EXTRA-LESSONS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
QUALIFICATION INFLATION AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

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This paper examines the growing prevalence of extra-lessons, modes of participation, and equity of access in the scramble for educational credentials among secondary school students in Trinidad and Tobago. The paper aims to add greater dimension to existing theories of student allocation by stressing the growing significance of shadow education on the distribution of student outcomes. Through empirical data collection, two main hypotheses were tested through established statistical methods: (a) that excessive examination pressure is responsible for the growing popularity of extra-lessons among secondary school students, and (b) that the patterns of participation in extra-lessons reflect the patterns of social and educational stratification found in Trinidad and Tobago. The main research instrument utilized by the study was a survey questionnaire, administered to 500 students at 8 secondary schools throughout Trinidad. Upon hypotheses testing, data analysis revealed strong positive relationships, confirming the study's assertions that extra-lessons is indeed involved in qualification inflation and threaten the equality of educational opportunities.

Introduction

The demand for education in Trinidad and Tobago has always been greater than the supply of school places. Beyond the shortage of school places, there has also been a shortage of quality education, manifested in a shortage of trained teachers, error-ridden school textbooks, inadequate school grounds and facilities, and severe limitations of "choice" for students and parents (Campbell, 1992). These obstacles have not retarded the educational aspirations of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago; instead, they have fueled the growth of a host of informal innovative solutions to overcome the problems of shortages (Harvey, 1981). Various forms of private tutoring, innovative forms of delivery, and a broad range of supplementary learning aids have been developed over the decades in an effort to satisfy the population's thirst for education. In
decades in an effort to satisfy the population's thirst for education. In contemporary Trinidad and Tobago society, these informal educational innovations have developed into an "industry," with increasingly significant impacts on the formal educational system.

This paper examines a type of informal educational innovation, locally called "extra-lessons," that has been growing in popularity in Trinidad and Tobago over the past decade. Extra-lessons appears in a variety of forms and may be attended for revision, supplemental, or even leisure purposes. This study, though, will focus on those students enrolled in secondary schools and preparing for formal examinations (Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) and A' Level), who seek private tuition during after-school hours in the subjects for which they intend to register in the examinations. Extra-lessons "shadows" the formal system as it is not intended to replace formal education, but to reinforce what has already been done in school. Its popularity, though, casts doubts on the entire process of formal schooling in Trinidad and Tobago.

The rapid expansion of extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago may be seen as one of the most significant developments in education in the 1990s, and represents a disturbing paradox. This paradox is manifested in a sharp inflation of educational qualifications and the concurrent deterioration of the formal school system. The consequence is an increasingly competitive student body, willing to do almost anything to acquire the necessary credentials for employment. Students feel compelled to seek out additional tutoring beyond the formal school system, faced with the prospect of competing for employment in a job market increasingly overcrowded with certificate holders.

The very informal and varying nature of extra-lessons may explain why there has been no previous research on the prevalence and possible effects of extra-lessons on education in Trinidad and Tobago. The lack of formal inquiry or official comment regarding extra-lessons has left many parents feeling unsure, anxious, and ambivalent about if and where to enroll their children in extra-lessons. Of primary concern, though, are the implications of extra-lessons on the equity of educational opportunities available to secondary school students in Trinidad and Tobago.

The implications of a highly-developed, informal educational system has been little studied in the context of modern developing societies, as most researchers assume that it is the formal school system--what goes on within school walls--that has the greatest impact on student aspirations and achievements. Given the prevalence of extra-lessons at both the primary and secondary school levels in Trinidad and Tobago, it would be expected that parents, teachers, and educational administrators would be equally concerned about the social implications of the practice of extra-lessons. This study is thus very much concerned with identifying why extra-lessons has suddenly become such an important
part of education in Trinidad and Tobago: Which students are most likely to be enrolled in extra-lessons? What are its impacts on the formal educational system? How does extra-lessons affect student chances, and what are the implications for equality of educational opportunity?

