for fulfilling the educational aspirations of the people in the region's "off-campus" sites.

However, the cost of maintaining a distance education system, in both technical and human resource terms, militates against each small state setting up its own, and argues for a co-ordinated co-operative approach. The UWI, to which the other smaller tertiary institutions look for leadership therefore faces a challenge - that of servicing a regional network of mutual support that could overcome the constraints of critical minimum size and economies of scale. As one member of a Distance Education Appraisal Team commissioned by the institution put it:

*UWI's policies will need to be a combination of outreach and distance education. They will need to have strong elements of institutional support, in-service training for lecturers in national tertiary institutions, and the development of colleague relationships among all who become engaged in the development and delivery of distance education courses (Renwick, 1991: 6).*

In the South Pacific, the expansion of distance education is to some extent one reaction to centrifugal forces operating in the tertiary education sector. While USP has to date favoured meeting the tertiary education needs of its members by developing its distance education and extension activity (Caston, 1993), the constituent members are also gearing themselves up to interact with metropolitan institutions by distance means. Facilitated by satellite networks and high technology communication systems (Jones et al, 1991), distance education in the South Pacific is expanding faster than conventional higher education (Monsell - Davis and Naidu, 1989), with island-metropolitan interaction likely to outpace inter-island interaction (Crocombe and Meleisea, 1988). As already indicated, the latter view represents a controversial Pacific perspective which argues that regional approaches to university education have not achieved their objectives in this context because of the failure of centralised systems to share their benefits equitably, and that the conventional way of reading for a degree entirely in one university is outdated. Distance education is thus becoming both a mode of delivery and a deliberate strategy for the provision of tertiary education for the small state institution.

While this strategy of multilateralism in tertiary education may be dismissed as an example of the small state making virtues out of necessities, it holds lessons for larger states or institutions currently considering moves towards the internationalisation, or

at least the regionalisation, of higher education. Kerr's analysis of the historical movement of higher learning from a unified model to diversified models responding predominantly to national interests, leads him to conclude that:

*... a new period of internationalisation of learning appears to be developing, with more world-wide exchanges of scholars and students and ideas than ever before, and more and more with the support of supra-national agencies. And the scholar is now becoming less the citizen of one nation alone and more a citizen of the academic world; thus he or she is living more and more in two worlds - the international and the parochial (Kerr, 1990: 18).*

Kerr concedes that there is still a long way to go before this internationalisation of learning can be fully operational; a reservation which suggests that Crocombe and Meleisea's optimism about the pace at which it has proceeded might be premature. However, their proposals suggest a framework for a new concept of student mobility which, if it be allowed to develop, could revolutionize tertiary education in the small nation state. The inability of the small state to provide all its tertiary education needs is clear; yet the option of overseas training often recommended by those concerned with economies of scale and critical mass comes up against considerable hurdles. Not least among them is the question of cost, for small state nationals, as foreign students in overseas institutions, are charged "full cost" fees paid from a national purse dependent on a slender and vulnerable economic base. Access to overseas institutions is also sometimes subject to quotas and considered a privilege even within a community of nations like the Commonwealth which purports to promote student mobility among its membership. A tertiary education culture which views student mobility in terms of ease of access to the courses and programmes of individual institutions instead of in terms of the conventional residential mono-institutional formula is therefore an attractive option for the small nation state.

The potential of distance education to create an enabling environment for that type of mobility can be assessed from recent developments in the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Some of the regions' TLIs have taken advantage of the support of "supra-national agencies" such as COL which lists among its priorities the "promotion of co-operation between universities, colleges and other educational institutions, and the development of mutually supportive networks" (Commonwealth of Learning, 1991b).



At the national level, COL has helped set up initiatives such as the Solomon Islands Distance Education Network (SIDEN) which provides bridging courses for people in rural sub-centres to enable them to qualify for diploma courses at the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (Crocombe and Crocombe, 1993), and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Distance Education Centre which provides tertiary education opportunities to St Lucia's southern region. COL's growing involvement at the sub-regional and international levels in the Caribbean points to the increasing use being made of the distance education facilities of larger Commonwealth countries by the regions' institutions. The OECS Management Systems programme, for example, administered by the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, combines components and materials of Management programmes from NIC and the University of Victoria in Canada, while staff from the University of Waterloo Correspondence Programme are involved in the administration of the Waterloo/St Vincent Project which allows students from St Vincent to access its comprehensive degree - credit distance education programme (Knapper, 1992). With the exception of a few special groups such as Canadian service personnel and diplomats posted abroad, Waterloo does not allow enrolment in its distance programme by students residing outside North America. Its decision therefore to initiate the St Vincent Project and, at the request of COL, to extend it to The Gambia and the Seychelles (Knapper, 1992) is an illustration of the type of institutional will on the part of larger established institutions that can create the enabling environment within which the small state can manoeuvre.

Distance education, as a strategy for the provision of tertiary education is therefore a distinct option open to educational institutions in small states. While its use in this context is not dissimilar to that exercised by large institutions, both in the developed and the developing world, it is its use as a strategy for co-operation and collaboration that makes it particularly attractive to the small state. Monsell-Davis and Naidu (1989) for example, see co-operation as becoming the central feature of distance education in the South Pacific, with islands and metropolitan institutions working to meet the differing needs of the region. Their call for a mix of competition and co-operation between the institutions in order to provide a wider choice of course

offerings for students is indicative of current trends in educational development in the region. Recent World Bank discussions on access, quality and efficiency in Caribbean education make similar calls for competition between UWI's campuses to enable the NCCs to make choices rather than relying primarily on sub-regional campuses (World Bank, 1992a; Bray and Packer, 1993). The Caribbean might be a bit wary however about introducing an element of competition in its regional system of tertiary education. The historical and social consequences of the "divide and rule" strategy of former powers in the region, and the continuing practice by foreign investors have alerted them to the dangers of playing off one country against another (Compton 1993).

### **In-country collaboration**

The foregoing discussion demonstrates that the strategy of providing tertiary education on a collaborative and co-operative basis at the sub-regional, regional and international levels has been enthusiastically embraced by national authorities seeking to strengthen tertiary education capacity. There is however often less evidence of this collaborative approach at the national level. In-country collaboration among providers of tertiary education is less structured, relying more often than not on informal, individual initiatives.

The active involvement of the churches, international companies and agencies, non-governmental organisations, business firms and private bodies in the provision of tertiary education in the Pacific is being increasingly recognised. While most operate outside the formal education system, offering programmes usually designed for particular categories of people to upgrade their skills, they have been seen as providing a much higher proportion of post-secondary education and training in the region than is generally understood (Crocombe and Crocombe, 1993). Taufe' ulungaki considers that type of training to be much more relevant to the needs of the region, arguing that training in-country and on the job:

*... effectively demonstrate[s] the truism that in the rapidly changing technological world of today, formal training of a highly specialised nature is increasingly becoming too inflexible and inappropriate ....*

*Increasingly, the most effective training is short-term, task specific, and on the job, which also has the advantage of being the least costly (Taufe' ulungaki, 1991 : 581).*

Whatever may be one's views on such practical approaches to tertiary education and training, it cannot be denied that in the absence of some administrative machinery for collaboration and co-ordination, the system-wide effects of this significant contribution outside the conventional education institutions could easily be dissipated.

Although the level of involvement in tertiary education by non-governmental agencies is much lower in the Caribbean (World Bank, 1992a), there is still a need for more dialogue and stronger linkages between the formal education sector and other providers. The UWI is considering the establishment of enterprise and technology parks in a triangular partnership with governments and the private sector (McIntyre, 1988b). The OERS sees the success of its regional efforts as dependent on the strengthening of linkages between the programming of the national colleges, and the general economic thrust of the individual countries (Charles, 1992). In St Lucia, the OERS' call for the rationalisation and consolidation of tertiary education delivery systems at the national level, greater articulation between formal and informal structures, and the formalisation of relations with the private sector to promote its participation in skills training and on-the-job experience, is echoed by educational policy makers and planners, the business sector, labour market analysts and development workers (Interviews, CTO-P, 30.09.92; CCE-S, 05.08.92; CTE-S, 17.08.92; CCI-A, 13.08.92; EMP-L, 20.08.92; LMI-A, 08.09.92; NDF-C, 19.08.92).

A prime area of national responsibility could therefore be the identification and delegation by governments, of a co-ordinating and advisory body that would facilitate rationalisation, co-operation and consultation between themselves and other providers of tertiary education. The value of such functional linkages at the regional and sub-regional levels has been established; COPE, ACTI, the Pacific Agency for Technical and Vocational Education, the Caribbean Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, being but a few examples. Ideally, the selection of

programmes for regional action should be based on identified gaps and deficiencies in national provision. National Training Agencies, for example, have been proposed for the co-ordination and management of TVET in the Caribbean. With representation from government, training institutions, industry, the private sector and labour organisations, they are mandated to assist in the planning and co-ordination of TVET activities at the national level, and to interact with regional agencies and bilateral and international aid agencies (Caribbean Community Secretariat, 1990). In St Lucia, the National Advisory Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NATVET) has been instituted to oversee the overall co-ordination and management of TVET programmes, by establishing functional linkages among various ministries, organisations and other systems involved in these activities.

A body, modelled along similar lines, but incorporating all aspects of tertiary education would not only facilitate the establishment of a network of tertiary education providers to permit better co-ordination of training efforts, but could also advise periodically on the type and level of tertiary provision required to meet the countries' changing human resource development needs. This is particularly important as it is argued that the viability of the tertiary sector in small states depends on its adaptability and responsiveness to changing needs. The LMIS already established in some of the small states of the Caribbean operates as a type of sensor, picking up trends in market forces and movements in the labour market. What is needed is an Advisory Body to translate these trends into guidelines which would inform tertiary education policy to determine the "form, style and extent" of provision at periodic points in time.

## **Conclusion**

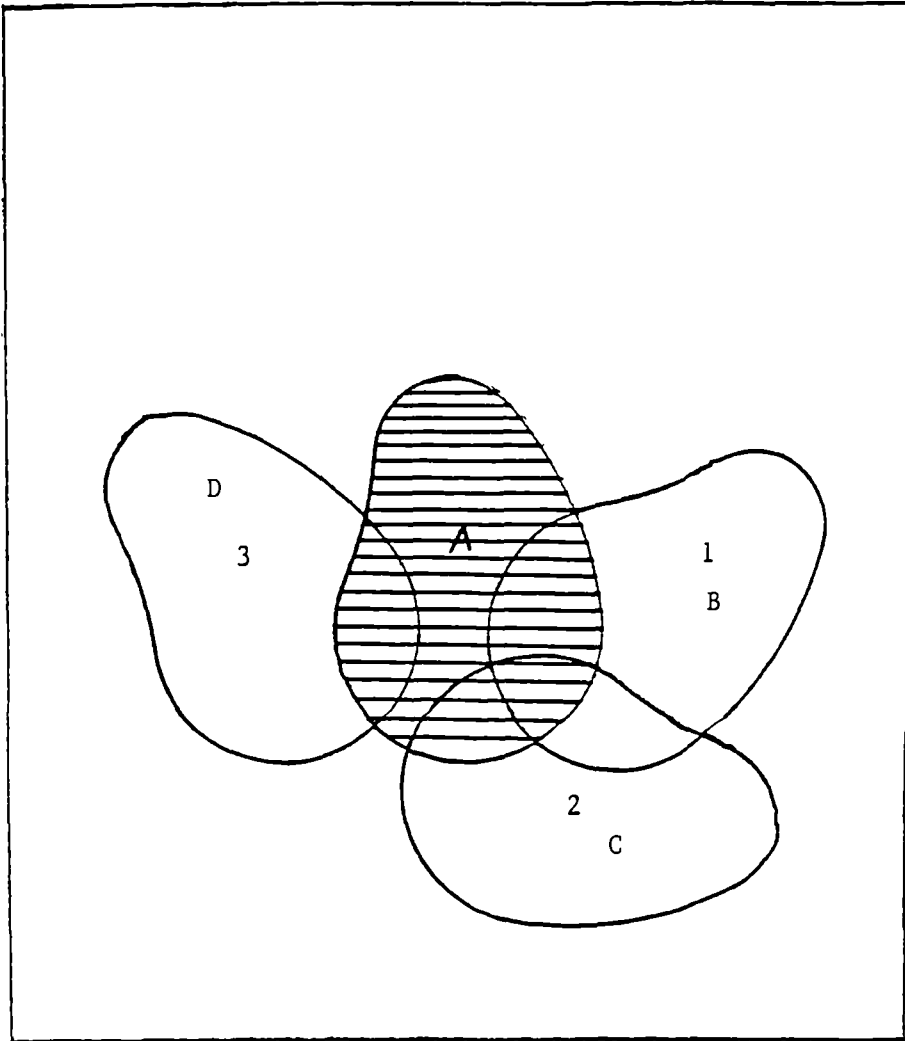
The policy options examined here have identified a range of strategies through which small states are meeting their tertiary education needs. Despite the diversity of circumstances, a strikingly similar model of tertiary education management is emerging in both the Caribbean and the South Pacific. To provide tertiary education opportunities for their people, some of these states are challenging the constraints of

size by setting up multi-functional, multi-mode institutions which operate simultaneously within sub- regional and regional networks while maintaining multiple links with international institutions and agencies (Figure 13). The pace at which these strategies are being implemented in the two regions differs because of dissimilar contextual circumstances, but the evidence points to a more complex system of networking in the Caribbean, and more input from international sources in the South Pacific.

This small-states model does not have a parallel in the tertiary education sectors of large states. Its evolution provides a critique of dependency rhetoric, as it points to the ability of small states to create indigenous models that can meet their particular needs. Moreover, the call for interdependence at all levels of higher education (Watson, 1991; Bown, 1992a; Crossley and Mebrahtu, 1992;) suggests that this emergent small-states model could soon be gaining currency in the wider international community. If it does, it will have substantiated Miller's (1991b) observation that in adopting a global perspective while operating at a local level, marginal groups - as are small states - are in a favoured position to convert disadvantage into opportunity and move to a more central place in the continued development of human civilisation. In making this observation, Miller, speaking from a Caribbean perspective, points to the maturation of a people who have grown to see challenges where at first they tended to see only constraints. From perceiving marginalisation as having a crippling effect on educational development (Miller, 1987b), he now calls on the small states of the Caribbean to use their marginal positions to be creative and innovative in providing for their future needs. Reflecting on the chances of their making a success of it, he argues persuasively:

*Marginalisation is a negative force when you are going into it. However, marginalisation is a positive force when you are coming out of it. Those being liberated from marginalisation enjoy the energy, the motivation and the momentum of new possibilities. Human history is the story of the rise of marginals to displace the powerful. Civilisation is the accumulated store of inventions, innovations and creations of marginals seizing the possibilities of power and position in society (Miller, 1991b: 283).*

Figure 13  
The Small-state Tertiary Level Institution



- |   |                        |   |                          |
|---|------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 3 | National Institution   | A | National programming     |
| 1 | Sub-regional network   | B | Sub-regional initiatives |
| 2 | Regional network       | C | Regional programmes      |
| 3 | International linkages | D | International inputs     |

Marginalisation therefore is not a terminal condition. The efforts of the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific in providing for their tertiary education needs, and their achievements to date, hold promise for other marginalised groups grappling with the universal issues of access and equity in an ever-changing social order. Their experience has shown how a co-operative approach to the provision of tertiary education can be a realistic policy option from both financial and political perspectives.

*CHAPTER EIGHT*  
*CONCLUSION*



*"Smallness should not be unduly romanticised;  
but neither should it be unduly condemned".  
Mark Bray and Steve Packer*

The growth of interest in the circumstances of small states and recognition that they do succeed in maintaining viable systems suggest that there is little likelihood of their facing condemnation by the international community. The greater danger lies in their being dismissed as "curios", treated as fascinating and complex subjects of specialist study, instead of being seen as part of a global system. This final chapter discusses the contribution of small-state studies to educational theory and practice, and considers some lessons that could be learnt from the small-state experience. The chapter then recalls the main features of the tertiary education system that is developing in the small states referred to in the study, and assesses the strategies proposed and adopted to provide tertiary opportunities at the national level. In the light of these, suggestions are advanced for strengthening tertiary capacity at the institutional, national, regional and international levels. The study concludes with a suggestion for further research in tertiary education in small-states contexts in the light of Little's (1988) call for the building of theoretical frameworks of education which take national motivations, perceptions and conceptual models as their priority reference point.

### **Small states and comparative education**

The review of the literature on small states reveals a progression overtime along two planes. On one plane, the focus shifts from a study of the economics, politics, sociology and administration of small states, on to the study of education. On the other plane, a pre-occupation with the problems that beset small states gives way to a perception of these first as constraints and then as challenges, followed by an analysis of the coping strategies adopted and, more recently, by the identification of an "emerging" theory of education in small-state contexts. It is not fortuitous that the development of a body of knowledge on education in small states should have been preceded by studies of their economic, political and sociological characteristics, since

the theory which is evolving argues that it is both legitimate and useful to place education at the centre of a study while at the same time drawing on the conceptual frameworks of other fields (Bray, 1991c; Bray and Packer, 1993). The data from the international literature and from the present study suggest a much closer relationship and it is now generally accepted that understanding the character of, and opportunities for, educational development in these settings requires an analysis of these contextual factors. In this respect this study of tertiary education in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific, has made an important contribution to the evolution of educational theory.

The study of education in small states has also helped revive the methodological and theoretical orientation of early comparativists (Kandel, Hans, Mallinson, King) who all tried to give substance to Michael Sadler's 1900 remark that "the things outside the school" are more important than what happens inside the school for the understanding of national systems of education. Thus the strategies and policy options adopted by the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College are more clearly understood when examined in the context of St Lucia's cultural, political and economic circumstances. The call for detailed case-studies of individual small countries to help improve our understanding of educational processes in these states is a recognition of the significance of these contextual factors.

The realisation that it is not only useful and legitimate, but also essential, to draw on the conceptual frameworks of other fields of inquiry in an examination of education also recalls Lé's recommendation of what should constitute the basis of a truly general theory of education:

*A truly general theory of education would be based on an in-depth study of reciprocal relations between education and society in different types of historical civilisations. Such a study would entail the examination of all dimensions .... of society and economy, of ideas and values, of social and political structures, and of education. It would also include investigation of the influence of society on education and of education on society in its statics (at one point in time) and in its dynamics (over time) (Lé, 1986: 217).*

The contribution that the study of tertiary education in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific has made to the testing of such a theory is not to be underestimated. The small size of their tertiary education systems has facilitated trans-national comparisons, thus contributing to international and comparative research in tertiary education.

### **The small-state experience: lessons from the periphery**

The literature on small states has consistently argued that these countries are not scaled - down versions of larger states, but in fact constitute a singular constituency, with an ecology of their own. It is argued that this should not be interpreted as a basis for imputing theoretical uniqueness to small systems, but as evidence that there are multiple ways of ordering society and therefore multiple ways of dealing with that diversity.

It is for this reason that Shaw (1982) is critical of earlier studies that concentrated on the problems of small states, arguing that they tended to emphasize uniqueness rather than develop an analytical framework from existing theory, and in the process, identify gaps in theory and practice requiring further study and investigation. Thus some of the issues discussed in this study suggest that there are lessons to be learnt from the small-state experience which can contribute to the refinement of policy and practice in the wider international arena. Three of these issues relate to qualitative research methodology and practice, the structure of tertiary education systems, and international development assistance policies. Each will be examined in turn.

#### ***Qualitative research in small-states contexts***

The case study field work in St Lucia raised practical and ethical issues which call for a modification of the conventional strategies suggested for the conduct and reporting of qualitative research. The personalised nature of the society and the existence of particularistic role relationships made it difficult, for example, to assume the type of remoteness that conventional research approaches require to achieve

objectivity or to guarantee anonymity. These issues are particularly crucial as qualitative research is seen to have considerable potential to contribute to educational policy and practice in developing countries. The modifications adopted in this study suggest ways in which qualitative research techniques can be adjusted to the specific contexts of small personalised societies. These modifications could contribute to the refinement of the qualitative research approach and help strengthen its claim of sensitivity to local contexts.

The research experience in this small-state setting also draws attention to certain ethical issues relating to the reporting of research findings. In a small system in which informants are likely to be able to identify themselves and others in the research report, there is a compelling reason for the researcher to make sensitive use of authentic data, and to adopt a reporting style that is true to the data yet not unduly intrusive of the subjects' right to such privacy as can be enjoyed in so personalised a society. This is an approach which could most usefully be adopted by the wider research community.

### *The integrated tertiary education system*

To develop their tertiary sectors, many small states have had to devise educational policies, planning models and structures which, in the light of contemporary debate, has placed them a step ahead of larger, more developed countries. In this sense the small-state dimension has provided an opportunity for the development of models and for the identification of gaps in tertiary educational policy and practice in larger national contexts.

Among the themes current in the literature on tertiary education reform are the diversification of the sector and the need for more flexible structures. The recognition that traditional universities alone cannot meet the emerging demands for further education and training has resulted in a diversity of post-secondary institutions being established to provide a wide range of general, technical and commercial programmes. This points to the need for a reconceptualisation of the structure of the

tertiary education sector to take account of this diversity.

The small states of the Caribbean have begun a move in this direction. The relationship between the emerging national multi-purpose colleges and the UWI provides a model of the type of integrated higher education system which Williams (1991) recommends. This Caribbean network, though still in its early stages, already incorporates:

- ◆ arrangements for review, co-ordination and articulation of the different parts of the system to avoid duplication, identify and fill gaps, and adopt common approaches and policies to common problems;
- ◆ standardisation of provision and treatment for activities at equivalent level;
- ◆ arrangements for recognition and credit;
- ◆ facilitation of transferability of students between institutions and sub-sectors of higher education: a system of ladders and bridges between different types of institutions and different levels of the system; and
- ◆ arrangements for linking institutions through affiliated or associated status to stronger and more advanced ones.

This small-state system points the way to the type of approach that needs to be considered in larger countries if there is to be an integrated system; one that recognises and accepts an organisation of institutions based on a hierarchical system of functions and levels. This study of small states has accentuated the interdependence of different parts of the tertiary education sector. The establishment of networks and institutional linkages to which small states are committed exploits the concept of an integrated system of tertiary education, but draws attention to what is involved in such a system: the type of institutional relationships, the containment of individualism and the competitive spirit, the sub-sectoral and institutional giving and taking that must prevail. The difficulties inherent in creating and sustaining an integrated system are captured in Di Maggio and Powell's view that the image of

higher education both within and between institutions is more that of a loose federation of medieval Italian fiefdoms, sometimes at war and sometimes at peace, than that of collective homogeneity (quoted in Jones et al, 1991). The principles endorsed by small-states regional networks such as ACTI and COPE illustrate that concept of unity in diversity.

### *Development assistance policies*

This study has shown that the development of tertiary education in small states is influenced by their dependence on external assistance. The special attention that needs to be given to monitoring the quality and quantity of the assistance received, and the intervention strategies used, puts small states in a strong position to contribute to a general understanding of the policies and practices of the development assistance community. The tendency of the community to downplay national contextual issues in the formulation of policies aimed at the recipients of development assistance is borne out by the experience of the Caribbean and the South Pacific reported here.

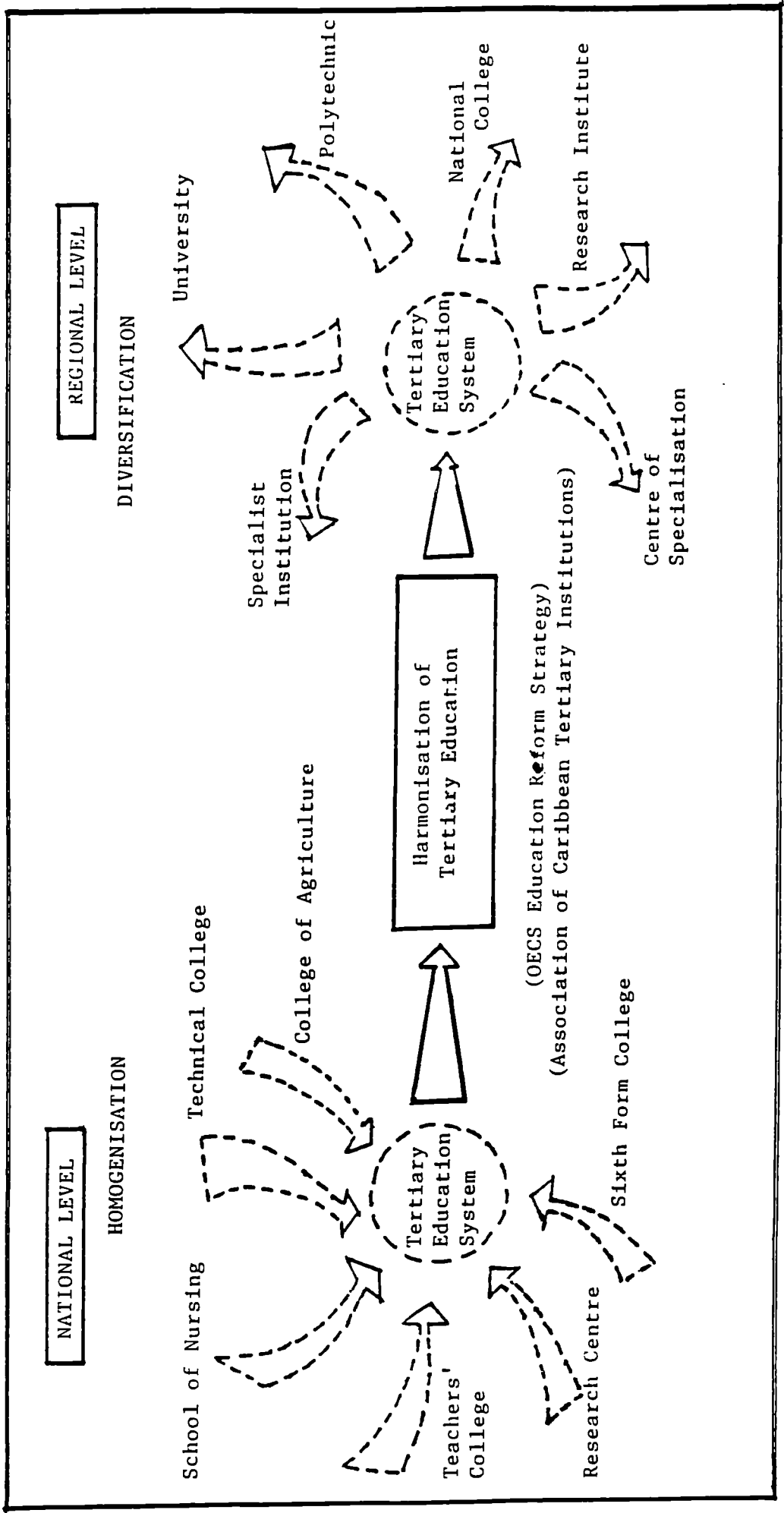
The primary stated objective for global aid-giving is based on altruistic motives. However, development assistance for tertiary education in the Pacific is motivated for the most part by the strategic, economic and political interests of the main donors (Luteru, 1991). For this reason, the establishment of national universities has not been encouraged in spite of the wishes of national authorities, and the continuing practice of bilateral aid donors to favour out-of-country training has been regarded as retarding the nationalisation of the region's educational development. Such an indictment argues for a re-examination of these policies and, in this regard, the responses of some of the small states of the Caribbean deserve closer consideration. This study draws attention to the Caribbean's regional approach to project preparation and implementation and to the negotiation of development assistance. The OECS experience points to the ability of small states to manage diversity and its responses to the issue of development assistance suggest strategies that other recipient countries and the development assistance community itself could adopt to advantage.

## **The tertiary education system in the Caribbean and the South Pacific**

The national structure which is developing in the Caribbean and the South Pacific is a multi-purpose, multi-level, multi-mode institution capable of functioning as a sub-regional Centre of Specialisation within a wider regional system, with additional support for institutional development and capacity building derived from collaborative links with international institutions. The emphasis that these institutions have placed on middle level education and training has raised questions concerning their eligibility to be classified as institutions of higher education. The findings of this study indicate that this issue of quality control is addressed by the accreditation, validation and monitoring arrangements that exist between the small-state institutions and the larger internationally accredited institutions to which they are often affiliated. Thus, for the Caribbean and the South Pacific this new emerging model, with its distinctive identity and mission, is a credible, legitimate complement to the traditional university-type institution. The impact of this non-university sector on the world-wide expansion and diversification of higher education has now been recognised. In this regard, Watson's (1992) identification of cost, accessibility, flexibility and relevance as important factors in this movement is borne out by the development of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and other national institutions in the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

In an assessment of the tools currently in use for analysing higher education systems, Meek (1991) argues for the use of those which concentrate on the interests and motivations of conscious actors in particular places. The findings of this study suggest that the interests, motivations and particular circumstances of small-state tertiary education planners in the Caribbean and Pacific regions have led them to think in terms of consolidation on the one hand, and of harmonisation on the other. This has found expression in two main movements: homogenisation, both of structure and of function, at the national level, and diversification at the regional level, with institutions in the system accepting a kind of division of labour as far as programmes and levels are concerned (Figure 14). It is in this latter movement that the national tertiary institutions are seen as complementing the regional provision of

Figure 14  
 Homogenisation and Diversification in the Caribbean  
 Tertiary Education System





higher education, compelling a change in the structure of the tertiary education system in their respective regions, and a reassessment not only of their future role but also that of the regional institutions as well.

The multi-purpose college itself can be regarded as a mini-system within which the dynamic relationship between homogenisation and diversification can be perceived. Thus the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, through its academic programmes, provides diversity within what is essentially a homogenous system. It is in this sense also that the structure of its Associate Degree programme can be considered as putting into practice on a national scale the idea of academic mobility and interchange.

It has been argued that change in higher education is based on power relations and the articulation of interests of various groups whose actions and interests are themselves constrained or furthered by the structure of the academic field and their location in it (Meek, 1991). The change that is currently taking place in the tertiary education sectors of the Caribbean and the South Pacific is prompted as much by an acceptance of the interdependence of the various sub-sectors as by a recognition of their growing strength. However, while national institutions have empowered their respective authorities to take a more decisive role in the provision of tertiary education, their response has been a willingness to harmonise policy and practice at the regional and sub-regional levels.

This move towards the harmonisation and centralisation of educational policy at the regional level parallels current moves towards closer economic and political integration in the two regions. The integration experience of the OECS is characterised by joint action in policy areas on aspects of government where regional action is considered the best avenue for effectiveness and efficiency. Consequently, they have been pooling their sovereignty in these areas, while still retaining control over local matters of particular concern to each state. Whether in opting for this type of "centralised" authority in the management of tertiary education, these states are moving in the opposite direction to current international trends concerning the

distribution of authority over education is a moot point. Lauglo (1993), for example, sees these international trends towards decentralisation as arising out of loss of confidence in 'statist' bureaucratic centralisation as a way of managing education. The small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific, however, are in search of a workable balance of centralised and decentralised systems to ensure more efficient use of the scarce financial and human resources at their disposal. It is argued here that this is not peculiar to small states, as it is in essence the same principle underlying the concept of subsidiarity which the former President of France, Valerie Giscard D'Estaing proposed for the political integration of the European Community, and its implementation is proving to be just as problematic.

Paradoxically, it is the deconcentration of regional tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific that is strengthening the process of centralisation of tertiary educational policy making. It has been argued that bureaucratic establishments are much more ready to redistribute authority to groups whom they see as like-minded to themselves and whose competence they trust (Lauglo, 1993). The national tertiary institutions that are being established are regarded as creating that type of climate which facilitates decentralisation; the more independent and competent these institutions become, the more willing they are likely to be to pool their sovereignty into a stronger centralised authority. This study has shown that the movement towards that type of centralisation is more advanced in the Caribbean than it is in the South Pacific; the cultural and historical homogeneity of the small states of the Caribbean probably accounting for this difference.

### **Tertiary education provision in the Caribbean and the South Pacific**

The case study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and the comparative analysis of the management and structure of the tertiary education sector in the Caribbean and the South Pacific demonstrate that, in spite of real constraints, small states can succeed in providing for their tertiary education needs, sometimes at a level out of all proportion to their size. This section takes up the questions raised in the introductory chapter and reviews the 'why', the 'what', and the 'how' of tertiary

provision in the small-state setting.

### *Factors influencing the development of the tertiary sector*

The evidence points to the growing social demand for tertiary education and the consequent need to expand access as fueling the development of the tertiary sector. This is matched by what the planners see as an urgent need to create a national capacity to develop the human resources needed to initiate and sustain the endogenous development process. Underlying this, is a concern by many small states for the cultural dimension of education; for the development of their identity as a people, and for the mobilisation of their creative energies. The development of the sector is therefore intimately bound up with issues of control and self-reliance, which are seen as helping to shape ideas about indigenous development and a nation's orientation to the world. Even in instances where the cost of tertiary education is borne almost entirely by external agencies, as is the case in the South Pacific, the need to develop an indigenous capability is forcefully argued. Indeed, the greater the dependence, the stronger the need to assert control as the establishment of national universities in the South Pacific, in the face of strong criticism, illustrates.

### *Policy options at the tertiary level*

The institutional model which has developed in many small nation states offers a range of courses at sub-degree as well as degree levels, but with an emphasis on middle-level training of professionals and paraprofessionals to meet the managerial, technical and supervisory needs of the economy. Such an emphasis reflects a pragmatic concern for the utilitarian aspect of tertiary education and training in spite of small states' stout defence of the cultural and philosophical dimension. This raises the question as to whether there is incompatibility between the utilitarian and the cultural aspect of education and training in this context. The answer lies beyond the scope of this study but the ambivalence reveals a desire on the part of small states to balance the need to provide for the occupational demands of a growing modern economy with the equally valid need to develop their own distinctive identities.

There is no gainsaying the fact however, that at this stage of their development, the struggle for economic survival favours concentration on the pragmatic and the utilitarian.

Moreover small states are themselves caught up in the international human resource development ideology which is itself strongly associated with the occupational aspects of education. The observation that, in our enthusiasm for science and technology, we are in danger of losing sight of other branches of learning such as the arts, literature, religion and music sums up the dilemma in which many small states find themselves. The time is ripe perhaps for planners to think more in terms of developing human potential and less in terms of exploiting the human resource. There is a certain measure of pragmatism in small states' concentration on middle level training at the domestic level, as they recognise the human and financial limitations associated with smallness of size. However, the experience of some small states has shown that opportunities for higher level training can be provided through innovative management and administration. The key lies in the ability of both the providers and receivers of tertiary education to devise and take advantage of strategies that can bring these higher level programmes within the reach of those capable of benefitting from them.

### *Strategies and mechanisms*

It has often been argued that the basic question underlying the strategies that small states have adopted in providing tertiary education is how to gain institutions of sufficient size to permit economies of scale. However, the admission that it is very difficult for small states to achieve economies of scale, because the optimum number of students needed to achieve such economies is far greater than the actual number available for training, suggests that the use of this criterion to assess the provision or performance of the small-state tertiary sector needs to be re-considered. The five strategies which this study has identified point instead to efforts at improving the quality of provision, at the expansion of access and the broadening of choice and opportunities. The similarity of approach to such qualitative improvement indicates

not only a similarity of needs but also a similar range of strategies and mechanisms through which these needs are being addressed. These strategies, geared towards strengthening the sector's internal capability and broadening its external orientations, fall into the following categories:

- 1 amalgamation and consolidation of existing tertiary education facilities;
- 2 accessing courses and programmes from larger institutions;
- 3 use of multiple delivery modes;
- 4 regional cooperation and networking; and
- 5 international collaboration and institutional linkages.

That there is no one panacea for meeting the tertiary education needs of all small states is confirmed by the many configurations that have appeared in different contexts.

#### *Amalgamation of tertiary education facilities*

The study points to the amalgamation of existing specialist colleges as the main strategy adopted by the Caribbean and the South Pacific to provide tertiary education at the national level. In the case of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, the results have been an expansion of tertiary level programmes, a broadening of choice, and more rationalisation of the management of tertiary education. The case study of the College points however to the need for special attention to be given to more flexible programming in order to maximise the benefits of amalgamation, and to the strengthening of a central administrative unit to manage the integration process.

#### *Accessing programmes from larger institutions*

One of the main strategies adopted to provide the higher level and specialist courses which are either too costly to be developed locally or for which demand is likely to

fluctuate, is that of accessing programmes or parts of programmes from larger institutions. It enables the sector to respond with relative speed to sudden or one-off demands of the market. This is particularly important in a situation where resources are limited, but where it is necessary to interpret and respond quickly to market signals, so as to be able to take advantage of niche opportunities. The viability of the sector also depends heavily on its ability to implement this strategy and the evidence in this study indicates that it is becoming increasingly popular.

#### *Use of multiple delivery modes*

As one of the main buttresses undergirding the whole tertiary education structure, the use of multiple delivery modes affords the small institution, on the one hand, the flexibility to access programmes and expertise from outside, and, on the other, the capability to increase access to students within the small state. Distance education capabilities, in particular, has broadened the sector's and the institutions' external sphere of operation while strengthening their internal capacities. As a strategy for co-operation and collaboration, it is particularly attractive to the small state as the experience of the Caribbean and the South Pacific confirms. Its potential for assisting in the development of a new concept of mobility, perceived in terms of programmes and credit flows rather than in terms of student flows, offers a new dimension to the policy of internationalising higher education.

#### *Regional co-operation and networking*

Regional approaches to the provision of tertiary education in the Caribbean and the South Pacific remain as essential today as they were seen to be in the past, in spite of the many critical comments on the effectiveness of regional provision. There is, however, a departure from the earlier pattern of regionalism which placed the smaller partners in the group in a type of satellite relationship with their larger, more resource-rich partners, in favour of a system of mutually-supporting institutions, voluntarily sharing facilities and responsibilities. This new form of regional co-operation is based on what might at first appear contradictory - the growth and

development of national institutions. In the sphere of education as in that of politics and economics, national confidence and capability must be promoted, fostered and nurtured if a regional spirit is to flourish. The argument that regionalism is no more than an instrument for the achievement of individual national goals has to a large extent influenced the new pattern of co-operation and the choice of partners in the co-operative provision of tertiary education. The findings of the study suggest that the regional grand design of a system of mutually supportive and inter-related institutions working to a common developmental purpose, such as is envisaged for the Caribbean, can only be achieved if there is an acceptance of a synergic relationship among the national institutions and between them and the regional university. Individual countries need to have a perception of long-term, if not immediate, benefits to be persuaded to transcend national interests in favour of a regional approach, whether such an approach is selective and pragmatic or integrated and ideological. The trend towards the establishment of national universities in the South Pacific suggests that regional provision of tertiary education is still very problematic.

Incorporated in this new regional thrust is a system of networking, which allows the smaller institutions to overcome some of the limitations associated with size, enabling them to do in a co-operative way what each is unable to do by itself. This interlocking system of sub-regional and regional networks contributing to and benefitting from on-going initiatives is reminiscent of Schumacher's (1973) view of organisational structures as articulated ones capable of coping with a multiplicity of small-scale units. The Centres of Specialisation, COPE and ACTI all rely on this networking to facilitate mobility, to strengthen indigenous institutional capacity, to share ideas, expertise, research and information, and to harmonise policy and practice across the spectrum of tertiary provision. In many ways, tertiary education in the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific is at a point where it can consolidate and build on the strengths of the regional system by effectively managing these networks which serve as communicative bridges across national and sub-sectoral boundaries.

### *International collaboration*

The principle of internationalism which these small states have espoused as their response to the constraint of isolation, explains the increasing use of international collaboration as a strategy for providing tertiary education opportunities. This study shows that the option of arranging for small-states nationals to obtain part of their education in an international environment, or of incorporating components of an international programme within their own national curricula, is not only of value but of significant importance. Of even greater importance is collaboration with larger institutions which affords the small state the opportunity of participating in the actual development of the programmes, and which assists in institutional development and capacity building. The reality of small size is such that these partnerships cannot avoid being seen in terms of a rich-and-poor, large-and-small type of relationship, but the practices that have been adopted have in some cases resulted in genuinely co-operative activity.

Three different levels of collaboration are identified in this study, representing progressively higher levels of participation by the small-state institution:

- (i) accessing the programmes of the larger institution;
- (ii) joint delivery of the programmes accessed; and
- (iii) joint development and delivery of programmes specially conceived to respond to the needs of the small state.

The third level, unarguably the best, assures sustainability, strong local commitment and ownership. The hallmark of this collaborative model is partnership rather than dependence, as the relationship provides the larger institution itself with a broader international perspective and exposure to new experiences. In the case of the St Lawrence College/Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Linkage Project, this has led to some institutional capacity building on the part of the larger partner enabling it to play a more effective technical co-operation role.

Some of these collaborative arrangements between the national TLIs in the Caribbean and the South Pacific, and those of larger countries contain the germ of wider co-

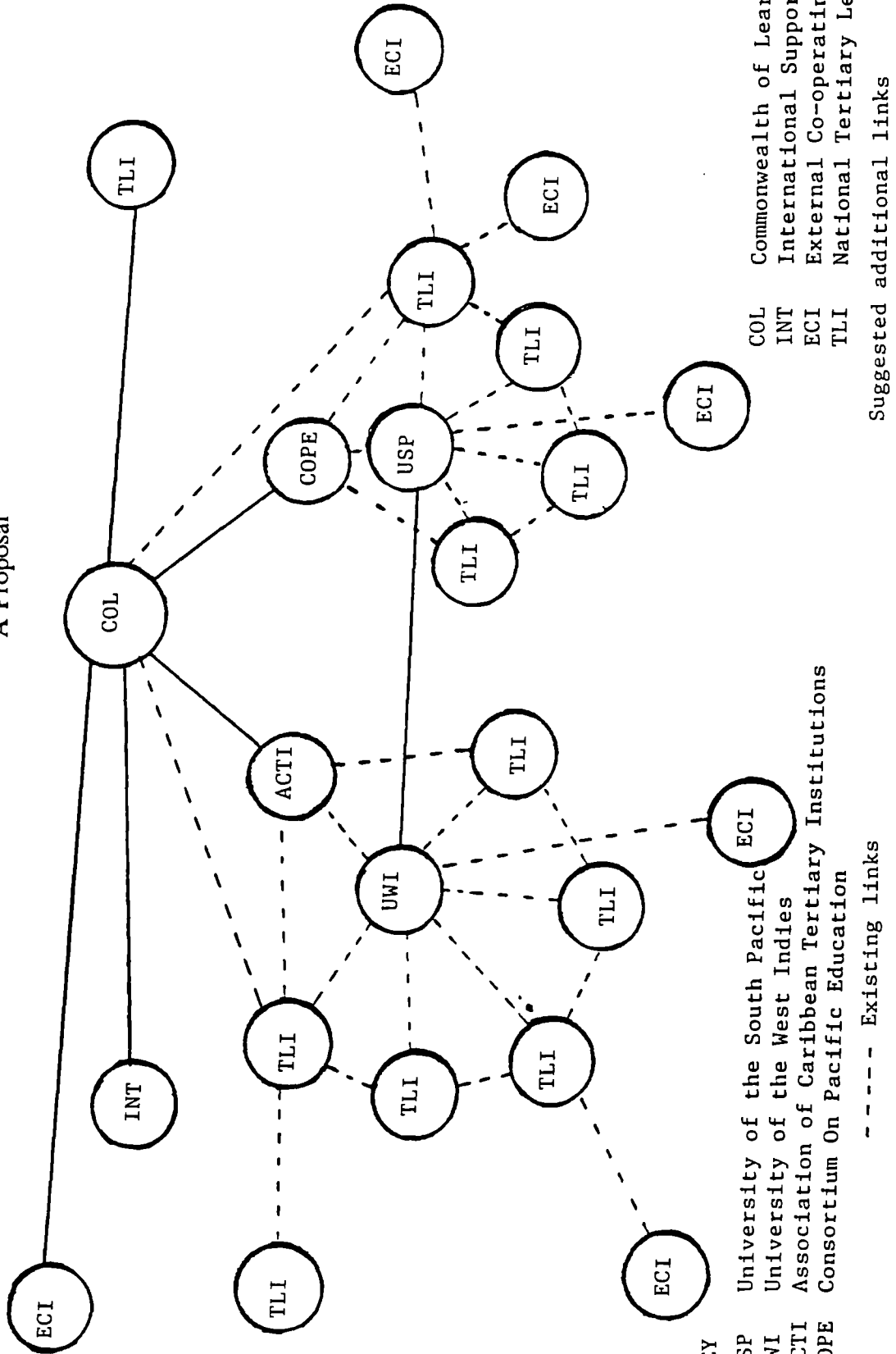


operative schemes being suggested for the international academic community. One such scheme is the Commonwealth Higher Education Support Scheme (CHESS), whose declared purpose is to strengthen the institutional capacity of developing countries (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1990). Although CHESS's aim of creating "strong centres of advanced study and research, capable of attracting the best scholars and research funding" (1990: 15) suggests that it may not have had small states in mind, one of the principles of their Support Scheme is so similar to what has been happening in some of these small states, and so relevant to their context, that it is quoted here at length:

*It is important to engage the active involvement of higher education institutions, both from developed and developing countries in CHESS. The prime aim is to assist the strengthening of higher educational institutional capacity in developing countries, with the intention that the assisted institutions should in time play their own full part as contributors to the network of inter-university or college interchange on a self-sustaining basis. Institutions in more developed countries will often be academic partners in this process through both informal and structured linkages and may in turn need some capacity building to enable them to play a more effective technical co-operation role as sources of specialist expertise, training and other services (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1990: 17).*

The danger that small states may slip through the CHESS net, and through others like it, which currently favour larger institutions, argues for another level of networking among small states to enable them to access and benefit from these wider international initiatives. A small-state tertiary education network (Figure 15), co-ordinated by an existing supra-national agency such as COL which has to date shown considerable sensitivity to the special needs of small states, could provide a forum where their special circumstances can be addressed and where their interests and needs can be articulated. COL, dedicated as it is to the development of mutually- supportive networks (Commonwealth of Learning, 1991b) could act as a clearinghouse for information and data on tertiary education in small states, making such information more readily accessible to institutions and agencies who balk at the prospect of dealing individually with this diversity of states.