**Shadow Education and Juku**

The phenomenon of extra-lessons is indeed extraordinary in its form and structure, but by no means unique to Trinidad and Tobago. Extra-lessons may be compared to several forms of "shadow education" identified throughout the world. The term *shadow education* has come to refer to those organized educational pursuits, operating outside the peripheries of the formal school system, that provide additional tutorship, designed to improve the student's performance in school. Shadow education may be manifest in a number of forms, including the practice of past-paper examinations, correspondence or distance learning, private tutorship, or private after-school classes (Stevenson & Baker, 1992). In Britain, *cramming schools* cater to a niche market of students competing for entry into prestigious universities. *Prep(eration) classes* for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) (a standard selection mechanism used by North American universities) have become very popular in many areas of the United States. Extra-lessons most closely resembles what the Japanese call *juku*, which is said to shadow the formal school system.

*Juku* was identified in Japan by Stevenson and Baker (1992) as a form of shadow education, utilized by secondary school students preparing for university entrance examinations. The study observed that it was the general opinion among many students, parents, and teachers that participation in *juku* was important for success in upcoming examinations. The authors suggest that shadow education is likely to develop in societies where there is excessive reliance on centrally-administered examinations, and where educational qualifications and social and occupational opportunities are closely tied, and students are encouraged to compete. When young people's entire fortunes and life chances are based on academic performance, students and parents are careful to explore all possible alternatives.

**The Scramble for Education**

The study will develop conceptual links between the practice of extra-lessons and the growing demand for education in Trinidad and Tobago in the post-oil-boom period. The process of educational or qualification inflation has been well documented by studies in highly developed, as
well as rapidly developing countries since the 1960s (Beeby, 1966; Buswell, 1984; Dore, 1976). Educational inflation occurs when educational qualifications become the accepted device for occupational allocation and, thus, a dominant force in social and economic stratification. The effect is that young people not only attend schools in larger numbers, but are also willing to do whatever it takes to obtain the proper qualifications perceived as necessary for employment (Dore, 1976).

In Trinidad and Tobago, students, parents, and even teachers view extra-lessons as providing a competitive edge in the battle for educational qualifications. Since educational qualifications have become the new benchmark of the modern world; the new measure of a person's value, there has been a scramble for diplomas, credentials, and qualifications that threatens to distort the aims and goals of the educational system. Too many students and parents have become overly anxious, if not obsessed, with examination passes alone and have lost sight of the intrinsic value of education. Employers, too, recruit new employees solely based on educational qualifications, instead of developing appropriate skills, attitudes, and experiences. Clearly, extra-lessons is not the solution for educational inflation, but rather a symptom of the problem.

Less obvious, but just as critical, are the effects on the non-participants in extra-lessons. If extra-lessons does indeed improve the performance of its participants, or even raise overall educational standards as a whole, it is conceivable that groups who fail to enroll in extra-lessons may eventually become socially disadvantaged. If extra-lessons is only really accessible to certain groups of students, from certain social backgrounds, we need to examine how extra-lessons may indeed be involved in reducing the chances of social mobility for less “well-off” students.

This paper draws attention to the growing phenomenon of extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago, and insists that there are important and unexplored implications on the equality of opportunities that have yet to be considered. Through deeper study of extra-lessons, complex issues are expected to emerge regarding the quality of education, the equality of access to education, and its consequences on social and occupational stratification. The following sections outline the process through which this study collected empirical data for analysis, in the context of educational inflation and student stratification.
Data collection on the phenomenon of extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago was undertaken in 1997, during the months of March and April, just as students were preparing for formal examinations. The study relied on quantitative methods to gather data, through a detailed survey questionnaire administered to secondary school students throughout Trinidad. A sample of 500 students was chosen, through random systematic sampling, from 8 secondary schools deemed to represent rural/urban, regional, and school-type differences.

Of the eight schools in the study, two were located in the southern part of Trinidad, one in the central region, and five in the northern part of Trinidad. To represent rural, urban, and semi-urban differences, two schools were selected from rural areas, three from urban areas, and three from semi-urban areas. Rural, urban, and semi-urban were defined by population concentration in the area where schools were located. Since secondary school students in Trinidad often attend schools outside their area of residence, an exact fit between school and residence could not be expected.