Figure 15  
A Small-states Tertiary Education Network  
A Proposal



KEY

- USP University of the South Pacific
- UWI University of the West Indies
- ACTI Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions
- COPE Consortium On Pacific Education

- COL Commonwealth of Learning
- INT International Support Schemes
- ECI External Co-operating Institutions
- TLI National Tertiary Level Institution

----- Existing links  
- - - - - Suggested additional links

## **Strengthening institutional and sectoral capacity**

The five strategies reviewed in the previous section may seem to represent a limited range of options but combining all of them within a single institution is a complex administrative exercise requiring a degree of co-ordination which argues for a strong administrative and planning unit within the institution itself. Studies of individual institutions will dictate the size and composition of such a unit, but successful implementation of the strategies discussed suggests the following main areas of responsibility:

- ◆ co-ordinating the process of organising the institution's curriculum in such a way as to enable students to take maximum advantage of the breadth and diversity that the multi-disciplinary model can provide;
- ◆ liaising with external institutions and agencies, managing and servicing the networks, linkages and co-operative activities which support such a significant proportion of the programmes offered;
- ◆ conducting periodic needs assessments in order to advise on areas of contraction and expansion: the viability of the small-state tertiary sector has been recognised as being dependent on its adaptability and responsiveness to changing needs.

There is evidence in the St Lucian case study to suggest that the integration process at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College would have been much more advanced had there been a stronger technical and management section to assume this first area of responsibility. Such evidence argues for the task of co-ordinating the College's multiple institutional linkages to be assigned to a unit with an overall knowledge and appreciation of the different components of each link, so that expertise and information provided by one can be accessed by others to their mutual advantage. The need to provide the institution with the capability of assessing the human resource development needs of the community was a central argument for its establishment. Such a capability was found to be not only central to the College's mission and purpose, but also the key to sustaining a viable tertiary education sector.

The lack of a strong planning unit at the College to assess the educational and training requirements of the community draws attention to one of the weaknesses of the national tertiary education sectors of the small states under review - the ad hoc unstructured approach to in-country collaboration among providers. The study points to the high proportion of such training provided outside the formal system in the South Pacific, and to the need to strengthen linkages between the programming of the national colleges, national human resource needs, and the general economic thrust of the OECS. A prime area of national responsibility therefore, could be the establishment of a National Commission for Tertiary Education to permit better co-ordination of training efforts, to advise on the type and level of provision required to meet the countries' human resource needs, and to serve as a barometer of social and private demand for tertiary education. While the small size of the communities, with their high visibility and close interpersonal networks could ensure that such needs are recognised relatively quickly, there is an urgent need to bring together periodically the providers, users and beneficiaries of tertiary education to avoid wastage, overlap, duplication of efforts and under-or over-supply of particular types of expertise.

In the light of the present study, three levels of in-country collaboration hold potential for improvements in the provision of tertiary education in St Lucia. At the national level, a Commission for Tertiary Education as described above could be set up to advise on the tertiary education needs of the State. The LMIS could be strengthened to provide the technical information needed to inform the Commission's recommendations, while the Ministry of Planning's Training Division would monitor the level and the quality of the programmes offered by the various providers to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. At the intermediate level, there could be continuous dialogue and networking among providers both in the formal and the informal sector to agree on areas of demarcation and on joint ventures. Thirdly, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, as the main institution in the formal sector, could have a special role to play in providing technical assistance to other educational and training initiatives and in serving as an accrediting body for programmes offered by other establishments, particularly those outside the formal system. It is in discharging this role that the College could become a resource for the entire community, and the

nexus of a national learning system.

It is recognised that a critical element in the development of a regional system of tertiary education is the nature of the inter-institutional articulation that is pursued to enable national colleges to fulfil their specific functions to good effect. A concept of articulation which is particularly suited to the systems developing in the Caribbean and the South Pacific is that suggested by the Florida State Board of Community Colleges, which defines articulation as:

*... a systematic co-ordination between an educational institution and other educational institutions and agencies designed to ensure the efficient and effective movement of students among these institutions and agencies, while guaranteeing the students' continuous advancement in learning (cited in Peters, forthcoming).*

In the context of the networks operating in the two regions, it is clear that mechanisms like ACTI, COPE and the Centres of Specialisation, can contribute significantly to this type of co-ordination. These mechanisms could be strengthened to ensure more systematic co-ordination at the sub-regional and regional levels. The Centre of Specialisation concept deserves particular attention in view of the contribution it can make towards alleviating some of the constraints of smallness in the provision of specialist programmes. This suggests firm agreement on a common concept and a common set of guidelines for the planning, management, delivery and evaluation of the programmes identified.

The Caribbean and South Pacific experience has shown that co-operation across national boundaries is an intensely political affair. The type of division of labour involved in the Centre of Specialisation concept has necessitated deep discussion on the part of the national governments. In view of the frequent consultations that are necessary to co-ordinate these specialisations, and the costs that these incur, national governments could delegate this responsibility to an existing regional or sub-regional body. The suggestion put forward by the OERS Working Group (Miller et al, 1991) - that an Eastern Caribbean College Council should be created under the aegis of the OECS to co-ordinate programmes and specialisations in all tertiary institutions in the

sub-region - is within the spirit of this proposal.

The present study has pointed to the focus on linkages and networks as one of the main policy options adopted in the tertiary education system of the Caribbean and the South Pacific. It is this focus which underlies the main suggestions proposed for strengthening tertiary capacity at the institutional, national, regional and international levels respectively:

- ◆ the staffing of a strong administrative unit within the national institutions to liaise with external institutions and agencies;
- ◆ the establishment of a National Commission for Tertiary Education to co-ordinate in-country training initiatives;
- ◆ the strengthening of inter-institutional articulation to ensure more systematic co-ordination at the sub-regional and regional levels; and
- ◆ the setting up of a small-states tertiary education network to provide opportunities for inter-regional and international collaboration and to provide a common frame of reference for participation in international co-operative schemes.

There are benefits to be derived from such networking - the cross-fertilisation of ideas, the creation of new ideas and new thinking, and the development of models and systems of tertiary education attuned to the particular circumstances of the small states of the world.

### **Suggestions for further research**

In her inaugural lecture as Professor of Education in Developing Countries at the University of London's Institute of Education, Angela Little identified one of the challenges for international and comparative work in the future as the building up of conceptual and theoretical models which take different national conceptual models as their priority reference point (Little, 1988). The ability of the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific to contribute to the building of such international

models depends on our understanding of the processes of educational development at the national and regional levels. The detailed study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College has sketched the broad outlines of two movements operating within the tertiary education sector of small states - homogenisation on the one hand, and diversification on the other. The comparative study of the tertiary education systems of the Caribbean and the South Pacific has identified parallel movements: diversification and harmonisation. It would be instructive to examine these parallel processes in greater depth as this could contribute to a greater understanding of the principles involved in the planning and management of tertiary education in both small and large systems.

Such an examination calls for further studies of small-states systems. The recent consultative exercise carried out by the OECS has pointed to a certain homogeneity of views, perspectives and approaches to tertiary education planning and management in the Caribbean sub-region. While studies of tertiary education in the South Pacific have been overshadowed by the aid issue and the debate over USP, there are also indications of a co-operative approach to the provision of opportunities at this level. There is need to build on these studies to arrive at a deeper understanding of those processes which have influenced the trends, strategies and policy options that are in evidence in this study.

The providers of tertiary education in small nation states face challenges that spring both from their limited internal capacities and from the international environment in which they must operate. This study has shown that their institutions and their systems have the potential to achieve viability if given an enabling environment. The tendency to see tertiary education solely in terms of university-level programming has led many to argue against the establishment of national tertiary institutions in the Caribbean and the South Pacific. This study draws attention however to the distinction that these small states have made between the two, and argues that university-level programming has indeed been successful <sup>and</sup> can be made available in these states through strategies such as networking, co-operation and collaboration within the context of a new regional provision. Tertiary education development as

articulated in this study is therefore a viable option for small states, and national provision within the context of a network of mutually-supporting institutions is academically, politically and economically realistic. The main challenge therefore for those who would look ahead is, as Miller (1991b) puts it, to be perceptive without being euphoric, and to be critical without being fatalistic.



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*APPENDICES*

*Appendix A*  
*Research Memorandum*

Tertiary education in small-states

The importance of human capital formation in advancing the economic growth of nations has been widely recognised and has been gaining currency particularly during the past two decades. A consensus seems to have emerged among economists from the developed world however, that priority in public investment in education should be given to primary schooling. Governments of developing countries are therefore being advised to re-allocate their financial resources from the tertiary to the primary education sector where the social rates of return are alleged to be higher. What is more, international aid and donor agencies have been influenced by the policy implications of these cost benefit analyses. In fact, some of these authors see the overexpansion of tertiary education as the scourge of the Third World and regard any policy that tends to decrease enrolments at the higher level as a step in the right direction.

However, an examination of recent educational developments in small nation states reveals that there has been a significant increase in the domestic provision of tertiary education. What is it then that has prompted small country governments to go against the recommendations of the very agencies to whom they must turn for aid and funding to service their tertiary education sectors? What are the factors that have provided the impetus for the expansion of tertiary education provision at the national level?

Small nation states, it has been argued, are adversely affected in their development process by the constraints of scale, isolation and dependence. The small size of their economies and their populations, their peripheral position on the international scene, and their marked dependence on external influences have been regarded as factors working against them. How have these issues of scale, isolation and dependence impacted on the provision of tertiary level education in small states? Given that there is a certain finality about size, how can small nation states deal with these constraints? What policy options and strategies can they adopt to provide the type of higher education opportunities that can enhance the growth process of their national economies?

An overview of developments in tertiary education in some of the small states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific for example, reveals a common pattern - one that moves from a decentralisation of facilities away from the traditional regional institutions (the University of the West Indies and the University of the South Pacific) towards the establishment of National Colleges, which then

proceed to enter into institutional arrangements with each other, to form Regional higher education systems. What is the nature of the interplay between these forces? How have they found expression in national educational policies?

Small nation states may often be marginalised as far as international developments are concerned, but they do have to face many of the same issues in higher education as do larger states, even though these are 'writ small'. How then may small states fit into an international system of academic interchange and collaboration? What can be the nature of their involvement in, and their contribution, to international issues in higher education?

### A Case Study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College

A case study of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College will be conducted in the light of these questions as they relate to higher education planning in St Lucia. The conduct of in-depth studies of specific education systems and institutions, as well as of comparative analyses across small nation states, has been recognised as an important step in the better identification and resolution of problems of educational provision in small country contexts. It is recognised too, that small states have a lot in common, and so common strategies can be suggested for consideration by policy-makers. Small-country educationalists, from their distinctive perspective, are in a good position to identify these factors and suggest these strategies as they relate to education, thereby contributing both to the intellectual debate and to the process of educational development within their countries. The case study will document the factors and processes which led to the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, and those which continue to shape its development. It will examine the extent to which it has been able to fulfil the mandate that it was given, and consider some of the issues that need to be addressed, as it becomes part of a Regional Integrated System of Higher Education. Such a study it is hoped, will be of direct assistance to all those engaged in the further development of the College itself. In addition, it is hoped that the study will be regarded as a significant, if small, contribution to an understanding of the mechanisms of planning, management and administration of higher level education in a small country setting.

**Appendix B**  
**CASE - STUDY OF SIR ARTHUR LEWIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

| Respondent   | Nature of Involvement  | Case Study Focus          | Topics to be discussed during interview session   |
|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| Minister for Education and Culture   | Responsible for articulating Government policy on education  | Mission Policy            | Government's tertiary education policy.<br>Long-term plans for SALCC.<br>Plans for absorption of graduates on the labour market.<br>Thoughts on strategies for reduction of high units costs.<br>Strategies and policies for Staff retention and dealing with increasing students numbers.  |
| Chairman, Board of Governors   | Chairman, Task Force on Integration of Morne Educational Complex (MEC)   | Policy Mission Governance | Views on decentralisation of regional provision and consolidation of domestic provision of tertiary level education.<br>Long-term view of College.<br>Integration of higher education systems in the region.  |
| Executive Secretary, Task Force on the Integration of the Morne Complex Institutions | Research on tertiary level education models/systems.<br>Preparation of preliminary papers.<br>Preparation of Task Force Report.                    | Mission                   | Assumptions made by Task Force.<br>Choice of Open Comprehensive Community (OCC) model- rationale, feasibility, influences.<br>Perception of need for and extent of provision for Tertiary Education.<br>Problems/constraints encountered. Assistance received.<br>Regional framework envisaged.<br>Financial implications - Strategies considered.<br>Thoughts on extent of implementation to date. |
| Deputy Chairman, Board of Governors  | Former Permanent Secretary, Education and Culture Managing Director - St Lucia Development Bank.<br>Supervision of cost-analysis exercise of SALCC | Mission Management        | Role of SALCC.<br>Human resource development capacity of SALCC.<br>Staff development.<br>Financing tertiary education in general & SALCC in particular. Student Loan Scheme & SALCC: Cost recovery strategies.<br>Non-economic value of tertiary education - Options for SALCC.<br>SALCC and the future.  |
| Former Ministers of Education & Culture  | Morne Educational Complex Initiative<br>Setting up of Task Force on Integration of MEC.  | Mission                   | Vision of tertiary education for St Lucia<br>Thoughts on direction taken by SALCC<br>Future for higher education in St. Lucia.  |

Continued.....

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Special Adviser, Projects, OECS Central Secretariat</p>              | <p>Development and planning of tertiary level education within the OECS sub-region Facilitator/intermediary between SALCC and Funding and Donor Agencies</p> | <p>Aid and collaboration Linkages</p>  | <p>Procedures and conditions for aid applications. Type of aid received. Capacity - building potential of externally-funded projects at SALCC. Regional initiatives at tertiary level-Trends and implementation. Integration of H.Ed systems in the region.</p>   |
| <p>Resident, Tutor, School of Continuing Studies, UWI</p>               | <p>Member, Task Force on Integration of Morne Educational Complex Member, Board of Governors, SALCC Representative, University of the West Indies.</p>       | <p>Collaboration Co-operation Linkages</p>   | <p>The role of UWI's Outreach Programmes in tertiary education planning in Non-Campus Countries Relationship between UWI and University Centres and tertiary level Institutions (TLIs). Relationship between School of Continuing Studies and SALCC: Potential for growth and further collaboration. Distance Education- University of the West Indies. Distance Teaching Experiment (UWIDITE): Potential, Constraints, Future development.</p>   |
| <p>Executive Director, National Research and Development Foundation</p> | <p>Member, Committee on Educational Priorities. Former Resident Tutor, Extra-Mural Dept. UWI</p>   | <p>Mission Programmes</p>  | <p>Evolution of relationship between UWI and Morne Educational Complex Institutions. Early efforts at domestic provision of tertiary education. Perceptions of Committee on Educational Priorities. Type of tertiary provision envisaged. Reflections on current directions taken. Scope for collaboration with non-formal post compulsory education initiatives.</p>   |
| <p>Project Director, Comprehensive Teacher Training Project</p>         | <p>Development and piloting of a Distance Education Programme to be delivered by SALCC.</p>  | <p>Programmes</p>  | <p>Distance education: Potential for tertiary education development. The Project: Its place in SALCC's programme; its potential; strategies and options.</p>  |
| <p>Principal SALCC</p>  | <p>Policy implementation. Leadership provision. Planning. Promotion of interests of College within and outside the State.</p>                                | <p>Philosophy Management Programmes and Projects Staff Development Aid Collaboration Finance Evaluation Monitoring</p> | <p>Rationale for domestic provision of tertiary education. Philosophy, Mission and Goals of SALCC. The Open Comprehensive Community Model- Implication for Planning. Organisational Structure. Staffing. Staff development programmes and initiatives. Programmes and Projects. Linkages. Aid and Co-operation: Issues and Implications. Thoughts on strategies for broadening SALCC's financial base. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The Future and SALCC. Integration of Higher Education Systems in the region.</p> |

Continued.....



|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Registrar, SALCC  | Secretary, Board of Governors<br>Secretary, Academic Board<br>Secretary, Management & Finance Committee<br>Registry.   | Organisation<br>Management  | Organisational structure.<br>Co-ordination between Divisions and Departments.<br>Staffing: Recruitment and Conditions of Service.<br>Public Relations: The College and the Community.   |
| Deans, Co-ordinators, Librarian   | Day-to-day administration of SALCC.<br>Planning, organisation and co-ordination of courses/services at divisional/departmental level.<br>Programme implementation.<br>Membership of Standing Committees - Academic Board and Management and Finance Committee. | Organisation<br>Mission<br>Programmes<br>Collaboration<br>Staff development<br>Linkages | Thoughts on inter-divisional collaboration.<br>Range and level of courses/services.<br>Modes of delivery.<br>Relevance/access to community.<br>Thoughts on OCC Model.<br>Implementation of College philosophy, mission and goals on a divisional/departmental level.<br>Staff management and development: Issues, constraints, strategies.<br>Linkages.<br>The Future and/of SALCC. |
| Training Officer,<br>Training Division Ministry of Planning                           | Administers Government's Training Programmes and Scholarship Awards.<br>Oversees drawing up of Government Priority Training Areas.<br>Liaises with donor/funding agencies.   | Planning<br>Aid   | Procedures for deciding on priority areas for training at tertiary level.<br>Funding of tertiary education: Sources of funding; conditions;<br>Types of awards.<br>Cost-recovery mechanisms.  |
| Permanent Secretary,<br>Ministry of Education and Culture                             | Technical adviser to Minister.<br>Administrative Head of the Ministry.<br>Co-opted member of Board of Governors.   | Mission<br>Planning<br>Programmes   | Thoughts on SALCC as a tertiary level institution.<br>The place of SALCC in the national education system.<br>Thoughts on the Open Comprehensive Community Model.   |
| Chief Education Officer,<br>Ministry of Education and Culture                         | Member, Task Force on the Integration of the Mome Education Complex.<br>Co-opted member, Board of Governors  | Planning<br>Policy<br>Mission   | Reflections on the issues and factors which prompted the establishment of SALCC. Evolutionary process or response to a crisis?<br>Thoughts on the OCC model; on the role of SALCC as a tertiary institution; on the place of SALCC in the national education system.  |
| Representatives of Chamber of Commerce,<br>Employers Federation, Labour Organisations | Industry, Commerce and the Labour Force  | Stake-holders and<br>beneficiaries of tertiary<br>education training                    | Role of private sector<br>Human resource needs<br>Future of tertiary education<br>The Labour Market   |

# UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Centre for International Studies in Education

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## Appendix C Letter requesting access

10 May 1992

I have spent the past few months here at the University of Bristol looking at issues in the development of small nation states as they relate particularly to the development of education and the provision of educational opportunities. My research interests have led me to focus on recent developments in the provision of tertiary education in small country settings, and I have decided to take a closer in-depth look at the planning and development of tertiary education in St Lucia. The rationale for this decision and the specific focus of my study are outlined in the Project Statement that I have enclosed.

I am writing therefore to find out whether you would be agreeable to our discussing some of the issues raised in the Statement, in view of your particular involvement in the planning/administration/management of tertiary level education in St Lucia.

Should you so agree, I would be extremely grateful if you would share with me your personal perceptions of the general issues. More particularly however, I would be grateful if we could discuss the following:

I will be supplementing information from the interviews with other documentary data and therefore I would also be grateful if you would permit me access to pertinent documents and files in your possession or in your care. To facilitate the subsequent analysis of the data, I should like to request permission, in advance, to have the interview tape-recorded. Should you have any reservations on this, however, I shall abide by your wishes. The interview data will be used primarily for my doctoral dissertation and I will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of any information that you share with me which is not already in the public domain. There will be no verbatim

transcription of the interview. However, if you so wish, I will provide a synopsis of my understanding of the issues discussed during the session with you, for your comments.

I intend to be in St Lucia from mid-July through to mid-September to do the fieldwork, and I should very much like to meet with you as soon as I arrive, so that I can provide any other information you may need and arrange the date of the interview.

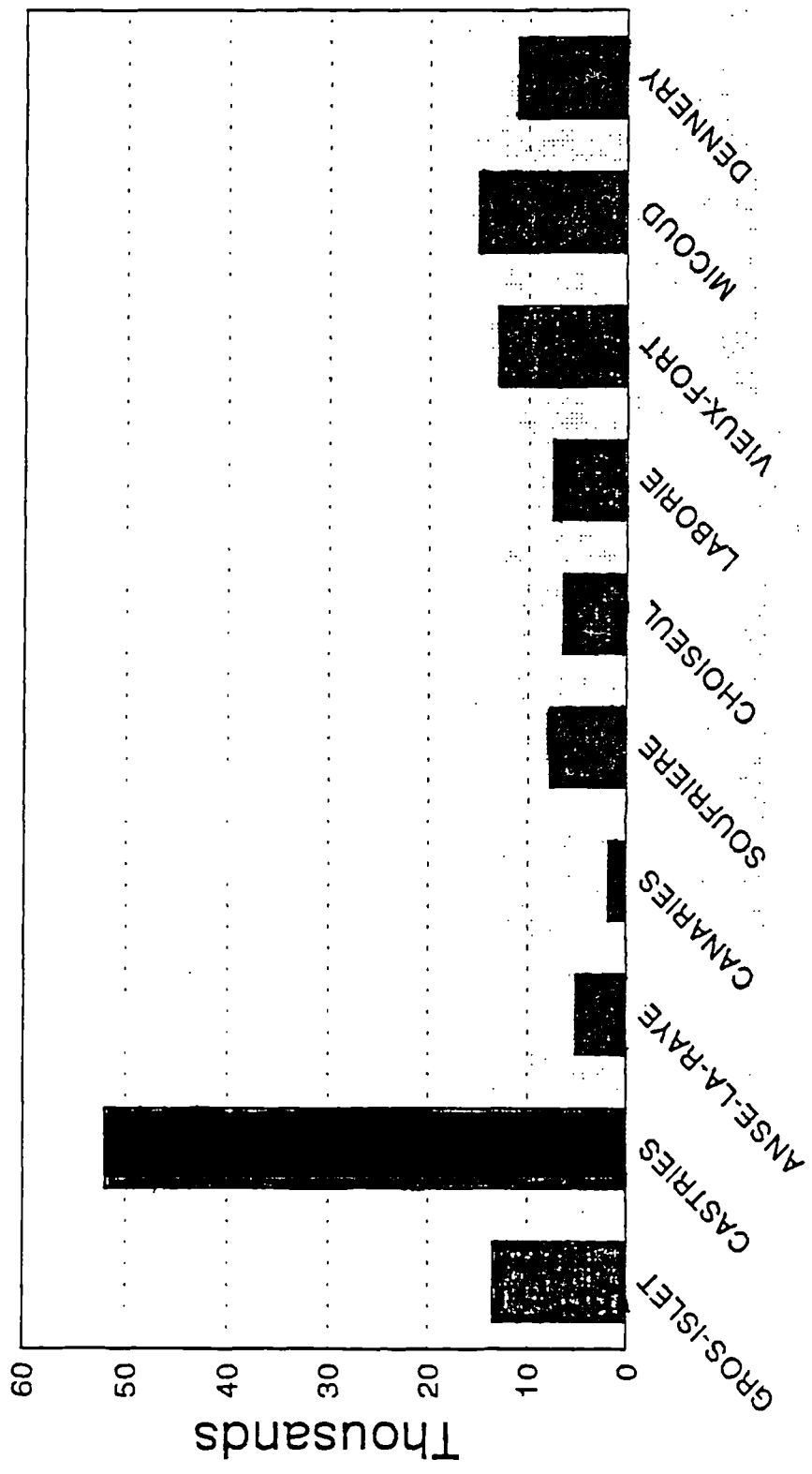
It is my hope that the findings of the study will be of direct and practical assistance to the further development of the College as it strives to contribute to the task of developing the country's human resource potential. I am sure too that the insights I will have gained from this Research Project will, on my return, enhance my own contribution to the College's efforts in this regard.

I therefore look forward to the possibility of working on the Project with you.

Yours sincerely

*PEARLETTE LOUISY*

Appendix D  
 St Lucia: Population by District



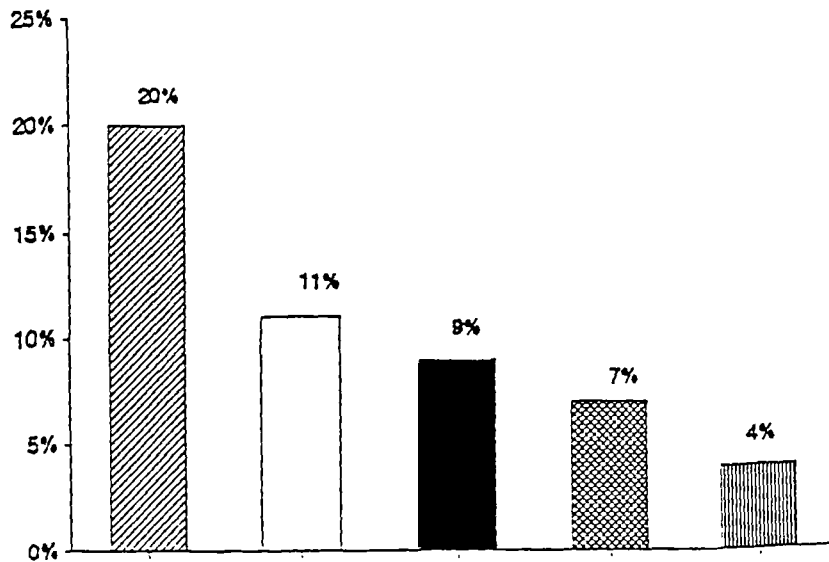
Source: 1991 Population and Housing Census Statistics Dept.

Appendix E  
 Selected Socio-Economic Indicators St Lucia  
 Census years 1980 - 1991 and Projections to the year 2040

| Year                                       | 1980   | 1991   | 2000   | 2040   |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Census Populations and Projections         | 115499 | 135975 | 162393 | 269528 |
| Females of Child bearing age (15-44 years) | 27120  | 31928  | 41378  | 58012  |
| % total population                         | 23%    | 23%    | 23%    | 23%    |
| Population 65 +                            | 7541   | 8879   | 8719   | 29228  |
| % total population                         | 6%     | 6%     | 5%     | 11%    |
| Life expectancy at birth                   | 70     | 72     | 73     | -      |
| Population under 15 years                  | 42426  | 49948  | 52222  | 60729  |
| % of total population                      | 36%    | 36%    | 32%    | 23%    |
| Population aged 15-24                      | 24007  | 28262  | 33318  | 40353  |
| % of total population                      | 21%    | 21%    | 21%    | 21%    |
| Population under 24 years                  | 66433  | 78210  | 85540  | 101082 |
| % of total population                      | 57%    | 57%    | 53%    | 38%    |
| Working age population (15-64 years)       | 65632  | 77148  | 101450 | 179573 |
| % of total population                      | 57%    | 57%    | 62%    | 66%    |
| Dependency Ratio                           | 98     | 76.2   | 51     | 34     |
| Unemployment Rate                          | 18.6%  | 7%     | -      | -      |
| Net Migration (approx)                     | 19000  | 17000  | -      | -      |
| Population Growth Rate                     | 1.8    | 1.6    | 1.9    | 1.9    |

Compiled from figures obtained from Government Statistics Department

Appendix F  
St Lucia: Budget Allocation per Sector  
Recurrent Expenditure 1991



Education - EC\$ 55.0m



Health - EC\$ 30.2m



Communications and Works - EC\$ 23.8m



Planning and Personnel - EC\$ 12.7m



Agriculture - EC\$ 11.0m

Source : Prime Minister's Budget Address

***APPENDIX G***  
***THE CASE STUDY DATA BASE***

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## Preface

The creation of a formal, retrievable data base, independent of the case study report, has been strongly recommended to researchers considering using the case study as a research technique. It is argued that such a data base increases the reliability of the report (Yin, 1989) and serves both as grounding for the researcher's own reporting and as a resource for communal use by the wider community of researchers (Stenhouse, 1978). Accordingly, a data base is created from the information obtained from in-depth interviews conducted during the period of intensive fieldwork, and from the documentary material consulted.

Each of the tape-recorded interviews was analysed following a procedure recommended by several qualitative researchers (Bodgan and Biklen, 1992; Vulliamy and Webb, 1992), which matches units of data to pre-established coding categories. These categories, corresponding to the main themes in the interview agenda, were grouped together to produce a synopsis of each interview which was assigned an alpha-numeric code, the first part identifying the respondent, and the second, the date on which the interview took place.

Although this type of "edited primary source" (Stenhouse, 1978: 37) has been criticised as presenting only a filtered version of the conversations that actually take place, it is argued here that this reconstruction provides an organised and structured data base which remains true to the data, and which can be conveniently accessed. For this study, such a record is considered particularly important for future comparative studies of small-states institutions and systems.

A record of the main documents consulted during the fieldwork period is regarded as complementing the data generated by the interviews. The contents of these documents are therefore summarised and presented as an annotated bibliography.

This data base reflects the multiple perspectives of the community of people involved in the development of the tertiary education sector in St Lucia. As such, it constitutes

an important resource not only for tertiary education planners and policy makers within the country, but also for those from outside involved in formulating policies likely to affect the future development of this emerging sector.

## References

Bogdan, R.C. and Biklen, S.K. (1982) Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Stenhouse, L. (1978) "*Case study and case records: towards a contemporary history of education*" British Educational Research Journal 4(2): 21-39.

Vulliamy, G. and Webb, R. (Eds) (1992) Teacher Research and Special Educational Needs. London: David Fulton.

Yin, R.K. (1989) Case Study Research: Designs and Methods. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

## The Interview Agenda

*Note: Prior to entering the field, a preliminary interview guide was drawn up to match each interview respondent with the topics and issues to be investigated. The match was made on the basis of the respondents' special knowledge of the particular topic (s) and the nature of their involvement with the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College or with the provision of tertiary education in general. From this interview guide, the following pool of questions was compiled to be used as an agenda or aide-memoire during the interviews. From this pool individual agendas were prepared for each respondent covering the issues to be discussed during each session.*

The SALCC was established on the Open, comprehensive community model. Could you share with me some of your thoughts on this model?

Has SALCC on the whole been able to implement this model? What have been the challenges, constraints, shortcomings, successes? Future directions?

To what extent would you say has your Division/Department been able to implement this model? Challenges, constraints, shortcomings, successes, suggestions, prospects?

Range, level and mode of delivery of courses and services offered in your Division/Department. What prompted these choices? Future directions?

What kind of a future would you like to see for SALCC?

What would you say are the College's institutional mission and goals?

Given St. Lucia's particular social, cultural and economic circumstances, what do you see as the role of SALCC?

What would you say were the perceptions of the Task Force which led to the selection of the community college model?

As far as you can ascertain, how did they envision the College and how did they see it implementing the philosophy adopted?

The costs of tertiary education should be shared by those who benefit from it. What are your views on such a system of apportioning costs? What implications would such a system have for equity of access and quality?

What would you say is the Government's policy on tertiary education?

What would you say is the College's tertiary education policy?

What, in your informed opinion, should be the tertiary sector's main emphasis?

What, in your considered opinion, should be the goal and purpose of domestic tertiary education?

What were the perceptions of the Committee on Educational Priorities as regards the type of tertiary provision to be established in St. Lucia?

What was your particular vision for the development of the national tertiary education sector?

In regional initiatives the benefits accrue where the concrete is poured. Is that true of St. Lucia and the Caribbean?

What was the nature of the early relationship between the UWI and the Morne Educational Complex?

What were the University's early reactions to plans for developing St. Lucia's tertiary education sector?

What impact has the current move towards the establishment of Centres of Specialisation had on the development of tertiary education in the OECS? Could you share your views on this policy option?

The role of the UWI's outreach programme in the planning of tertiary education in the non-campus countries.

What, in your opinion, has been the contribution of the Office of University Services in the planning and management of tertiary education in the non-campus countries? In St. Lucia?

Tertiary education planning in St. Lucia. The role and contribution of the UWI School for Continuing Studies. Current and future.

Regional initiatives in tertiary education. What level of collaboration or harmonisation currently exists? Problems, challenges, constraints, successes? Future prospects?

What are your views on the notion of "Education for Export"?

"Schooling at home". How do you feel about such a policy when applied to tertiary/higher education?

The SALCC was established on the open comprehensive, community model. In your informed opinion, what part can the distance education mode play in the implementation of the College's institutional mission?

What, in your considered opinion, is the potential of distance education in the development of the tertiary education sector?

How important a factor is smallness of size in the implementation and management of a distance education delivery programme?

In what way would you say has smallness of size influenced the development of the tertiary education sector in general and SALCC in particular?

What would you say has been the impact of scale, isolation and dependence on the development of tertiary education in St. Lucia?

Tertiary education planning. The role and contribution of Government's Training Division.

To what extent is tertiary education, both local and overseas, funded from internal sources?

The "Open, Comprehensive Community College". What are the main implications for planning. How does the College or the Government feel the pulse of the nation?

There are constant calls for SALCC to emphasise Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Is TVET at the tertiary level the answer to meeting the human resource development needs of St. Lucia?

Graduate unemployment/underemployment has been identified as one of the consequences of tertiary education expansion. Is that the way St. Lucia is headed? How do you see St. Lucia dealing with this issue?

What, in your considered opinion, is the human resource development capacity of SALCC?

Do the labour organisations see themselves as having a part to play in the planning of tertiary education in St. Lucia?

How would you describe the current labour market for graduates of tertiary level education in St. Lucia? Current trends? Future directions?

How do you see an institution like SALCC contributing to the growth and development of the island's labour force? Of the national economy?

What kinds of linkages or networking mechanisms SALCC have with other local, regional or international bodies/institutions? Suggestions for improvement? Possible avenues?

The integration of tertiary education systems. Why, what and how?

What scope exists for collaboration between the College's programmes and other non-formal post-compulsory education initiatives?

Could you share with me some of your thoughts on the concept of the "internationalisation" of tertiary education?

What type of contribution can the region make to the development of tertiary education at the international level?

Financing and funding of tertiary education. To what extent does reliance on external sources of funding influence the government's planning of tertiary education?

Aid for development. Is this a goal of the externally-funded projects at the SALCC? How is this assessed? What are the ingredients that make for a successful marriage of the two? How has SALCC fared?

Role of the private sector in the provision and development of tertiary education in St Lucia.

Local human resource needs. Perspectives from Industry and Commerce.

### Open, comprehensive, community model - perspectives

Such a model suggests an institution that does not restrict people by educational standards, offering therefore a lot of remedial programming. There is a need in St Lucia for that kind of educational opportunity and the College is very well placed to fill that need.

### Constraints and successes

Space is a constraint and so is finance. But we could maximise our physical resources by mounting evening, weekend and distance teaching programmes. The biggest constraint is the Staff. They seemed to have dug their feet in and they try to restrain change as much as possible on the grounds that these changes are being imposed on them from above. In any case, they seem unwilling to do anything they have not done before.

The College has had its successes however. Its performance in the first year university work indicates a certain capability for that level of tuition. It is seen not simply as a viable institution, but also as a trend-setting institution. It is perhaps because it has been making haste slowly.

### Role of SALCC

The College should be able to provide training to a level where people can perform economically; it should be able to provide aesthetic education where people are content to live in St Lucia, seeing a vibrancy and a future here.

"If continued commitment to UWI means impeding seriously what we want to do and what we can do, then we need to think seriously as to whether we want UWI certification for our courses".

### Open, comprehensive community college - Perspectives

The model suggests an institution which offers a whole range of subjects, catering to a wide spectrum of needs to a diverse community who cannot all take advantage of full-time attendance at a facility located in one main area.

As presently constituted, the College is already catering to a wide range of needs but perhaps there could be some expansion in the area of science, languages, fine arts, management studies. Its outreach activity has got off the ground with the establishment of the Southern Extension Service in Vieux Fort. If successful, this pilot project should be replicated in other communities so that Sir Arthur can become a household name.

### The Department of Continuing Education

The Department offers a wide range of 45 hr modularised evening courses in the technical and academic areas. The response from the public, from individuals, and in particular, from private sector institutions has been very good; in fact, the majority of people registered in the programmes are sponsored by firms and businesses. Suggestions for courses come from needs surveys conducted by the Department, requests from the community, and from the private sector, evaluation of current offerings by participants themselves and participants' own interest and perceived needs.

It is perhaps fair to say that the Department is still very traditional in its course offerings. This may be due in part to the inflexibility of Academic Board who sets criteria for the way courses are conceived, delivered and assisted. On the other hand, there does not seem to be a market for general interest courses; everyone wants some kind of marketable certification on completion.



SALCC must however begin to give some thought to more aggressive marketing of its programmes. There is increasingly strong competition from the National Research and Development Foundation (NRDF) the St. Lucia Industrial and Small Business Association (SLISBA) and other consultancy firms, and were it not for the fact that SALCC has a good reputation, that its certificates are recognised, it would not have got away with it.

### **Outreach Programme**

The College opened the first of its Outreach Centres in September 1992. The initial plan was to have the Southern Extension Centre, as it is called, operate as an Open Learning Centre, but restrictions on Staffing and opening hours changed it into a Distance Education Centre. The Class, Individualised, and Distance Education Options being offered use instructional packages developed by North Island College in Vancouver, Canada. SALCC has not yet had the time or the resources to do the type of adaptations that it would have liked to, but the response has been very positive indeed.

### **Linkages**

There is scope for collaboration with Government, SLISBA and NRDF in the entrepreneurial skills development programme. There are mutual benefits to be derived from such a partnership with the public and private sector providing the resources, the expertise and the clients, and SALCC serving as the accrediting body.

There is need for SALCC to recognise programmes offered by other local institutions, particularly private post-compulsory establishments. The reluctance to date of extending a helping hand is a bit of a pity considering SALCC itself is hammering on the doors of other institutions seeking accreditation and validation of its programmes. Charity, it would seem should begin at home. A lot of private educational institutions are looking to SALCC for leadership and the College should be in a position to offer that. There has to be recognition of life experiences and previous qualifications and credit should be given for skills already acquired.

### **Status of TVET**

Continuing Education programmes in technological subjects have always had a good response, but basic skills programmes have been woefully undersubscribed. The reasons for this are not quite clear. Perhaps the people on the ground have made the distinction between technical and vocational education, while the experts have not.

### **Future of SALCC**

SALCC is going in the right direction. The idea then of a fourth campus which has been mooted recently is not right for St Lucia at this time. If we go the university way, the College will cease to be community-based, to be open. It would be closing its doors to the majority of people out there; even now we have set barriers to a large percentage of post-secondary learners who have so often expressed the need for upgrading in CXC/'O' level offerings.

**Scale, Isolation and Dependence**

When the concepts of scale, isolation and dependence are applied to tertiary institutions in a small state, one is considering perhaps the extent to which the institution can provide for the various educational needs of the State. The concept of scale is indeed a relative one, and is perhaps best seen in relation to what the state can sustain with the population that it has. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. When we look at SALCC and the diversity of programmes it provides, it would seem that the impact of scale in some way impinges, but it has not prevented the institution from providing the kind of service for which it was established. In spite of the fact that the College has a very diverse programme which suits the island's needs, there comes a time however when for certain programmes, it becomes more cost-effective to send people abroad or to enter into relationships with other countries. But any country would have to take this into consideration, regardless of size. In the case of small nation states, it is always more acute.

Like scale, isolation is a relative concept. In small island states however, the problem of isolation may be even greater than that of scale, since few people realise the nature of the isolation caused by the water which divides them, and the kinds of cost involved in air and sea transport. The islands are forced to struggle with problems that others have managed to resolve, but they tend not to benefit from them because of this isolation. However, attempts are being made in the Caribbean to reduce this isolation, by building up structures like the OECS and CARICOM through which one can co-operate with other institutions, territories or bigger blocks. Real benefits are emerging from this. The isolation is real though, not only in terms of what the institution (SALCC) can do, but also in terms of development of personnel. Thank goodness for technological devices which to some extent can help small states to overcome the isolation.

The issue of dependence is again very real. But small countries need not make a song and dance of it. If we lived in a perfect world, our more developed brothers would feel some kind of responsibility towards their underdeveloped brothers, but we do not. Instead, small nation states are being asked to survive in this unequal situation. Economically, they are at the mercy of the developed world and are very much dependent on the external economic and financial climate. The question arises as to how they can overcome this dependence. Self-reliance is a laudable virtue but it cannot erase this dependence.

Coupled with this dependence is the open nature of our society which also makes small countries fragile, exposed as they are to the vagaries of the external economic and financial climate. A number of things however can happen in small island states that help reduce the impact of dependence. One way to do so is to ensure that the country has a buoyant economy. This would help to make people independent even if the country itself is not.

SALCC, for example, is dependent on staff from abroad because of its inability to staff the diversity of programmes it offers from internal resources. Then again, there is no need to make a song and dance of it, because there are virtues emerging from this type of dependence, in terms of the cross-fertilisation of ideas, the enrichment of people coming into a new situation, and the dynamics of that producing new ideas and new thinking.

The notion that needs to be capitalised on is that of interdependence, because the notion of dependence tends to perpetuate the idea that some people have of being hopelessly helpless. Which simply is not true. Nobody is so poor that he cannot contribute to somebody else's good and welfare. If we accept this as a basic policy, there must be some way in which small states can contribute to bigger developed countries, and it is in this way that we become interdependent. However small a country is, it can make a contribution.

## Factors contributing to the development of the tertiary sector

There has been a combination of factors, and it is indeed difficult to isolate them or to measure the extent to which one factor has been predominant or has been the basis for action. In addition, the factors have from time to time shifted in their emphasis.

One can however cite the following:

- 1 *The attempt on the part of UWI to move from a unified kind of university to a centralised form of administration providing semi-autonomy for the campuses. This created a feeling of unease and instability on the part of the NCC's who saw themselves as part owners of the real estate that is the UWI. This led them to believe that at some particular time they would be dropped and they would have to begin to fend for themselves.*
- 2 *The question of national pride and identity. It was nice to have the UWI, but the islands felt that they needed their own institution which would respond more quickly to their own island, community and societal needs.*
- 3 *The development of the human resource. The realisation by the NCC's that you could not make a dent in the economy of your island unless you trained your people properly. The need for training seemed to have been felt almost overnight, in every field, particularly at the managerial and supervisory levels, and in the technical field.*
- 4 *It became simply a matter of cost. The Government was unable to continue to send large numbers of people for overseas training at the type of cost that it had to pay to maintain them. It seemed a better idea to put the money into establishing a domestic institution.*
- 5 *The experience of concentrating all sixth-form work in an 'A' Level College showed that there was some economy of costs to be derived from consolidating tertiary education in a single institution.*
- 6 *In retrospect, it was probably an attempt to reduce the brain drain. SALCC has since its inception provided an opportunity for upward mobility in the education system for students and for staff particularly.*

Instead of factors, one can perhaps speak of movements at different periods in time which seemed to unite themselves and to point to the type of institution that could satisfy the country's needs.

### **Human Resource development capacity of SALCC**

The College has gone a long way towards developing the human resource, but there is still a long way to go. The numbers currently attending SALCC are but a small percentage of the total age group and the College can do much more in providing greater access. That need not be done in the traditional way, however, because that would seem to restrict, since it involves brick and mortar. The College could initiate concepts of the kind undertaken by the Open University of the U.K. for example, to help increase its capability to train the country's resource without necessarily involving the Government or itself into providing more bricks and mortar. While there will always be limitations set on the full-time enrolment of the College, it can, through its outreach programmes, provide a tremendous means of this development.

When one speaks here of the development of the human resource, one is thinking of training the individual to his fullest capacity and not simply training him for a specific skill. In this respect then, human resource development is a fuller definition of education.

### **Role of SALCC**

An educational system or institution has a general role to perform. But the way it performs it depends on a variety of social, cultural political or religious factors.

As a domestic institution, SALCC has a distinctive role to play in helping St Lucians develop their own notions of history, their identity as a people, their own creative possibilities in terms of culture in all its aspects. It has to be more than just a liberal arts college or a specialist institution. Service to the community has to be seen as one of its specific responsibilities. These two roles can in fact be considered the college's institutional mission.