Schools selected for the survey included junior secondary, comprehensive, government secondary, and "prestige" denominational secondary schools. These schools were stratified on the basis of their historical reputation and examination scores over time. Secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago can be stratified, as there are significant qualitative differences in the type of education they deliver, and the courses available at different levels of the secondary school system. This hierarchy means that, at the lowest level of the system, junior secondary schools have come to be considered "inferior," usually the last choice for students sitting the Common Entrance Examination (CEE). Denominational schools, on the other hand, are typically the first choice for students sitting the CEE, and have come to be considered "superior," or prestige secondary schools.

The research instrument, in the form of a short questionnaire, was constructed to verify two specific hypotheses, as well as to gather other information on the social backgrounds, motives, strategies, and attitudes of students preparing for examinations. Data analysis followed standard statistical procedures, first through hypothesis testing to establish significance, and then through further procedures such as ANOVA statistics, Pearson's R, and Spearman correlation coefficient and multiple regression to determine more precise relationships. The following are the two main hypotheses tested in the study:
Hypothesis 1: \((H_1)\) Participation in extra-lessons increases as secondary school students face greater “examination pressure.”

The premise is that students enroll in extra-lessons to relieve the “examination pressure” they undergo as they approach formal examinations. The paper will show that extra-lessons becomes more and more popular among secondary school students as competition for educational qualifications increases. As greater and greater emphasis is placed on performance on examinations, students seek additional tutoring to deal with the great examination pressure as examinations approach.

Hypothesis 2: \((H_2)\) Participation in extra-lessons reflects patterns of educational and social stratification in Trinidad and Tobago.

Middle-class students and students already successful in the formal school system will be more likely to participate in extra-lessons. Since extra-lessons is often a financial and emotional sacrifice for both parents and students, it is expected that those with greater resources would be more likely to participate in extra-lessons. Students from middle-class homes may simply be better able to afford the services of an extra-lessons teacher. It is thus expected that students from white-collar families would be over-represented in the extra-lessons sample population. Students from working-class families, whose parents may be less able to afford tuition, are expected to be less likely to participate in extra-lessons.

Educational Expansion

Theoretical models (see Figures 1 & 2) were constructed to conceptualize the process through which enrollment in extra-lessons grows alongside expansion of the formal system. Figure 1 illustrates the rate at which secondary student enrollment expands over time. The graph shows the typical S-shaped curve indicating logarithmic expansion between the 1960s and 1990s. Enrollment increases only slightly up until 1960, after which it increases steadily. Educational expansion is slow at first, but by the midpoint between 1960 and 1990, there is more than 50% enrollment, and by 1990 there is close to 90% enrollment (see Figure 1). At this point, expansion levels off as enrollment approaches 100%. What this graph represents is the pattern by which educational expansion has been described in the literature. As
more and more students enroll in formal education, it becomes more and more costly to stay out of school.

The study theorizes that the same pattern of expansion of the formal system should hold true for shadow education. As more and more secondary school students enroll in extra-lessons, those who only attend regular classes begin to feel the "pressure" to stay competitive. Enrollment in extra-lesson is indicated by the gray line below the line representing the expansion of formal education. The starting and ending points differ significantly from that of formal education, as enrollment in shadow education is inevitably related to both the formal system and the ability of parents to afford shadow education. It should also be apparent that shadow education is only really possible after expansion in formal education is well underway. Shadow education is thus projected as a significant phenomenon only when formal education becomes saturated, and in this graph it begins in the 1990s (see Figure 1). The expansion of shadow education is also projected to level off well below the 100% of the formal system. Enrollment in extra-lessons will be limited by students' ability to pay. This conceptual model by no means reflects all possible variables affecting enrollment, but rather a theoretical model that makes it easier to visualize the mechanism through which enrollment may expand over time. Such variables as culture, the allocation processes, real and perceived importance of education, occupational opportunities, social class differences, costs of living, and so forth, are expected to play significant roles in the expansion of both formal and shadow education.