## Tertiary education policy of SALCC

If pressed into articulating a policy, one would fall back on the Act which set up the College and which determined what the aims of the institution would be. The Act sets out various aspects of a policy in the sense of what the College is expected to do, the legal boundaries affecting it in terms of its autonomy, its financial needs, its staffing. It would seem however that tertiary institutions are involved with policies rather than with a policy. The College has used the framework that the Act has provided to draw up the administrative and financial rules, the programme guidelines, the staff rules that are necessary to implement this policy. That framework has also been used to set out clearly certain values that the College has attempted to promote outside purely intellectual ones, so that staff could begin to build a consensus as well as an ethos in the institution.

Admittedly, it has not been all smooth sailing. Bearing in mind the history of the College, where we have had to bring together people from different institutions, this consensus and this ethos will be more difficult to achieve unless there is greater integration. The College also needs to find a way of re-structuring its programmes, and this is what is being attempted through the Associate Degree programme.

### Linkages

The idea of co-operation and collaboration with other institutions has been a real good for the College. The College's experiences have shown that it is myopic to view co-operation simply in terms of concrete and mortar. Co-operation with institutions like CAST and UWI for example, has had an enriching effect on the College. It has helped in the development of better and richer programmes; allowed for easier programme articulation; helped to maintain standards; improved staff development. Had the College not had this co-operation it would not have been able to make the kind of progress that it has. There is also the OECS experience of Centres of Specialisation/Excellence which can be seen as a solution to the constraints of scale and isolation.

The College's connection with the St Lawrence College in Canada has given it a capability to take on certain things that it could never have dreamed of doing on its own.

ACT1 - an interesting movement - is an example of the concept of unity in diversity put into action. ACT1 brings together a diversity of tertiary level institutions doing a variety of things; they also have to come to grips however with the same issues of accreditation, articulation, equivalency. For the first time this region as a region is coming to grips with these issues, and this can only benefit individual institutions in facilitating mobility, understanding of programmes in individual institutions, certification and interpretation of the certification. Without doubt, these are examples of where co-operation can exist and what can happen with this closer co-operation.

It is now common practice for parties in these kinds of partnerships to agree on a memorandum of understanding, so that each party recognises the benefits that can flow from the relationship. In cases where SALCC is in partnership with larger, more established institutions, the latter have benefited from the vision, experience and opportunity that SALCC does provide.

It is partnerships and linkages like these that will bring about the internationalisation of education, particularly at the tertiary level. This is precisely what ACT1, for example is all about. The Caribbean has had the experience of the Standing Conference on Teacher Education and the Joint Board of Teacher Education which accredits teacher training programmes in the region. ACT1's mandate is more universal, and it has already put in place a Standing Committee to look at regional programmes in terms of accreditation, of processes by which programmes are developed, of the nomenclature used for various programmes, among others.

### **Caribbean contribution to development of higher education**

It has already been argued that smallness in itself is not a bad thing, and that because one is small does not mean that one cannot make a contribution. The experience of



CXC is a case in point. The structure developed by CXC has gained currency outside the region and it is being implemented in education systems in the developed world. There is no reason why the Caribbean cannot make a contribution to the development of tertiary education at the international level. The region's problem is that it does not document sufficiently the initiatives that it has taken.

The Caribbean's small size can be used to advantage in this regard. It could serve as an interesting showcase where ideas could be tested and results obtained fairly quickly.

### **Problems of graduate unemployment**

There is no need to be unduly bothered by this problem. What small countries are doing is training the human resource. Admittedly there will be cases of mismatch, but developed countries have been doing this, and resorted to exporting their people to various parts of the underdeveloped world.

It is not to be assumed that in educating more people that one is creating a group of people that is more volatile, that would create crime and problems. If one has done a good job in the training of the human resource, then one will have created the possibility and the potential for people to be self-employed, to use themselves creatively, to move into new areas and develop these. It is true that when one thinks of small countries with limited resources, one wants to ensure that there is some balance. But that is what planning is all about.

It has already been pointed out that in St Lucia the percentage of people who are now in training as compared to the percentage that ought to have access is so small that the question of oversupply is not an immediate concern.

This is the age of the tertiary as it has become clear that expansion of economic activity cannot be achieved simply by training primary people. Even if the country was heading towards an oversupply of graduates, there would be no need to be

pessimistic. People have desires and aspirations and these need to be taken into account. Restriction on training would be a tremendous error. After all, one is dealing with a people who have visions, who have had training and who see themselves as being able to contribute in a variety of ways. Admittedly we need to look at some of the traditional things we have done well and improve on them, but it is ridiculous to ask people to restrict their vision, and to return to traditional things because of the likelihood that you might be unable to provide employment for them beyond that.

A lot of the criticisms that are being levelled at developing countries by the international community have been generated by the international community itself, and it is this realisation that leads one to believe that they have an ulterior motive. Admittedly there is an overemphasis on paper qualifications and certification and not enough on life experience. The international community itself is to be blamed and it should help remedy the situation. Failure to do so only puts a premium on the paper qualifications that are themselves under attack. The balance between paper qualifications and life experience needs to be redressed. The Diploma Disease is not incurable.

### **Financing tertiary education**

It may not seem apparent, but there has been in fact a lot of cost sharing taking place in education in St Lucia. The parents have been bearing a significant proportion of the costs - providing books, uniforms, meals, transport, etc. What needs to be done now is the targeting of the beneficiaries of the education system. Ways of doing this include:

- 1 *The establishment of a SALCC Foundation; this would deal with the issue of equity of access.*
- 2 *Sponsorship of lectureships, chairs, purchase of equipment in specific areas.*
- 3 *Provision of inducements by way of tax-free privileges to people/agencies who contribute in this regard.*

The opportunity for the college to engage in revenue - generating activities is very limited and this would not assist to any significant extent. Fees are not likely to bring in any significant amounts either. The fees collected are not sufficient for capital expenditure, let alone operational expenditures.

### **External aid**

A lot of the aid which is available to developing countries is externally driven and does not take into sufficient account the views and plans of the recipient countries or institutions. Aid must be in respect of the perceptions of the recipient.

The problem with international donor agencies is that they come to you enthusiastically with a programme or a project with a view to your institutionalising and sustaining it, and almost immediately want you to take it over before even discussing your ability to meet the costs. This practice of putting the saddle on one's back before he is ready is atrocious.

The World Bank in particular has tended to behave like an omniscient educational schoolmaster telling the world what they need to do at any particular point in time and then impose that view with money behind it. To a national who is a recipient of aid, and still more to an educator, this is revolting.

### **Programme Planning**

The college needs a Planning Unit so that the process of planning can be done on a continuing basis or at least periodically on a review basis. There is as of now no Manpower Planning Report which could tell the College what the country's manpower needs are, so the College does its own, imperfectly and not quite thoroughly admittedly. It relies on its system of Advisory Committees, the results of tracer studies and needs assessments, requests from its major clients (Ministries of Education, Health and Agriculture) and the community itself.

The lack of co-ordination which the interviewer has commented upon, in the planning of tertiary education, is more apparent than real. The courses that the College offers are normally approved by Cabinet, so that even if the College, the School of Continuing Studies and the Training Division do not sit together to plan, their mandate and authority come from the same source. There is therefore no incompatibility between the programmes offered and no conflict. There is in fact an unwritten demarcation of responsibility and a respect for these areas of responsibility.

### The Open Comprehensive Community Model

This kind of College is reminiscent of the Land Grant Universities of America, and like these Universities, SALCC would need to address the academic and technical aspirations of St Lucians. There is in a sense a mediocrity, a lack of professionalism and workmanship in the various trade sectors in the country. The comprehensive nature of SALCC should allow it to address this and to improve the level of professionalism in the work place.

Although there is some kind of apprenticeship in some trade sectors - tailoring and dressmaking, catering and cake-decorating, carpentry, masonry for example - emphasis is placed simply on the mechanical level. SALCC could provide the higher level skills of reasoning, managing and entrepreneurship. Moreover, the sophistication of modern day technology requires the active involvement in the work-place of a College such as this. SALCC is well-placed to improve the calibre of our tradesmen. The Outreach Centre in Vieux-Fort is already a good example of the way in which the College can go out among the people, as the majority are unable to attend the College's scheduled programmes.

### Challenges

The College's greatest challenge is perhaps enshrined in its motto "Pursuit of Excellence". It has to date extended itself by leaps and bounds, but how can it produce more and more marketable graduates?

### Constraints

The availability and flexibility of finance is the College's main constraint. Can it tune itself in its educational activities to the development trends and needs of the country?

## Programmes in Agriculture

The Diploma programmes aim at preparing students to undertake responsibility as senior technicians, middle management personnel, commercial/business farmers, farm managers, and to provide a base for advanced agricultural studies. The Certificate programme will prepare junior technicians, commercial/business farmers and junior workers at agricultural institutions. The emphasis is on the commercial aspect of farming, as people in St Lucia do not seem to recognise that agriculture is a business. St Lucia's economy is agriculture-based, and we need to treat agriculture/farming as a business enterprise if we are going to sustain growth in that sector.

The levels are comparable to those of the Jamaica School of Agriculture. SALCC's goal is to seek accreditation of its programmes from UWI and other extra-regional institutions, so that its students can pursue higher degrees in Agriculture. Entry requirements for the Diploma programme are the same as for the rest of the College, since the institution is seeking accreditation from others operating at this level. The Certificate programme accepts lower entry requirements as well as life experience. The Outreach arm of the programme will emphasise hands-on practical work on the College farm which is intended to operate as a Teaching and Commercial Farm. Student attachments at the Ministry of Agriculture, CARDI, WINBAN, SLBGA, Windward Islands Tropical Ltd, and with reputable farmers will provide valuable links with the community. The main objective of the programmes is to train students to use modern techniques of agriculture and to practise farming in a business environment. The change from subsistence farming to business farming is dictated by the times. From a situation in which we sold what we could not use, we seem to be heading for one in which we must use what we cannot sell. A fairly recent survey revealed that St Lucians had a positive attitude to agriculture, ranking it 4th among the professions commonly practised in the country. The respondents seemed to have based their ranking on their perception of the land as the country's main resource. The main deterrent however was the type of farming practised - the legacy of slavery and the plantation system.

## Linkages

Linkages with local, regional and international bodies and institutions have already been established, but there is room for expansion. At the local level, the public and private sectors have indicated interest in participating in the programme through sponsorship of students and projects. SALCC could perhaps discuss its programmes with them on an annual basis and invite suggestions, so that the College could in fact meet their needs.

Regional links already exist and SALCC can sustain them through regular contact among colleagues, many of whom are products of North American, UK and regional institutions. As a member of ACTI, SALCC can enjoy the benefits of regional networking with agricultural colleges like the Jamaica School of Agriculture. International links can be made through bilateral arrangements through Government channels. The current Environmentally Sustainable Farming Systems Project handled by SALCC, the Ministry of Agriculture and Mc Gill University (Canada) is a case in point.

## Role of SALCC

SALCC can be the leader in showing people how to make maximum use of their resources for the improvement of the economy, the environment and the general quality of life. As a domestic institution, SALCC can provide the environment for the development of domestic models for use locally. The expertise of foreigners notwithstanding, nationals are in a better position to know their country, and if they are trained to identify and exploit the resources at their disposal, then they are better placed to develop their own institutions and to sustain them.

SALCC's role is to develop the intellect, the technical skills, the values and attitudes of its 'students', and so instil a sense of national pride and foster professionalism in the work place. To instil that ethos, SALCC must set its standards and ensure that its students adhere strictly to them. What one has practised is what one will deliver.

## Dependence

In agriculture, as in other spheres of economic activity, we are price takers. We do not consume what we grow. There is need for import - substitution, even if one recognises that it is cheaper to import a product than to produce it locally. Dependence can be reduced if St Lucians understand the goal and objectives of import -substitution, of export of crops, and of complementing the banana industry. Our tastes too must change, if we are to reduce this dependence.

## Smallness

One is reminded of Japan, a relatively small country, but undoubtedly an industrial force to be reckoned with. Smallness however is a paradox, for small size does have constraining effects. In agriculture itself, size determines the kind and size of enterprise that you can operate. What we have not experienced in St Lucia and the Western Hemisphere is scarcity. Perhaps this is what we need to make us pull up our socks. It would seem that people have got too affluent, and it is difficult to get someone to do a decent day's work or a decent quality job. But size does not matter here. Perhaps then it is the qualities, the characteristics of the human resource which is the main factor. In this regard, the current attention being given to human resource development is both timely and well-placed.

## SALCC's Division of Agriculture

The community at large compliments the Government of Saint Lucia in taking what they see as the perfect step in incorporating Agriculture into the programmes offered at SALCC, as this is seen as improving on the negative status that agriculture holds in the community. The Division plans to emphasise the business aspect of agriculture using a three-pronged approach - modern techniques, appropriate technology, business atmosphere. SALCC is set to be at the forefront of the re-education of the agricultural community by word and by deed.



### Regional initiatives

One of the objectives of the OECS is collaboration and harmonisation in a number of areas, one of which is tertiary education. Perhaps the first decisive step in this direction was taken at the first Annual General Meeting of the OECS Council of Ministers held in 1987. The OECS Council of Ministers, which is served by the Education Desk of the Central Secretariat, is responsible for the broad spectrum of educational provision - primary, secondary, teacher training, technical/vocational, tertiary including university. This linkage has been successful to some extent, but there is no doubt that the OECS Education Reform Strategy (October 1991 - January 1992) will help to give the collaborative thrust far more energy and result in more productive developments, since prior to this, there was no one document which spelt out where the collaborative movement should go. The establishment and design of the Strategy should be a watershed in terms of the future development of the education sector since one of the Key recommendations is the establishment of a Reform Unit within The Secretariat, out of which would develop a whole range of projects which could be taken to the donor community for funding. A review of education activities since the formation of the council of Ministers include those funded by Lomé III (1989), BDDC, GTZ (1989) and the World Bank/CDB. The emphasis on such regional initiatives has been in the area of Science and Technology, TVET, Modern Languages, Entrepreneurial Skills and Data Processing.

### Integration of higher education systems

Given the problems that exist regarding standards and the recognition or non-recognition of the programmes and certificates of each other's programmes, the formation of ACT1 which brings together the tertiary education institutions in the region is a very good first step. It is good too, that UWI is at the hub of this initiative and it could give the individuals who hold office, a useful instrument for pulling institutions together and setting common standards in programming, testing,

evaluation and accreditation. Such a regional grouping within CARICOM is necessary; it is part of the integration process. Nevertheless the OECS still needs to keep its act together. The islands are a more homogenous group and there is a kind of dynamic in the grouping which to date has produced results, and has kept things moving. They ought not therefore to put this on the back-burner to run with their bigger brothers and sisters.

ACTI is indeed a plus. It is important that we develop our Tertiary Level institutions; it is important too, that we keep a cohesiveness which will be achieved by the Reform Unit as it will allow for greater networking, with the Secretariat as the Management Arm, and the Ministries of Education and Principals of the TLI's. There is need at the regional level for frequent collaboration and consultations, but we should be wary of too many groupings, in view of the region's scarce financial resources.

### **Impact of Scale**

Governments in the region are strapped. They all are making efforts to manage their resources properly without wastage, but they are constrained by the nature of their economies, the scale of production, the need for protected markets, the small manufacturing base and the difficulty of penetrating external markets. These are realities, so although smallness is a plus, it is also a minus. Hence the importance of acting together, of sharing, like the OECS has started to do in its Centres of Specialisation. In tertiary education, we need to be sensitive to the issue of scale; we need to look at innovative ways that would reduce cost. In this regard, distance education is one avenue to which the region should give serious consideration.

### **Region's contribution to the international community**

The UWI seems to have lost its way, and unable to provide direction. But perhaps, the international community can learn from the concept of Centres of Specialisation with its focus on linkages, networking and pooling of small resources.

### The Open Comprehensive Community College Model - Perspectives

The College must be sufficiently flexible to take into account the varying needs of the community, both academic and employment - related so that it is not seen as an institution which tends to concentrate on higher level studies. It must be able to go out into all parts of St. Lucia, not only to determine the needs but perhaps also to initiate research studies to find out what the real needs are.

For St. Lucia to develop, efforts must be made to solve the problem of illiteracy, for this has implications for the way one is able to absorb and interpret things, even in technical education. We cannot continue to have illiterate technical people, and so the College should be very supportive of the Ministry of Education's Adult Literacy programme.

St. Lucians do not seem to have a history of post-schooling learning, but it is important that such an ethos be developed in our people. The response to the College's efforts at establishing a Business Education Centre in the south of the island has been less than encouraging, despite the obvious need for such an initiative in that community. But the College should press on with the development of other centres in the island, so that perhaps its mere presence would make people in the communities think more seriously of the need to improve themselves. There is perhaps a need as well for the College to consider the idea of delivering courses and programmes in Creole, if it is going to serve some sectors of the community.

Because we are an open, comprehensive, community college, we are mandated to plan activities, conduct research and carry out assessments of needs. At the same time we do also have a responsibility to lead people in a direction that we consider suitable.

The financial resources at the College's disposal constrains it in the implementation

of its mandate. But perhaps a greater constraint is the lack of *expertise* and the difficulty of persuading staff to take a broader view of their job. For the College to develop, staff must perceive themselves as being involved in the process and be willing to extend themselves.

### **Status of TVET**

There is indeed a lot more to be done to uplift people's perceptions about technical education. It is distressing to find that most of the applications that come into the Division of Technical Education are for courses in the Business Studies programme. It may be that the courses offered at the *Division* are *not* of a sufficiently high level to challenge students. We need however to examine the absorptive capacity of the economy before considering increasing the number of higher level programmes that are offered. It would be problematic if more technician level programmes were offered only to find that graduates had problems finding jobs.

Some people may well ask whether it is economical for a small country such as this to train people only so that they can leave the country, and whether the money could not be better spent doing something else. But people must have a vision that they can do something with their lives, and so it is perhaps more desirable to do more training than is actually necessary. There is a need too, to look at employment creation, and help develop self-employment particularly in the service industry.

### **Financing of education**

There are several ways in which the private sector can contribute to the financing of education, and they should be given incentives by the Government to do so. Payment of tuition fees, donation of equipment, scholarships to deserving students, co-operative ventures between the College and firms, are some suggestions.

Admittedly, students should not be required to pay the full economic cost of tertiary education, but pre-employment students can certainly be made to pay fees. Of

course, provision must be made for those who have the ability, but are unable to bear the financial costs of attending the institution. Already, firms do often bear the cost in the case of in-service, professional up-grading.

### Linkages

The Division of Technical Education has links with the University of Wisconsin, CATVET and others, but perhaps the greatest contribution has been made by the St. Lawrence College of Ontario, Canada. The SLC/SALCC Project which began in 1982 is funded by CIDA, and is concerned mainly with programme strengthening and institution-building. The relationship however is not really project-bound as the Colleges have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which they undertake to do things together within their own budgets even if the funding from CIDA ceases. This kind of agreement gives a degree of permanence to the relationship between SLC and SALCC.

The Project is administered by a Project Manager from SLC and a Project Coordinating Committee which comprises the Chairmen of the Board of Governors and Principals of the two Colleges, the Project Manager and his St. Lucian Counterpart and a representative from CIDA. The relationship is more of a partnership than a hierarchical structure. People come as equals, and although most of the technical assistance comes from SLC to SALCC, the SLC staff gain considerably from the experience of working in a new environment. The Project helps the College source supplies which it has difficulty in acquiring locally through a Materials Facilitation Unit, while it also serves in a brokerage capacity where the expertise is not resident at SLC. SALCC also has links with CATVET, an association of Technical/Vocational institutions and Ministries of Education. CATVET however, has not wielded the influence it was expected to wield, as its role has to some extent been usurped by other organisations and associations formed subsequently, for example ACTI and the OECS Training Board which have been able to develop much closer links with the Ministries of Education.

## **Impact of Scale**

Smallness of size has its problems, among them being the high cost of putting on programmes at the tertiary level and the limited demand for such programmes. We need therefore to be able to bring together resources from different territories to make certain programmes and activities viable at the tertiary level. When Technical Colleges were established in the region in the 1970's, the initial idea was for each College to concentrate on one main area. The idea was dismissed because the territories felt that there was a basic level of skills required in each area in sufficient numbers to justify establishing these Colleges. Instead, specialisation resided in the Principals. But the time has come when we need to reconsider the realities of the situation, in spite of the nationalistic spirit that exists in some territories. Perhaps the sub-region might consider rotating the venues where these higher level programmes are offered, providing of course this does not involve a high level of infrastructure. Thus the different territories will feel that they are getting involved, and that no one territory has a marginal edge over the others. In view of our size, there is a possibility too that we would be glutting the market within a relatively short-time period. But if people are led to recognise that there will always be incremental improvement of whatever they do, there will always be a need for training.

### Factors leading to the establishment of SALCC

There was, first of all, the recognised need to provide a cadre of trained personnel who would be able to meet the needs of St Lucia as a developing nation. The move to establish the College was accelerated in some measure by what was happening at UWI at the time. University education was becoming more expensive and less accessible. In addition, there was a feeling on the part of the NCC's that the campus territories were really out, if not to nationalise, at least to make the university serve their individual needs. There was therefore the need to ensure in the NCC's that there was a local capacity to provide tertiary education up to university level, if possible. There was too the question of efficiency. The Ministry of Education felt that it was possible by merging the 3 institutions, one could achieve some economies of scale; provide more cross-faculty teaching; deploy staff in a more efficient manner; set up a more centralised administration which would make the institution an easier unit to deal with.

The establishment of SALCC made adult education more accessible to the wider public. It remedied what was a glaring deficiency in the country's education system, for community post-secondary education before SALCC was limited in very narrow and well defined ways.

### SALCC

The College has made significant strides but it has a long way to go. Two areas need to be emphasised. Its Outreach Programme needs to be expanded with the establishment of more outreach centres in the island. It needs also to increase its level of enrolment. Preparatory programmes could be mounted to bring prospective applicants to the College's entry requirement levels; parallel courses may be a way of doubling the College's capacity, while the Distance Education mode could take care of the out-of-school cohort.

The presence of SALCC ensures that you can keep a resident pool of expertise in the country. This store of intellectual capital is then available for tapping and can make an invaluable contribution to the social and intellectual life of the country. In many respects, it makes economic sense. It stimulates you to develop your own infrastructure, as has happened with the construction of the Library and the Technical Wing. It has had a multiplier effect, filtering down to other areas of economic activity. Cost has to be related to effectiveness, and although there may be arguments about the high capital and recurrent costs of maintaining an institution such as SALCC there are stronger arguments for training large numbers at home versus small numbers abroad.

### **Financing tertiary education**

Government should carry educational costs only up to a certain level, perhaps the secondary level. People however should begin to meet a reasonable proportion of the cost of tertiary education. Provisions should be made however to ensure that those who can benefit from the opportunity of tertiary education are not left out *due to their inability to pay*. Scholarships, bursaries, student loans are among the measures that can be instituted.

The private sector are users of the product of education, and as such should make a contribution to the system.

### **Education and employment**

There is no need to be unduly concerned about the prospect of unemployment from tertiary education expansion. In any case, it is better to be educated than to be uneducated. What we need to do is to channel people into the areas of need. We need perhaps to bear in mind that it is not tertiary institutions which create employment or unemployment. What creates it is the ability or inability of the economy to successfully open up and to provide jobs. An economy that has a number of reasonably educated and qualified people stands a better chance of being a little



more creative in exploring alternative avenues to new jobs than one in which the majority of people remain under-qualified and untrained.

### **Status of TVET**

In our society, paperwork was generally perceived the ultimate type of occupation, for the less physical exertion was required for a job, the greater was the status accorded it. The brightest and the best were always channelled into academia, while something called Tech/Voc was created for those that were left behind. Tech/Voc even when used by educators always meant something for other people's children, never for their own. Tech/Voc advocates themselves have realised that over the years they have done quite a bit to harm to its reputation by their acceptance of the low achievement level of students in the tech/voc stream.

There is need perhaps for a change of emphasis and a broadening of the field to include science, technology, design etc. and the use of the term Science and Technology.

**Factors which contributed to the development of the tertiary education sector in St Lucia.**

As the University of the West Indies developed, there developed as well a growing awareness on the part of Governments in the region that the cost of university education would inhibit large numbers of qualified people from attending the university itself and therefore from getting some form of higher education. The response to the establishment of a campus at Cave Hill influenced some educational practitioners in the small islands into feeling that, in some respects, the only way to mop up a large number of people who really want higher education is to make it available on the spot, even though in a limited fashion, due to the high costs involved. In the initial stages of the discussions on the establishment of SALCC, there was not much talk of establishing a university campus. It was more a question of how to bring a diversity of post-secondary education to larger numbers of people, at a limited cost and with limited facilities.

In setting up the College, Government was influenced by the need to find ways of utilising the large core of qualified people available in the country; by the fact that there could be some savings in amalgamating existing institutions; by its own policy of advancing technical education at the post-secondary level; by the low level of trained teachers in the system and the large amount of mopping-up that needed to be done in that area. In addition, the number of scholarships available for tertiary education abroad was on the decline, and in the face of Government's inability to sustain study abroad at previous levels, there was need to ensure that there was some level of tertiary education available locally, and that the sphere of that teaching continued to widen.

**Type of College**

SALCC was established as a Community College to offer a diversity of post-

secondary offerings at different levels. It is a multi-purpose institution dedicated to the advancement of technical education at various levels, to the advancement of teacher education. It is the only institution in the country offering programmes at the Sixth Form Level, and full-time university - level tuition.

### **Scale, isolation, dependence**

Smallness of size is indeed an inhibiting factor, but not a problem as long as you do not believe that you can do anything you like. There is in fact a lot to be optimistic about once you accept your size as something that will always be there, and work with it. Rapid developments in communications technology and the consequent change in the technology of teaching has reduced the sense of isolation which twenty years ago would have been considered a constraint of smallness.

### **Linkages**

The University of the West Indies should have taken the initiative to ensure a systematic articulation between itself and the College as tertiary institutions. It can be said perhaps that the strongest articulation is in the area of Teacher Education although the paths that the College had to tread to initiate its B.Ed programme suggest that this articulation is not accepted by UWI. It would perhaps be better for SALCC as well as for UWI if the former came under the aegis of a larger institution, even as an autonomous institution. To the extent that SALCC offers UWI's degrees, there should be a sharper focus and connection between the two institutions at the level of staff, planning and curriculum. Although some of this has been accomplished, much of it seems to have been due to the effort of individuals. This situation needs to be remedied. It was hoped that the office of University Services (OUS) would be the structure by which this articulation would have been accomplished, but it was not anticipated that so much of this articulation would have been done at the level of Faculties. As a result, OUS seems almost isolated from this process of articulation. This too, needs to be worked out.

The pursuance of joint policies in tertiary education in the OECS however, has not been unsuccessful, and in this regard the establishment of the OECS Ministerial Council has been a very useful instrument particularly for dealing with aid. What has not happened under this aegis is the articulation and integration between the institutions themselves. It may be that it is being superseded by the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI). The region has not yet been able to bring to fruition the concept of Centres of excellence, of specialisation among the Colleges, nor has the issue come up for concerned and deep discussion by the Ministerial Council.

In the 1970's the UWI closed itself from international communication, particularly in the Social Sciences. Its scholars tended to give themselves too great a sense of peculiarity and specialness and almost came to believe that the normal tools of science did not apply to them. They went too far, and the Caribbean environment became inhospitable to international scholars. That is beginning to change and indeed must change. The region needs to recognise its location in Middle America and the implications of that location in a world in which technology can penetrate so easily, and then to re-establish at the highest educational levels, linkages with other institutions and other scholars.

A community as small as ours has to internationalise itself and therefore make channels so that what we are creating can more easily flow out. The UWI must take the lead and the smaller institutions would no doubt follow.

SALCC needs to find ways of exposing its staff and students to a diversity of methods and institutions, and is actively seeking to strengthen existing links with St Lawrence College in Canada, and new links with the University of Wisconsin.

### Financing of SALCC

There is an urgent need to find ways of getting the community to support the College. The origins of the institution within the Ministry of Education has created certain

problems. The College is still being treated as an adjunct of the Ministry and that is reflecting itself in the approach to the budget. This has implications for an institution that is supposed to be autonomous. The extent of control which the Ministry exercises over the College's budget is a cause of great concern to the administration.

Government has not yet fully grasped the real implications of the autonomy that the College is supposed to have been given, and it has not yet come to terms with the commitment to sustain the institution especially in its growing period -in its initiation and establishment. The College should then on its own seek, by establishing connections with professional and commercial groupings in the society, to begin to give itself an alternative by way of support and finance. It needs to establish some degree of real financial autonomy if it is going to be able to continue to speak of its autonomy within the context of the higher education system that the Government has elaborated.

### **Future of SALCC**

There will be some plateauing and some consolidation. The College needs to find ways of increasing its intake, whether they be full-time or part-time. There is a possibility that it will develop into a university campus of UWI although the country can ill afford at this point in its development the luxury of a purely university-type institution when there are so many other levels of post-secondary education that the society still needs. It is hoped that the College will strengthen the engineering/higher technology side of its programming; that the connection between language and the creative arts will be developed and strengthened; and that the College will be a good professional college turning out consistently good people in areas like accounting and management.

### **Financing of tertiary education**

It would seem that in spite of one's emotional response to the issue of user charges, its introduction is inevitable. Luckily, people are already bearing some of the cost

of education (book purchases, for example) and there is the strong suspicion that people can afford to pay a little more at the tertiary level. Means testing, of course, would have to be closely monitored to ensure equity of access. As for the contribution that can be made by the private sector, there seems to be no reason why firms could not subsidise lectureships at the College, or assist in the purchase of equipment or books.

### **Education and employment**

It is too early in the development of the tertiary education sector here to think in terms of graduate unemployment. In the St Lucian context, there is a large number of people currently employed who are not equipped to do the jobs for which they are employed. The College would need to be involved not only in the training of new entrants to the job market, but also in the training of people already in jobs, but who are not trained at the level of skill and capacity that is required of them. There is still a lot of mopping up to be done.

**The open, comprehensive community model - Perspectives**

This model suggests an institution which covers a range of academic and non-academic skills; is accessible to everyone with the qualifications for a particular course; is one with no age biases; and is responsive to the needs of the community. If therefore the College is going to be truly open, it should afford everybody who wants to, the opportunity to be qualified. It needs to be recognised however that not everyone can benefit from having the same kind of education. Particularly in a small system as small as ours, we will run into problems if we do not preserve an educational system for our academic elite. "We have to be growing thinkers,; the leaders have to be people who can be trained into a philosophy, who can come up with creative thinking for themselves. If we end up with one of these diluted processes where everybody gets the same thing, we are going to find that we have lost the best potential of our top group".

Openness should also be seen in terms of flexibility within the College itself. One of the problems that still plagues the institution is its lack of success in fully integrating the Divisions. The task itself has been so massive that at times the philosophy of the College has escaped the management and things have just happened. The question of the age limit, for example, is a case in point. One suspects that the Division would not consider the application of a 60 year old. But surely, a Community College should be able to offer a retired person an opportunity to study full-time once he satisfies the entry requirements, or to offer sandwich-type programmes to working adults.

It is a shame too that the senior primary school graduate is getting less and less of a chance of a place at the College, in its technical programmes. What the College needs is a two-tier technical system which would offer both up-market courses for students who are academically able and craft level courses for the least able.

## **Administration and Co-ordination**

The integration of the College has proliferated the administrative work of each Division. It has expanded it exponentially and it will continue to expand. It would seem logical to expand the administrative structure at the level of central administration with people trained in management feeding information to those who are dealing with the human presence on the ground. Fundamentally, there has to be this administrative change in the College, if it is going to grow and to change. There needs to be more centralisation of certain functions, more leeway for an academic presence in the Divisions, in order to achieve the internal efficiency that was anticipated.

## **Linkages**

The Division is linked to the UWI in its delivery of the first year degree programme. One could add that it is also supervised by the university and even to some extent constrained by what the university wants or allows it to do.

The OUS has been of invaluable assistance in smoothing over rough spots encountered in the delivering of the programme and in keeping it going. There is the feeling however that it is personalities rather than structures that keep the wheels turning.

## **Future of SALCC**

The College needs to expand its range of technical/vocational programmes dramatically to encompass a wider range of people. It is a blessing to be able to provide first year university locally, though one has reservations about plans to make SALCC a fourth campus of UWI. Admittedly, it is great for the mums and dads, and would in fact improve significantly the quality of life as a campus town, but one wonders whether the country can afford it, and whether it can be economically viable. What could be considered perhaps is the concept of Centres of Specialisation at the



university level. That ought to ensure that students get a nice range of interaction within their subject areas.

If however we are forced to become a degree - granting institution on our own, provision should be made for a good system of checks and balances to prevent us from slipping into an incestuous situation and unable to maintain standards.

Caught at the moment between the British system and the American system, the College is facing a difficult situation, trying, as it were to sell peanut butter in orange juice jars.

"I would prefer to see SALCC expanding its technical/vocational offerings, taking in a much wider range of people, making more space for part-timers and cross-over courses, and having a degree - granting capacity rather than an Associated Degree granting capacity".

### Development of School of Continuing Studies

There is at present in St. Lucia a tremendous thirst for continuing education, irrespective of the programmes. Adults, most of whom are women with family commitments have come to appreciate that a prime requisite for economic and social mobility is higher education.

Lack of a response to tertiary education programmes in Extra Mural Department's early days led it to emphasise the creative arts. Today, it is true to say that the Extra Mural Department has made a tremendous contribution to the development of the creative arts and to cultural development and awareness in St. Lucia.

### The Office of University Services (OUS)

OUS was instituted at the request of the Prime Ministers of the OECS territories solely to service their tertiary education needs. In this regard, it has monitored and facilitated the development and institution of the UWI programmes at the tertiary level institutions, and it is to be commended for its performance to date. OUS is also in contact with other Ministries of Government and conducts an impressive range of in-country workshops in all disciplines. It can thus be said that OUS is bringing the university to the people, so that perhaps the criticism levelled at the university in not being responsive to the needs of the community it serves, is not completely justified. OUS maintains an Advisory Group in each territory with representation from Ministries of Government, SALCC, the School of Continuing Studies and the Private Sector. From information supplied by the Groups, OUS draws up a list of training needs, accesses funds and delivers the training in each country.

## UWIDITE

With the advent of UWIDITE, the University has delivered a great number of programmes to all sectors of the public service. It is available for use by the private sector as well, once they are prepared to pay the fee. The system is often criticised and indeed it needs to be improved, but its output as far as the services it offers far exceeds its technical capability and sophistication. The system has a tremendous future in view of the importance that distance education is going to assume given the high cost of university education. What the University needs to do is to stop calling it UWIDITE, since it is no longer an experiment, and then institutionalise it, bringing it into the formal structure.

## Future of SALCC

SALCC will evolve no doubt into a fourth campus of the UWI. Perhaps the Community Colleges in the OECS will together form a fourth campus, since the Governments are very much committed to developing them as far as they can go. The time has come however for the Colleges to specialise. Size, admittedly, is a limitation, but there are strategies and innovations that can be adopted to circumvent this.

## Co-ordination of training programmes

The Training Division of the Ministry of Planning identifies training needs and is informed of all the training that goes on within the country. Perhaps however the Training Division could in addition undertake to evaluate the programmes offered in the country's training institutions, assess the level and quality of training offered and monitor the on-the-job performance of new entrants to the labour market. It would thus be in a position to monitor standards and levels of efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Distance Education**

Distance education will become absolutely crucial in every aspect of Tertiary Education in the 21st century in the areas of Pre-service, In-service and Corporate Education. When viewed in conjunction with the open model, where 'open' means taking down barriers to access, be they geographic, financial, racial or psychological, the possibilities are tremendous. The size of SALCC could be doubled if there was provision for the dissemination of quality material and outreach mode of delivery that supported the learner in his environment, with minimum face-to-face interaction. The walls of the College could become the shores of the island. Perhaps SALCC can adopt this as its institutional mission and take this concept, shape it and grow with it overtime.

Initially, distance education is expensive, but ultimately it becomes a cost-saving measure. It might seem like overstating the obvious, but managing a distance education system becomes easier the smaller the system, particularly as smallness of size makes it easier to maintain a learner focus. Networking is crucial in the development of distance education. In this regard, the Commonwealth of Learning offers great potential. It is hoped that the people who are managing it at the highest levels see it as a way of developing and sharing rather than marketing and a way of making money.

### **The Comprehensive Teacher Training Project (CTTP)**

SALCC could use the CTTP both as a pre-service and an in-service tool, opening it up to other sectors on a fee-paying basis with the funds returning to the system for on-going teacher training and for support services and structures.

## Constraints

*"I call them hurdles, because you can jump over them or go around them, or sometimes crawl under them or go through them, but just get them out of the way".*

*"The problems of the Caribbean region are definitely not the same as down-sizing everything in North America or Europe".*

Needs of the economy - Chamber of Commerce Perspective

There is an important decision that now needs to be made in the educational planning process. Do we go for the very attractive and apparently sensible thesis that we should train people for the world of work, or do we concentrate on giving people a good basic education which then allows them to move into different fields? For it seems that more people are being trained now, but lower levels of excellence are being achieved. We need however to generate our leaders - thinkers, academics, planners, technical people - from the system. If then the basic education which they receive is of a quality which is not going to identify such leaders, then the quality of life is going to decrease. This will inevitably have long-term implications as to who runs the society. If we are not educating people to a level where they can be leaders, we will find that the factors of production are not going to be controlled by nationals; they will be controlled by people coming from outside with superior education, superior resources, superior access to capital, superior linguistic skills for international trade etc.

It is not easy to assess the needs of the economy. Trying to do a training needs assessment in St Lucia is like pulling teeth. But two levels of training seem to be calling for urgent attention: training at management level and training in the basic skills of numerary, literacy, logic and analytical thinking. Analytical and decision making skills seem to be the major weakness. Can this be a consequence of the tendency at the primary level to teach people to pass examinations rather than how to learn and how to teach themselves? Businesses, particularly owner-operated businesses are constrained, once they reach a certain level, because unless they are ready to pay phenomenally higher salaries to qualified managers, it is difficult for them to expand using lower level management. They do not feel confident in devolving responsibility to lower level management because they lack confidence in their decision making capability.

Pundits will tell you that the inevitable transformation from the traditional to the modern economy continues. This suggests a down-playing of agriculture, greater share in GDP of industry, and beyond that moving more and more into service-related areas, particularly in our case, tourism, banking, insurance and so forth. However, our first priority must always be agriculture, since any small, vulnerable open economy must, under any circumstances, be able to feed itself up to a certain level.

The country's primary production base needs to be diversified, and it needs to be economical. A higher level of technology needs to be employed not only in production, but in packaging and processing. Ultimately, the future of agriculture will be in agro-industry, in semi-processed agricultural output so that the export sector will be dominated by the export of semi-processed fruit and vegetables. There is therefore need for training in that area. The next growth sector seems to be tourism. While the human interaction aspect of tourism can be fairly easily dealt with, emphasis needs to be placed on the more dynamic area of support services and on the training of people to service the technical aspects of such services.

What is needed for an economy such as ours to survive is flexibility of the work force. Developed countries, in the depth of their fiscal deficits are now recognising the contribution of small and medium scale industry to not only the growth of the economy but also to the creation of jobs and the reduction of unemployment and the creation of export-oriented activity. That contribution is linked directly to the flexibility of smaller companies in their ability to interpret and respond to market signals very quickly. This should serve as a lesson for us. With limited resources such as ours, the country has to maintain a certain flexibility with the work force to seize the opportunities when they arise. Very often these are niche opportunities - small-scale, seasonal, sometimes one-off opportunities. This underscores the need for a sound basic education, even in the technical/vocational area, in order to produce a trainable product out of the educational system. Self-employment is critical. The system needs to be able to produce people who are capable of going into an economic activity on their own.

## **Financing of education**

Over the past 10 years there has been a major change in the education product. We have concentrated on mass education, but there has been a fall in quality especially at the higher level. Financing has been one of the major constraints. One recognises that Government cannot afford to spend more than the 26% it has allocated to education, without seriously affecting what goes to other sectors. The overall budget either has to increase, or resources will have to come from somewhere else.

The country therefore needs to re-introduce a system of user fees. The country is too small and too poor to afford free education from the public purse. There are other private resources that can be mobilised and used as user fees which can then be spent on teacher-training, book subsidies etc. There are people who are willing to pay and who will gladly pay for a better quality education, but that willingness is not being tapped. For those who cannot afford to pay, support systems and other mechanisms should be put in place. An elitist view perhaps?

## **Role of the Private Sector**

Taxing the private sector to pay for education, on the grounds that they are beneficiaries of the system, is not the answer. That is a short-sighted approach. There are other areas of responsibility. Private sector personnel for example, should be used as resource people to support the education process so that teaching and learning can be augmented by practical hands-on contact with people. There is need for more aggressive recruiting policies by companies to demonstrate their need for high standards from school leavers. They should actively recruit the brightest and the best each year and get these people involved in the work place. The sector should get involved in on-going training both in and out of the work place. The sector is constrained however by the non-development of mechanisms like bonding by which firms can confidently train people on their staff knowing that they will get some service out of them after the investment has been made. If resources can be identified and mobilised, the private sector could consider establishment of Centres of



Excellence in specific fields of Management. They could then look at the brightest and the best in the education system, pick them up early, and offer them improved opportunities for training, self-development and further education. The demonstration effect of this could in itself serve as an incentive towards quality performance on the part of students.

### **Training at Home**

While one recognises that it makes greater sense to send people for training overseas in fields where the cost of training such a small number of people as we generate would be prohibitive and would not be the best allocation of resources, there is a need for some balance. One has to measure the economic cost against the orientation and the biases which are inherent in external training because of where it takes place, and because of the society, the community, the school of thought out of which it develops and to which trainees are now exposed. One needs to ask oneself what affinity would the training they receive have to the needs of the country, if an increasing number of the people at the top levels in the community are trained outside the country. It is in essence a question of relevance and transferability. There are of course benefits to be derived from training abroad - exposure, wider view of the world, a global perspective on things. Perhaps there should be greater opportunities for South-South training.

### **Impact of Scale**

Scale is the number 1 determinant of economic progress of countries like St. Lucia. There are so many activities that are not practical because of the size of the market and the level of demand, that it would take phenomenal per capita incomes to be able to make a number of activities feasible. There are some advantages however. We can service our demand for training with a relatively small number of well qualified people. Our physical size means that our needs can be easily addressed because there are no high transactional costs. Suggested resolution to the issue of scale - regional initiatives.

## Role of SALCC

SALCC should be at least sub-regional in its focus. It should strive for excellence, and be really the premier tertiary education institution in the Eastern Caribbean. It should function as a Community College and remove the perception that people have of a grand foreboding structure on the Hill. It has a role to play in popularising education and training; in helping people break out of the maléwé syndrome which is overtaking St. Lucia where it is not chic to aspire to be better than you are. SALCC can make people excited about education. It should have a very, very strong Public Relations programme, to send out the message that the Community College is part of the community and is focusing on community needs in education in the formal sense as well as the informal sense. Its Public Relations Department should be active in marketing the programmes it offers, assessing the demand, finding out where the target market is.

### Factors leading to the establishment of SALCC

The establishment of the College seems to have been first of all a matter of expediency, as it seemed to be more economic, more cost-effective and more efficient to have the three institutions brought under one administration. There was the realisation too that one needed to train manpower at a reasonably high level at a variety of levels, and that this could not be done without some sort of tertiary sector. That tertiary sector itself was very much undersubscribed not only in St Lucia but in the whole region. The low level of enrolment of the age cohort - 2-3% was having a drag effect on development. Moreover, the social demand for tertiary education was on the increase.

The expansion of the secondary sector will create an increased demand for tertiary education; the influence of science and technology on the commercial and production sectors will place new demands on society and consequently on the tertiary education sector; pressures from external demand, that is the ability of nationals to interact with the outside world will be extreme.

### Perceptions of the Task Force

The idea of a Community College was a difficult one to sell. The Task Force felt it unreasonable to recommend an institution providing only university - type offerings considering only a small percentage of the age cohort, and these mainly from the island's north-western area were going to benefit from that type of offering. They felt it necessary to provide services for a large array of people at different levels in the technical/vocational area to get the society moving. The decision to make the College an autonomous institution was an important one. It was felt that the bureaucracy in the Ministry of Education would prevent the institution from responding quickly and in a timely manner to various demands and pressures in the society.

The College would be "open" in the sense that it should offer a large variety of courses so that large numbers of people were not refused admission simply because they did not have the opportunity of secondary schooling.

There was some debate over the name of the institution that was to be established, but the choice of "Community College" prevailed because of the need to make people feel that the institution belonged to them and not to a privileged 1%.

The College has been pressed too hurriedly into going into University type programmes. This has been a dreadful mistake because once one has started in this direction, one would have to continue to channel a lot of the energies and the resources of the institution into this area, at the expense of other programmes. The College should be offering NI courses (preliminary courses) particularly in the Natural Sciences instead, to bridge the gulf between the secondary and university level offerings. Some of the things which the College has done therefore has gone against the grain of the original thinking behind the development of the institution as a Community open-type model.

There is some doubt as to whether an island the size of St Lucia can afford to provide the type of facilities and resources needed for a quality university-level education. A community of scholars is what a good university should provide - an exposure to a reasonably wide perspective of what knowledge at the university level is all about. To provide that kind of ambience is going to be costly; not to provide it is doing a disservice to the students. But how can you train a person universally if he lives his life up to the age of 25 and gets a degree on an island of 150,000 people? The use of modern technology, staff and student exchanges are strategies which could be used to get around this problem, but these can never replace the actual experience of going out and being exposed to a wider environment. Distance teaching for its part is cold, impersonal and laborious - it's everything; and it takes an individual with tremendous amount of drive to survive in this learning environment.

### **Planning for an 'open' institution**

The Board of Governors of the College should be selected from a wide cross-section of the public. They ought not to be from the same socio-economic bracket since where you stand really depends on where you sit. There should be structures and mechanisms in place to allow the public to inform them of what is going on and what their needs and concerns are.

### **Financing of tertiary education**

The suggestions that have been made for private sector financing of education are easier to conceptualise and articulate than they are to implement. The individuals or firms concerned must have a clear indication of how they are going to benefit and what kind of say they are going to have in terms of what is going to happen. Employers are looking for a particular type of work-related behaviour from a tertiary education graduate. To this end therefore, a positive attitude to work, a proper work ethic and a certain degree of humanity have to be worked into the programmes offered by tertiary level institutions.

### **The Status of Technical/Vocational Education and Training**

People in the community are beginning to recognise the value of training in the technical/vocational field. The system is still not helping much in this regard because of the unequal recognition given to graduates from the academic and technical areas. There is need too to define a reasonably clearer path for development of people in the technical field. They should be able to enjoy equal opportunities or better since the country is looking towards an economy with a technical, scientific focus. Of course, all these things are more easily articulated than done.

It would take a concerted effort on the part of those concerned, to see the society in these terms and to have the capacity to constantly direct it against the many pressures from those who would like to preserve the status quo.

The health and development of many of the territories in the region depend on their moving in this direction. Failure to do so will only significantly increase dependence on external forces. Tertiary institutions therefore have a very, very significant role to play in this regard: a role which may probably mean that they have to move away from the traditional ways of dealing with tertiary education.

### Development of the tertiary education sector

In examining the factors that have accelerated the establishment of tertiary education facilities in St Lucia and that are contributing to the continuing emphasis being placed on tertiary education, it is important to recognise the back ground to the evolution of the tertiary education sector. The disintegration of the University of the West Indies which followed upon frequent calls by campus territories for nationalisation of the regional facilities, and campus autonomy, forced non-campus territories to begin to think of the long term future of tertiary education not only in the Caribbean, but in their own states. The cost of tertiary education at UWI is escalating for reasons that have nothing to do with the non-campus territories. In addition, the non-campus territories themselves are experiencing severe strains on their finances to respond effectively to their manpower training needs. Besides, there are curriculum limitations at UWI at a time when growing emphasis is being placed on human resource development. There is the growing recognition too that one of the critical constraints on the development process in the non-campus territories is the limitations on manpower training available to their personnel. Another factor that is contributing to the growing urge to establish tertiary education facilities in the non-campus territories (NCC's) is the recognition of the benefits that can accrue to a country by virtue of the infrastructural, technological and intellectual capital available locally. There is too the issue of the politics of higher education as Governments capitalise on the prestige and image aspect of a tertiary education institution.

### Impact of Scale, Isolation, Dependence

It has always been argued that tertiary education in small states has a limited demand function, that the provision of tertiary education in such a context is not financially feasible, and that tertiary institutions themselves are not viable by virtue of factors of scale. In addition, the capital cost of educational infrastructure at the tertiary and higher education level tends to be high. While scale is indeed a factor, the economic

concept of cost-effectiveness which relies heavily on quantitative data should not be the sole consideration. There are qualitative aspects which need to be taken into account when dealing with the issue of cost-effectiveness.

Regional collaboration however can be one of the solutions to the problem of small population and small student numbers. Small nation states, recognising that the viability of the services they offer is a function of size, could seek through regional integration to bring about constitutional arrangements which could have an impact on institutional arrangements within their domain.

Small nation states, because of their small resource base, will continue for some time yet to depend on external assistance. We need to recognise however that donors are in the driver's seat; that their own agendas will influence the things that they are willing to finance, and that their priorities will always be a vital consideration.

The issue of isolation is not a problem in itself since it can be offset by the type of alliances that one cultivates. Hence the call for a regional approach to the development of tertiary education. Isolation becomes problematic only when resources are limited.

### **Tertiary education policy of SALCC**

SALCC is a statutory corporation established to fulfil a public purpose and its function therefore cannot be seen outside of the Act which created it. It is expected then that its goals will change as Cabinet and Parliament changes. However, SALCC has an independent function of keeping abreast of the economic and social changes taking place in the environment and seeking to respond within the limits of its resources, to these changes in collaboration with and in consultation with the Government.



## Role of SALCC

Any tertiary level institution established within a country has to be responsive to the needs of the community and the society, for that is its main role. In small countries however, people can only survive by their wits: hence this emphasis on education and training. Human resource development must take into account the changing demands of the economy and changing needs of the society. Tertiary education must respond to the needs of the individual both as a worker and as a citizen. The pressures that are being brought to bear on small states make it mandatory for tertiary education to play a meaningful role in preparing people for the challenges and opportunities.

In our particular context, there are psychological and intellectual adjustments that must be made in our society that education has not catered for. A conscious and systematic effort must be made to wean descendants of slaves, such as Caribbean people are, from the mental legacy of slavery, and recognition must be given to the fact that the Caribbean man is still in search of himself.

Tertiary education must not only improve the academic standing of our people, but it must also prepare them in an intellectual and cultural sense. Our history has left serious scars on our psyche and education must assist in this healing process. Failure to do so may well result in social chaos and anarchy.

## Future of SALCC

SALCC will eventually evolve either into an independent university or another campus of the UWI. We ought not however to view the College as a university/campus in the traditional sense, but as an institution free from the elitist pretensions which has been a preoccupation of the UWI. The institution being created should be responsive to the needs of the community it serves, in the tradition of some of the American universities. It should be a unique institution emphasizing scholarship, excellence and humanity. The traditional classic model of a university

should not be transplanted in our society; we would be doing ourselves a disservice. The institution should be eclectic in its approach with far-flung international associations, drawing on a pool of metropolitan experience and expertise.

### **Education and Employment**

Education is a value in itself and should transcend the need to prepare people for employment. You educate people not only for jobs, but so that they can make a positive contribution to their society and their country. Education broadens human possibilities, choices and options, so that the educated unemployed are far more mobile, far more capable of adjustment than the uneducated unemployed. The materialistic economic preoccupation devalues the perspective of education as a value in itself, and in small countries like St Lucia, we should try to transcend the economic investment view of education. Small states are particularly influenced by what is happening in the wider world. It would seem therefore that we should also prepare people for greater adaptability in the wider world, in addition to preparing them for service at home. We do have a history of migration and mobility and this trend will continue unless the avenues are completely blocked. We need to prepare people who are more marketable both internally and externally, people who are citizens not only of our own country, but of the Caribbean and the wider world. The educated can exercise greater initiative, and the opportunities available to them are far broader. It would seem therefore that given a choice between the educated unemployed and the uneducated unemployed, one should go for the former since they will, in the long run, be a greater asset to the country. It is true that in training people to be more marketable and flexible, we are contributing to the brain drain. But there is a reverse process which does take place: people do move back, often with greater experience and resources. The brain drain is not necessarily a loss to the country, since these people do contribute to the development of the economy by their remittances, savings and investments within the country. Very often, the brain drain is only a temporary phenomenon.

### **Financing of tertiary education**

Education seems to have been caught up in the whole dialogue of market economics with an emphasis now on the element of cost recovery. It must be remembered however that there are still major pockets of poverty in the country, and that the brightest people in the country are not necessarily the richest. While it is obvious that we can no longer afford the high welfare orientation, the Womb to Tomb syndrome, which we inherited, we need to ensure that cost recovery does not result in elitism in tertiary education. Every effort should be made to assist those who are bright and capable of benefitting from higher education, but do not have the means (Student loans, means tests, etc.). The nature of such cost recovery too needs to be examined; there is no reason why it should not include the provision of services and labour. The time has indeed come to introduce cost recovery mechanisms, but within certain limits; certain criteria must be introduced to determine who should pay and how they should pay.

The corporate sector should be required to make a greater contribution to tertiary education and to education generally, through the imposition of a training levy, for example, since they are a major beneficiary of the training that is provided.

### **SALCC - Open, Comprehensive Model**

While the College wants to adopt an open admission policy, there has to be a limit to the openness and the comprehensiveness of the institution. As far as possible, it should seek to be responsive, but only where the demand is seen to be sufficiently broad as to warrant a response. In attempting to be responsive, SALCC is to be basically inclusive rather than exclusive. It should attempt to bring in as many people as possible, affording as many people as possible the opportunity of pursuing higher education, without becoming financially extravagant or imprudent. Comprehensiveness too should be a function of both supply and demand.

## Governance of SALCC

The danger of retaining tertiary institutions within the centralised bureaucracy is that it allows decision making to be influenced largely by narrow political and sometimes partisan considerations. Policy making at SALCC is however insulated from narrow partisanship, as it is governed by an independent Board. Management of the College is therefore not under direct political control, a very important consideration for a tertiary institution. While the College has not been given policy autonomy, it does however enjoy operational autonomy, which insulates it from the narrow partisanship which could hamper the efficiency and efficacy of the institution. In any case as a statutory corporation, it would have been inadvisable to give total autonomy to the College since it was established by Government to fulfil a public purpose. It needs to remain responsive to the dictates of Government and Parliament, and to that extent, provisions must be made in the law to ensure that that accountability is preserved.

### **Status of TVET**

The educational system has not done a good job in selling the idea of technical/vocational education to the public. Students are not aware of career outlets in the technical field, as there is little guidance and counselling offered in schools, by the private sector itself, or in the local media for the benefit of students, parents and the general public. There is need for a tripartite approach to the guidance/counselling effort.

Programmes other than those on the curriculum (such as open house, open days, field visits) can set the base for opening up the avenue for enhancing knowledge, for changing attitudes and for establishing values so that TVET can make inroads.

Training opportunities do not create jobs. There is need therefore for constant needs analysis to monitor and identify the needs of the market and to tailor the curriculum to meet these needs. This is the strategy that works best in a situation where the market is small and where the needs of the economy are constantly changing.

### **Regional initiatives**

The OECS countries are gradually recognising the need for standardisation and for achieving economies of scale not only in TVET, but in education generally. The concept of Centre of Specialisation is one such initiative which has been tried and evaluated and which seems to be taking root. There is also the programme aimed at standardisation of curriculum to address the issues of relevance, economies of scale, assessment, evaluation and certification.

The Centre of Specialisation experience has shown that the idea has potential. But there are still areas to be ironed out. The programme offered in these Centres to date tend to be inward-looking. Those involved in the management and planning of these

programmes need to be conscious of the need for a regional input in the areas of curriculum development and assessment, for example. Policy guidelines for these Centres are not completely outlined, so it is left to the local institution to grapple with the concept and set its own agenda. What is needed however is some regional planning to come up with a common concept and a common set of guidelines and policies for the planning, management, delivery and evaluation of the programmes.

### Aid agencies operating in the OECS

- |                        |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| <i>CIDA</i>            | - | <i>Financed the OECS Education Reform Strategy.</i>   |
| <i>GTZ</i>             | - | <i>Co-ordination of efforts by aid agencies in the area of curriculum development in technical/vocational education.</i>                                      |
| <i>World Bank/CDB</i>  | - | <i>Infrastructure, Tools and Equipment, Technical Teacher Training, Curriculum Development, Regional co-ordination and Labour Market Information Systems.</i> |
| <i>BDDC</i>            | - | <i>Financing Centres of Specialisation in Technical Teacher Training.</i>   |
| <i>EEC.Lomé III/IV</i> | - | <i>Library Facilities and Resource Centres in the OECS at the tertiary level.</i>   |

### Financing of education

There is need in the OECS countries for greater maximisation of scarce resources in terms of the physical plant and in terms of personnel. Students' projects could be a means of generating funds, while cost effective strategies could be used in the management and utilisation of consumables.

A levy could be imposed on the private sector to finance training programmes. On the other hand, contributions to education could be tax-deductible. While they are helping to finance the system, they can have a greater say in the relevance of the curriculum. There seems to be no other way out at this point in time.

Students too should be required to make some kind of contribution towards the financing of their education at the tertiary level. In this way they will develop a greater level of motivation when they are made to take responsibility for their own training. This kind of initiative needs to be rationalised especially as finances are so scarce. There is a strong belief that this will be part of the answer towards a cost effective strategy to address the region's problems as regards the financing of education and training.

### **Role of the SALCC**

SALCC's level of development at this point in time, the central location which it occupies within the OECS can serve as a regional/OECS focal point for tertiary level education. The management, the administration, the infrastructure and the cadre of expertise that it already has in place can lay the foundation for an OECS Centre of Tertiary Level Education. It can play a leading role in the OECS, but that leading role would force it to refrain from having a purely internal perspective.

### Linkages

The Division is affiliated to the University of the West Indies' Faculty of Education which moderates and certifies its programme of initial teacher training. The conditions of moderation suggest, from all indications that this is a UWI programme offered at SALCC. So too, is the B.Ed programme recently introduced. The first year of the programmes has been rough, and preparing for it even rougher. The major constraint has been UWI which refused to endorse as lecturers anyone without a second degree, or anyone whose own course options did not include UWI's course offerings - an unreasonable stipulation when one considers that its B.Ed programme was itself only recently introduced.

There is some regional collaboration in the initial teacher training programme. The Faculty of Education (Cave Hill Campus) periodically mounts workshops in individual subject areas, where subject tutors discuss syllabuses, and arrange for exams and teaching techniques/strategies. There is also a biennial conference - a Standing Conference of Principals of Teachers' Colleges - where problems and issues are discussed.

### Regional co-operation

SALCC has now become a Centre of Specialisation in Technical Teacher Training in the areas of Home Economics and Industrial Arts. What began as local initiatives were expanded and further developed into regional programmes at the request of the British Development Division in the Caribbean (BDDC). This initiative is probably a starting points for regional unity which is currently under discussion, and an opportunity/example for other institutions to develop other areas of common interest to the region, especially in Technical/Vocational Programmes.



## Successes and Constraints

SALCC is only 6 years old, and it would need time to consolidate itself, especially as it was not established as a new institution. All things considered, it has done quite a lot towards implementing its mandate.

Staffing, however, has been a problem. Teaching is now seen as a last resort, and because of lack of commitment on the part of the majority of Staff, staff development programmes have not always produced the desired results. Turnover is a major constraint. The College is almost always at Square One, picking up new people, and this has hindered progress. Teachers, as public servants are bonded to serve the Government, and not the particular educational institution. Other departments of Government are only too willing to lure away College Staff once they have achieved a certain standard and attained a certain maturity of outlook.

Finance, too has been a problem. It is indeed difficult to conceive how the College can continue to operate effectively when it suffers annual budget cuts of 20%.

### Tertiary education - The Early Years

Tertiary education did not consume much of the Committee on Educational Priorities' time. The Committee was more concerned about problems at the primary level, and about peripheral things like the language issue, culture, the arts etc. However, there was some kind of conceptualisation of a single entity, a sort of vision towards a Junior College. But there were dissensions on the Morne Complex itself - the usual thing about people protecting their turfs their kingdoms and their power structures.

Although there were no formal discussions with the University about the integration of the Morne Complex, UWI's reaction was positive and encouraging. Their only association then with the Morne Complex was with the Teachers' College whose certificates it endorsed. While there is some uncertainty of the extent to which University officials were invited to look at or assist with the developments, they looked towards the integration of the Complex as a positive move. In any case there was within the University itself, during that period, a lot of discussion about what the University itself ought to be doing. The Extra Mural Department itself went through a Mexican jumping bean situation, as it kept being pushed in and out of Faculties.

In 1978, UWIDITE was being tested and the Challenge Scheme was introduced. It was this Outreach programming which was going to give the University's part within the Complex that tertiary level stature at the home base. Until very recently, the Extra Mural Department in St. Lucia was the only real Outreach Programme available. It has had a tremendous following, especially among civil servants. It has indeed saved the Government a lot of money, as it has kept people at home. its contribution to tertiary education was in proving that the market was there. That market is also now being served by SALCC's Continuing Education programming, not in competition with the Extra Mural Department but as complementary to it. This is however the route that tertiary education has to take if it is going to meet the vocational and professional up-grading needs of the society.

The participation of women in these programmes is perhaps one of the more positive outcomes of this Outreach/Continuing Education Drive. According to a CTAP Round Table discussion held in St. Lucia in January, 1992, short-term courses were accessed by a higher proportion of women.

### **Needs of the economy**

During the past year, a training needs assessment of the private sector was conducted. Among the findings was that while the private sector had considerable training needs, there was no one single institution addressing these needs. NRDF found that a lot of the people who would require up-grading would not be able to enter SALCC because of their educational levels. There was need therefore for a lot of hands-on short-term courses.

In a society such as St. Lucia's, tertiary education must embrace post compulsory education. One has to meet the needs of people in a work place which is changing dramatically. There should be the academic stream where professionals and paraprofessionals are trained, but to keep employment levels up through the self-employment scheme, one must also continually provide training for those who are running their own small operations and who need to provide good quality services and goods.

### **Collaboration and Co-operation**

Over the years there has been collaboration between SALCC and the Chamber of Commerce. The Co-ordinator of the Continuing Education Department is a Board Member of NRDF and sits on their Training Committee.

In addition, the four institutions which provide training for the private sector - SALCC, NRDF, the Chamber of Commerce and SLISBA all worked on the recent Training Needs Assessment of the private sector. Among the recommendations in their joint report was that these four institutions should come together annually and

plan their programmes jointly to avoid overlap. There was an element of apprehension and anxiety, for example, when NRDF saw the Canadian Government pouring money into something called the Small Business Resource Centre, into an area in which they were already involved, and wondered to what extent it could not have been a collaborative effort serving their clientele. To date, there has not been duplication however, mainly because the courses at SALCC have demanded a higher level of entry, or the courses have been held on the Morne, whereas NRDF's have been island-wide.

There needs to be more dialogue among the institutions offering training. There needs to be more interfacing between SALCC and the private sector, on the immediate release of their graduates, so that the private sector knows the capability of these new entrants. There is need of an internship or apprenticeship of some kind, or else one needs to work into the programme a year of practical work done under supervision.

To a certain extent, industry is not being served by SALCC except perhaps at the supervisory level. SALCC needs perhaps to concentrate on the type of programme that CTAP sponsored for the contractors and sub-contractors in the Construction Industry.

### **Impact of scale**

The size of tertiary education institutions in these small islands requires a different planning strategy. Staff turnover, for example, needs to be planned for. The College should maximise its resources, especially the physical plant, to get the most out of the investment.

### Country's training needs

The Employers' Federation, a member of Government's Training Committee has stated its views on training very clearly. There is need for training at the tertiary level so that nationals can take advantage of the highest positions in all areas of productive activity in society. There is need too for training at the supervisory/middle management level, and for training of technicians. There should be equal emphasis, at the secondary level, on training in the academic and vocational subjects - a comprehensive type education, while in the technical areas, there should be training in basic skills. Since the public and private sectors will be unable to absorb all entrants into the market, there is need for the type of training that will enable people to make their own way and provide for themselves. There is need for a permanent structure to review the educational system on a continuing basis so that the curriculum can be structured to meet the changing needs of the community.

The country should look towards the development of the service sector - financial institutions, service industries. However, if we are going to service and compete on the global market, we need to ensure that the type of training provided takes into account the importance of quality in the delivery of services and products. So crucial is this issue that the Employers' Federation has identified it as the special topic for discussion at the 1993 Annual General Meeting of the Caribbean Employers' Federation.

### Financing of education

Possibilities include tax levies, tax incentives, tax exemptions, sponsorship of schools, identification of institutions for special assistance. The high cost of labour and production makes it difficult for the country to compete on the world market. Investment in education is what is going to help people survive in the future.



### **Factors which contributed to the development of the tertiary education sector**

In recent times, there has been an increase in the public demand for education, particularly at the tertiary level. This consumer demand has been matched by political support for education - a support that has been widely expressed and sincere, with government allocating almost 30% of its budget to education, and still prepared to borrow money to inject into the system. The cost of training overseas however is exceedingly high, EC\$210,000 being the crude estimate for training a student for a 3 year period at UWI. The economics of the situation therefore influenced the Government to establish a domestic tertiary institution.

The establishment of SALCC was facilitated by the vision of persons like Hunter Francois who had the foresight to reserve Morne Fortune for educational purposes. The task of setting up the tertiary level sector was also facilitated by the availability of a number of persons who were associated with the university, who were fairly clear - headed about the processes of education at the tertiary level, and who could assume leadership for tertiary level institutions. The tertiary sector continues to respond to the emerging needs of the society.

### **Constraints of size**

Smallness of size is indeed a constraint in the development of tertiary level institutions. In a small country of 150,000, it is not cost effective to have a wide diversity of tertiary level institutions. Hence the idea of an integrated multi-functional institution which could service various sectors - quite an innovative structure in itself.

### **Regional co-operation**

The costs involved in the provision of higher level teacher training, for example, has led governments in the region to consider a regional approach. In the interest of co-operation, St Lucia has had to compromise and hand over the offering of some of the

programmes it would have liked to offer locally to other regional institutions.

The elaboration of tertiary education programmes at the regional level is undertaken at two levels. There is first of all the CARICOM Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Education and Culture (SCMEC), and at the sub-regional level, the OECS Council of Ministers. Initiatives undertaken in recent times include the development of curricula at the tertiary level in the area of technical and vocational education (World Bank/CDB project); negotiation of funding for tertiary level education projects (Lomé IV).

### **Role/Emphasis of SALCC**

The college's emphasis should be on middle level training, providing paraprofessionals to service the various sectors of the economy - the construction industry, agriculture, the tourism sector, the education system. In this regard, there is concern about the low level of training in the technical field being offered at the College. It is a bit of a waste, given the high unit cost of training at that level (EC \$10,000) to offer artisan/craft level programmes at a tertiary level institution. It encroaches on space that might have been utilised for more advanced training. The tertiary level sector should do what its name suggests: concentrate on post secondary training and reduce the need for industry to import skilled personnel.

The College should sharpen people's skills in the cultural sector as well, so that culture can come to be regarded not only as a fund-absorber but also as a generator of funds.

The College needs to be responsive to emerging needs. It should not isolate itself; it should be alert to what is emerging and try to respond to it. These needs are communicated to it by the Ministry of Education and other governmental agencies, but it needs also to do its own needs assessment through its advisory committees. It needs to be sensitive; (not like UWI which cannot be regarded as being particularly sensitive, judging from its lack of response to the region's call for



technical/vocational programmes). It should not be limited to non-degree programmes like its American and Canadian counterparts. What the country needs is a multi-functional institution which tries to do as much as possible.

### **The Status of TVET**

TVET lacks appeal in St Lucia, and not without reason. The system itself does not give uniform credence to qualifications of persons graduating in the academic and technical fields from the tertiary institutions. Until the system itself gives value to technical subjects the society is not going to respond favourably. There should be awards and recognition for excellence and achievement in the technical areas as is being given to graduates in the academic and teacher training areas. If students see scope for academic and professional mobility in the technical/vocational area, then they would be encouraged to take it up. Everyone recognises the importance of TVET now, but the status barrier needs to be removed, and unless the question of accreditation which ensures upward mobility is sorted out, there will never be total acceptance of TVET. The UWI itself has done little to support it. Yet TVET at the tertiary level is definitely the answer to the human resource development needs of the country. Human resource development is contingent on training and that training to a great extent is dependent upon the persons who can give that drive at the middle management level.

### **Education and employment**

There is need for much greater productivity and consequently room for up-grading the competencies of people already employed. The country's middle level range of manpower is limited and that needs to be improved. People's entrepreneurial skills need to be sharpened, and they can only be developed through appropriate technical and vocational education. There is no need to worry yet about saturating the labour market, for it will take a long time to train and up-grade the adult work force.

## **Financing tertiary education**

In view of Governments' changing economic circumstances, the public sector should not take on too much in the way of financing education. Everyone should make a contribution, particularly at the tertiary level, according to their ability to pay. The cost of tertiary education is such that if you required people to pay the full cost then you would be creating an elitist system. Part of the whole process of democratisation is to expand opportunities, and if opportunities are only available to people with the necessary resources, then we are in fact stratifying the society.

**Ref: CNE-L, 31.08.92**

### **The Open Comprehensive Community Model - Perspectives**

This model suggests an institution which would:-

- 1 meet the learning needs of the community with regards to community organisations, and institutions, business groups and individuals;*
- 2 provide people with the opportunity to acquire the necessary academic qualifications that are needed to pursue programmes in which they are interested;*
- 3 provide people an opportunity to pursue programmes in their own time and to get the necessary tutorial help and other support.*

### **SALCC - Challenges and Prospects**

SALCC's motto "Pursuit of Excellence" is in itself a challenge. Then there are the challenges faced in meeting the growing demands and expectations of the community in terms of special programmes; in developing programmes in keeping with desired levels and standards and in providing space for *Staff and students - the latter limiting* College enrolment - and of recruiting and retaining specialised Staff.

SALCC can however count among its successes, the physical expansion in terms of the new structures being put in place, and the increase in the number of programmes being offered. There is great promise of further development and advancement as a tertiary level institution, particularly within such regional initiatives as ACTI charged with the co-ordination of issues relating to the standardisation, evaluation, accreditation, and articulation of the region's tertiary level programme.

**Ref: MEC-G, 04.09.92**

### **Government's policy on tertiary education**

Government expects that as many students as possible will avail themselves of training opportunities at the post-secondary level - university, professional and paraprofessional levels, and specialist programmes in the technical/vocational fields. Tertiary education is being accorded the highest priority bearing in mind the need to ensure that the populace acquires some level of skills/training in areas that will allow it to compete or to operate within the community in the areas of business, industry, commerce etc.

### **Assessment of economy's needs**

In the past, there was no mechanism in place to assess the needs of industry, commerce and the private sector,. One just assumed that the training programmes offered would equip people with the necessary knowledge and skills to do a job. It was all done on a trial and error basis; as the demand arose, one focused attention on that particular need.

Five years ago, St Lucia embarked upon a Technical/Vocational Project, a component of which was a Scheme to collect data which related to labour market information. The Labour Market Information Survey collects data on industry, commerce and the labour market which provides the Ministry with the sort of information to structure the school's curriculum in a manner which will help provide school leavers with the training opportunities which will make them function in the job market.

### **Factors contributing to the expansion of the tertiary sector**

The development thrust of the country as pursued by Government is biased towards 3 main areas - Agriculture, Manufacturing/Industrialisation and Tourism. The level of economic activity which has been taking place in St Lucia has forced people to

acquire skills in specific areas. The education system has therefore placed a lot of emphasis on education for the world of work with a consequent increase in the numbers moving into the area of TVET. Out of school people recognise the need to upgrade or acquire their skills and this has resulted in the growth and mushrooming of SALCC's Continuing Education Programme. The general structure of the economy has also forced people to move into the area of small business. This trend will continue. With events in Europe and the EEC and the uncertain future of the banana industry, people will have to look at alternative activities to promote economic development; business ventures, manufacturing enterprises, the service industry. The specific skills necessary to sustain these are not readily acquired at the primary and secondary levels, and therefore the demand for tertiary education will increase.

St Lucia, like the rest of the region will have to consider making a switch from the exploitation of natural resources to the development of human resources. From a plantation society and economy, people moved naturally into agriculture, working their small family plots. But in the face of competition and high production costs, agriculture now has to be seen as a business, and we will see a gradual falling off of those who were in it by chance and not by choice. All the other areas of economic activity open to them however require some form of expertise and we will see an increase in the demand for training.

### **The status of TVET**

It is unfortunate that people are not completely sold on TVET at the tertiary level, a response reflected in the number of applicants to SALCC for whom TVET is a second choice. But things are changing. In today's job market, a person with a specific skill stands a better chance, even though the skill is not matched by any great degree of intellectual capability. Admittedly this obtains mainly at the lower levels of industry, since we need a sound academic education and a higher level of educational attainment if we are going to compete at the managerial and supervisory levels.

The country's Industrial Estates attract a large number of our low level achievers. In this environment, it is not what you know, it is what you can do. The Senior Primary School programme must therefore change its orientation and become more pre-vocational. Its curriculum must be specifically geared to the type of job opportunities that are available. The whole educational system must work to instill a proper work ethic in the people whom we are preparing for the job market. For it would appear that the major shortcoming in our efforts to increase productivity in the industrial and commercial sector is the lack of a positive work ethic.

### **Role of SALCC**

The College's main area of emphasis, at this time, should be the provision of middle management level training, since the majority of people in the community operate at this level and below. SALCC must see its role as being integral to the development of the community in terms of the demands of the public service, the social services, agriculture, the private sector, etc.

SALCC as a fourth campus of UWI? It is feared that this will come sooner than we realise, but we should move in this direction very, very tentatively. It may be good for the Government's political C.V., but not from the standpoint of the opportunities that will be made available to nationals. What will eventually happen if we move too rapidly in this direction is that the College will get engulfed in the more idealistic, theoretical, higher-level initiatives, and in so doing deprive the average person of an opportunity to benefit from some form of tertiary education. The impact of the institution on the community will be lost; a most regrettable situation.

### **Impact of scale**

Smallness of size as far as availability of finance has not affected the College. When SALCC was established, the Government tried to ensure that the institution from the outset got the fullest support, and that people developed confidence as quickly as possible in its capacity and its potential. The institution has really been privileged in

the level of resources that has been allocated to it, and criticisms have been made, even within the Ministry of Education, of the high per capita costs of the institution. But this has paid dividends, for in the shortest possible time, the institution has come of age; it has established an image and is being increasingly asked to institute training programmes for various sectors.

Constraints of smallness and the need to achieve economies of scale however have made the country look towards regional initiatives and regional collaboration. From the social standpoint however, from the standpoint of national needs, setting priorities and achieving things within certain time frames, that creates a problem.

### **Financing tertiary education**

It is unfortunate that in the St Lucian community, the private sector does not seem to appreciate that education is an interactive process and that they have a shared responsibility to provide for it. If there is no involvement of the social partners in education and training, there will be serious imbalances and mismatch between the type of training provided and the needs of the society and the economy. There are ways in which the private sector can participate: sponsorships and endowments, for example. The Chamber of Commerce considers only the economic aspect of managing an educational system, simply in terms of dollars and cents.

### **Aid for education**

There is not much comfort to be had from the current climate of international aid. Donor institutions are requiring structural adjustment of economies to produce one's surpluses. There has been a distinct shift in emphasis. Geopolitical issues are not centred around our part of the world anymore; there is no longer any vested interest in the Caribbean; no compelling issues to divert the interest of the Western Block and the international community from the happenings in Eastern Europe and Latin America

### The Labour Market Information System

In 1988 Government established its Labour Market Information System as part of the OECS Technical/Vocational Project. Among the outputs expected of the System is the production of LMIS bulletins, surveys of training institutions that provide TVET in terms of annual output and courses offered, tracer studies and manpower surveys. The data thus collected is to be fed back into the system so that institutions get an idea of the type of programmes they should mount.

The work of LMIS is managed by a broad-based Committee with representation from Government, private sector institutions, trade unions, employers and the National Development Corporation. The basic work is being done (1989 Tracer Study of technical graduates from SALCC 1988-1989; manpower survey) but the data is not being processed and reported for lack of clerical support staff. Apparently the Officials are not sufficiently committed to the idea, or have not really appreciated the contribution of such a system, to provide the resources to keep it going and provide the information that they all see as being urgently needed. There does not seem to be that political will to sustain the system.

Our decision makers continue to operate in a situation where they take decisions without being informed. The Government's Training Division is represented on the Committee, but makes little attempt to get the data it needs from LMIS to inform its decisions on training requirements. At the moment planners are merely firing shots in the dark hoping they will hit the target. Cabinet itself set up NATVET, the National Advisory Council for TVET to advise on who should be trained, what kind of training should be given and at what level, locally, regionally, etc but this Council has not been functioning. There has to be more dialogue and more co-ordination of training efforts. At the regional level the OECS LMIS co-ordinators meet to comfort each other. There is a great deal of sharing of experiences of ideas, of publications, of networking and interaction.



### Planning in a small country context

The Planning process is the same whatever the size of the country. However it is easier in the large country context because of the larger resources available to planners, both in terms of finance and personnel. The problem in the small country is the unavailability of human resources where one person has to do so much. The small country planner is caught up in so many things, his attention is so often divided that he is not always able to do a thorough job.

Dependence on external factors does not in itself affect planning. It cannot be ignored, of course, but the planner needs to know that he must take this factor into consideration in his planning.

### **Current market for tertiary graduates**

The large number of expatriates employed in various sectors of the economy is evidence of the low level of skilled manpower among St Lucian nationals in key areas. We need therefore to expand our tertiary education sector to provide training to meet the needs of these sectors. There are problems however in determining exactly what those needs are because of the country's economic structure and the changing demands of the international market both of which place severe restrictions on the development of the tertiary education sector.

The uncertainty of the banana market and of the manufacturing sector seems to direct the country into developing the service sector, - offshore banking, insurance, and particularly tourism. One recognises that these areas too are extremely sensitive to external conditions, but there must be decisions taken as there is a country to be run. The topography of our island does not allow for any serious development of agriculture, and in many instances, it might be cheaper to import agricultural produce. Whatever agricultural activity is sustained will perhaps be restricted to domestic consumption, since to date no suitable replacement *has yet been found for* bananas. Tertiary education therefore would have to be biased towards the training of people for the service sectors, particularly at the managerial and supervisory levels.

### **Role of SALCC**

In view of the constantly changing face of the job market, SALCC should establish a good Guidance and Counselling Department to advise students both at the secondary and tertiary levels on employment trends, training needs and career outlets.

### **Contribution of Labour Organisations**

While local Labour Organisations have not given any serious thought to the

professional development of their membership, their umbrella organisations have in a sense been doing their share in management training at their three Labour Colleges in the region.

### **Financing of tertiary education**

While Governments should see the provision of primary and secondary schooling as a basic obligation to their citizens, users of tertiary education should be asked to contribute towards the cost of their education.

With the backing of a political statement from Government the College could request sponsorship from the private sector particularly of programmes from which they draw their recruits.

### **Future of SALCC**

It would be a good thing if SALCC were to develop into a campus of the UWI, as this would allow more St. Lucians access to tertiary education, particularly in the academic areas.

The College is already making progress in the technical area, and perhaps it needs to develop its vocational programming. The community already regards SALCC as the institution which will help shape the future of this country; which has the responsibility and even perhaps the right to do so. This is the mandate that the Community has given it. To do so, it would have to significantly expand its Outreach Programmes to begin to prepare people to take advantage of its offerings.

**Budgetary procedures**

The College's annual Estimates of Expenditure are prepared by the College, approved by the Board of Governors and submitted to the Minister of Education and Culture. It is then incorporated into the Ministry's submission and then presented to Cabinet for approval. The College is then informed through the Ministry of the amount that has been approved. This is paid to the College as quarterly allocations by the Government's voucher system. The College applies, through the Ministry, to the Director of Finance for its quarterly allocation. The Ministry advises the Treasury of the amount to be disbursed which amount is then lodged in the College's bank account held in a commercial bank. The amount disbursed depends on the Government's current cash flow. Should the Government be experiencing any severe cash flow problems, the allocation is *disbursed in dribs and drabs*. This can be quite a slow process, as sometimes it takes the whole quarter or more to get the quarterly allocation. Every effort is made, it is true, to meet monthly salaries to staff, but other areas have a rough time of it. Allocations are seldom disbursed in block amounts to cover the request, neither is there any certainty that it will be given when requested, even if the amount has been approved. This of course has serious implications for planning. Yet changes in this budgetary practice will not be easily achieved, since this is how the Government's financial system operates.

In addition, the Ministry can and does make cuts to the College's approved budget and its allocations without first consulting the Management. This type of Control over the College's finances has serious implications for the institution's autonomy. It is suspected that the Ministry of Education uses the argument that too much is being spent on the College to justify the cuts which they make. And this, notwithstanding the fact that the College is being asked to take on new programmes every year. The Ministry must be aware of the initial costs of establishing new programmes, and yet the College has suffered successive cuts to its operational budget. The College has been able to meet such shortfalls from its Sundries Accounts

- from fees and administrative costs of programmes which it administers for external agencies - but this cannot go on forever. It has been able to survive because of astute financial management and a lot of viring of funds, so perhaps Government is beginning to feel that perhaps it need not bother after all. But the College cannot go on like this for much longer. Government needs to match their flowery speeches on progress at SALCC with far more concrete financial support.

SALCC has no great income - generating capability. The total amount collected in fees, for example, will not even meet the salaries of 2 staff members. A substantial increase in fees will have implications for access, not to mention adverse political fall-out. The College is looking towards other avenues of financial support, particularly from the private sector.

The unstable financial climate has implications for staffing - salaries and gratuities, staff development, staff increases to service old and new programmes, - for development of infrastructure and for implementation of new programmes.

**Factors leading to the development of the tertiary education sector**

In the period leading up to the development of SALCC, there was a large number of qualified people who were unable to proceed to university for financial and personal reasons, and it was felt that if there had been a tertiary institution on the island, they would have been able to avail themselves of the opportunity for further study. Moreover, having one's own tertiary institution meant that you were better able to respond to your own development needs. There was the opportunity to conduct in-depth research for accurate data to substantiate one's observations and so respond to these needs. There were courses too which were not available in any other institution in the area which suited St Lucia's particular needs, particularly in the field of adult literacy. There was need to offer at the tertiary level courses in literacy work. The benefit of tertiary education to students was obvious. But the development of the tertiary sector gave staff and management the opportunity to discover latent capabilities and provided opportunities for growth. In establishing our own institutions, we needed to have connections with other tertiary institutions in the region; we needed to keep abreast of developments in the various fields instead of being content simply to send our students to other institutions. In this way, we became actors rather than simply reactors.

**SALCC**

SALCC was conceived to be a local tertiary institution which would benefit a broad spectrum of the society offering opportunities ranging from degree - level courses to short-term part-time courses. The academic and technical development of students enrolled in the institution is obvious. But the benefits to be derived go much deeper than that. One would like to think that SALCC can help people actualise themselves. Its philosophy of education and personal development could so permeate its programmes, that people, in the process of following a course, could begin to have confidence in themselves and build up their self esteem and self worth. St Lucians

on the whole are shy and reticent; they lack self-confidence. There is a lot to be done in the area of self-esteem and SALCC can help in building this self-esteem. When that is done, it is automatic that they would reach out and serve others.

Although a college like SALCC should have some degree of academic and religious freedom, it is in no way contradictory to suggest that a Christian atmosphere should permeate the activities of the College. This Christian philosophy could be reflected for example, in the way staff lead their personal lives, in the way they teach, in the way staff and students relate to each other, so that people coming in from the outside could feel and sense that there was something wholesome going on at the College. One should feel that there is something dynamic going on in St Lucia in the area of tertiary level education. The College is moving, developing, finding out what is available overseas, choosing the best from wherever the best is to be found, and integrating these into our own, with what is best locally, to develop the country on the social, economic and political levels. Hopefully, SALCC should be able to offer people what they missed lower down the educational ladder - the attitudes, the values and the discipline which would foster the self-pride that must inevitably precede national pride.

SALCC should be able to give people an opportunity to think for themselves, to be creative, to have an enquiring mind, to make informed decisions. The course content of its programmes must be balanced by a sense of responsibility, a social conscience. Beneath the course content should be imparted that holistic view of self, of God, of the world, that would somehow permeate everything that is done at the College.

The College is in a bit of difficulty now because it cannot always get the kind of Staff it wants. But with Staff Development programmes and a stronger financial base, the College can look to better Staff to assist in its mandate of people development.

In the long-term SALCC could succeed in getting its customers to recognise and live out the principle of self-community-world and enjoy the ripple effect of these concentric circles.

**Ref: RGS-P, 30.09.92**

### **The Open Comprehensive Community College Model**

The College has been able to fulfil its mission of "open-ness" by providing programmes to a wide cross-section of the community. Its full-time programmes have done fairly well and its Continuing Education programmes have taken care of the needs of the population.

### **Role of the College**

The College is dedicated to educating and training people to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes for a better quality of life; to training people at different levels in management skills for self-improvement. The current emphasis, however, is on the academic. The College recognises that and is moving towards catering for the cultural and aesthetic.

### **Constraints and Weaknesses**

The College has been operating under several constraints, and space has been one of them. Shortage of space has affected its ability to meet demand, but it is hoped that this will be relieved somewhat through current and proposed physical expansion.

Staff recruitment, too, has been problematic, and the College has had to look to the region and further afield. Staff turnover has been most acute at the Division of Arts, Science and General Studies. While the reasons for staff instability at DASGS have not been analysed, one senses that the level of maturity of recruits to the Division may very well be one of the factors. Perhaps because of the fact that staff recruited for DASGS have a broader range of choices, and because they have not yet made up their minds as to whether teaching is what they really want, the time they spend at the College is short in comparison to that of Staff from the Division of Teacher Education and Educational Administration, for example.



However, the College's Staff Development programme, particularly the Study Awards have been somewhat successful in slowing down the rate of Staff turnover. The Award bonds them to serve the College for four years, and so they have perhaps a change of heart, an attitudinal change maybe, and therefore they stay on a little longer. Staff development therefore aids Staff retention.

The College has not yet been able to fully integrate its programmes. It could perhaps look to more flexible timetabling to achieve that type of integration. There should also be more utilisation of the physical facilities. There would be costs incurred but it would be worth the while to ease up the situation of increasing demand, particularly of the adult population seeking certification of one kind or another.

### **Strengths and successes**

One of the College's main successes has been its Outreach and Continuing Education programmes.

### **Future of SALCC**

"Where do we go when we cannot go anymore"? The Outreach Programme is one way out in assisting the College with its mandate. Already the Continuing Education programmes have experimented with parallel programmes to supplement its full-time programmes. If the College's physical facilities can be used at all times - day, evening, weekend, summer-through the distance and continuing education approach, the institution may be able to get very far. The Outreach Centre in Vieux-Fort is a first step and there is talk of another in Gros Islet. There is the suggestion of establishing a Southern Campus to offer parallel full-time programmes. The same constraints of Staffing and Finance would impact however, though it is a suggestion that should be examined critically.

## **Public Relations**

The public holds the College in high regard. Both locally and regionally, SALCC is regarded as the leading College in the OECS, and as a model for others to follow. Management personnel from other institutions in the region have come to the College on attachment, and so in this regard, it could be said that SALCC is projecting some image. This favourable image is held even by people on the international level. The College's efforts are therefore being recognised. Small though its contribution may seem, SALCC has made an impact on the community. Many adults in the community still wish that there was something they could register for at the College, a wish that is reflected in the success of the Continuing Education programme.

**Planning and funding for training**

The country's priority areas of training are decided upon annually by the Ministry of Planning which, quite appropriately, is responsible for Training. The Public and Private Sectors and Small Business are invited annually to indicate their training needs to the Ministry which then proceeds to draw up a short-list of priority training areas for the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers. The short-listing is done by a training Committee on which sit representatives from the Employers' Federation the Public Service Unions, and the Permanent Secretaries of Government Ministers. In arriving at what is popularly referred to as "Government's Priority List", the Committee takes into account the numbers graduating in the particular field, the funding available, the levels at which training is required and the absorptive capacity of the market. The Ministry is concerned that such frequent requests may lead to respondent fatigue and possibly indifference, and has set in motion mechanisms for the preparation and dissemination of Five-Year National Training Plans.

Government spends an estimated EC\$5 million dollars annually on scholarships and grants. Much of tertiary education training however is funded by donor/aid agencies who increasingly stipulate the training areas they are prepared to fund. Tertiary education training by funding agencies is for the most part project related or related to sectoral planning, with priorities accorded to developmental sectors such as agriculture, tourism, industry, administration and management. Short-term courses, usually not exceeding one year are preferred. Donor funding for health, education and social services is not readily available. Increasingly funding agencies are showing a preference for funding programmes pursued at regional institutions. The Ministry of Planning suggests four reasons for this trend: institution-building, cost-cutting, cost-sharing and an attempt to stem the brain drain from the region. Funds made available to the Government for tertiary education training are administered by the agencies themselves with the agencies making direct payments to the institutions and the recipients.

In the face of such restrictions, Government has had to find innovative ways of providing tertiary education opportunities at home, for those priority areas for which external funding is not available. Among these is the new requirement that the first year of the University of the West Indies degree programme be done at home (at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College) and the introduction of a Modular Programme for a degree in Public Sector Management to be administered by the UWI, but conducted at home along In-Service Training lines.

In addition, the Ministry of Planning conducts its own local in-house training for its public sector workers, and administers sponsored training programmes for the private sector.

The Training Division of the Ministry of Planning recognises that there are several institutions and agencies involved in training, both in the formal and non-formal sectors, and is in the process of establishing a network of Trainers which should permit better co-ordination of training efforts and reduce duplication of training initiatives. A directory of trainers is considered an essential component of this initiative.

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Section A of the Report includes a brief description of the eight Eastern Caribbean States that form the OECS, the developmental imperatives dictating educational reform and the current characteristics and state of education in the sub-region. Section B sets out the Reform strategies that have been identified for decision and action in the eight areas.

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