Figure 1. Shadow education and educational expansion.
Shadow Education and Educational Inflation

Figure 2 illustrates the expected role that shadow education plays in further accelerating the process of educational inflation. As discussed earlier, the cycle of educational inflation occurs when employers begin to increase educational requirements. This is usually a response to either an increase in the number of applicants for employment, or an overall increase in the educational qualifications among candidates. As job-seekers find it increasingly difficult to find employment with their current credentials, many choose to pursue further education. Since economic growth is often unable to absorb the exponentially growing population of certificate holders, employers are again forced to increase educational requirements (see Figure 2). The cycle continues as the jobless are compelled to return to school or forced to accept jobs that they may consider below them. Shadow education further compounds the problem by extending the hours of student/teacher contact beyond the formal system. The problem is especially evident in Trinidad and Tobago as competing students attempt to "double-up" (see Figure 2) in the contest for higher educational credentials.

Figure 2. Cycle of educational inflation: Role of shadow education.
Findings

The survey found high levels of participation in extra-lessons among secondary school students regardless of gender, race, religion, residence, family type, or family size. The strongest variables limiting students' access to extra-lessons were found to be student's socio-economic status and the type of school they attended. Almost half (47%) of the secondary school students in the sample reported being enrolled in at least one extra-lessons subject. Students enrolled in extra-lessons were likely to attend extra-lessons from 1 to 15 hours per week. The mean number of extra-lessons hours was 4.9, with a mode of 3.0 hours per week. Students enrolled in extra-lessons were also found to spend more time completing homework than students not enrolled in extra-lessons. On the whole, students enrolled in extra-lessons spent an average of 14.2 hours per week studying, while students not enrolled in extra-lessons spent only 7.6 hours studying. Enrollment in extra-lessons seems to be an effective strategy for increasing the number of hours students spend studying.

Secondary school students show a preference to enroll in mathematics, science, and business courses over English, languages, and social sciences. Extra-lessons for General Paper, physical education, and technical or vocational courses were the least popular. Of the students enrolled in extra-lessons, over half (58%) were currently taking at least two subjects; some students were enrolled in extra-lessons for as many as five different subjects. Table 1 displays the distribution of student enrollment in extra-lessons by subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Category</th>
<th>1 Sub.</th>
<th>2 Sub.</th>
<th>3 Sub.</th>
<th>4 Sub.</th>
<th>5 Sub.</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>64</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>118</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>412</td>
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</table>
Examination Pressure

The first hypothesis (H₁) linked participation in extra-lessons to the pressures faced by students as they approach formal examinations. Since older students in higher forms are preparing for formal examinations and are closer to entering the job market or tertiary education, it would be expected that these students would be under the greatest pressure to enroll in extra-lessons. To prove the hypothesis (H₁), the relationship between the independent variables “age” (student’s age) and “form” (student’s form), and the dependent variables “ex” (enrollment in extra-lessons) and “exhrs” (hours in extra-lessons) was examined.

Secondary school students enrolled in extra-lessons were mainly between the ages of 15 and 18, and were concentrated in Forms 4 to 6. Students above 15 were from two to three times more likely to be enrolled in extra-lessons than younger students. Exam-taking students were not only more likely to participate in extra-lessons, but also spent a greater number of hours per week in extra-lessons sessions. Form 5 students were found to spend an average of almost six hours per week in extra-lessons; a significant amount of time considering that these students already attend school full time, five days a week. ANOVA statistics, Pearson’s R, and Spearman correlation coefficient and multiple regression all confirmed significant positive relationships between age groups and forms, and the dependent measures of participation in extra-lessons (see Table 2).

Modes of Participation: Validating H₂

The second hypothesis (H₂) states that the extra-lessons population would reflect the modes of educational and social stratification in Trinidad and Tobago; that participation in extra-lessons would be consistent with the distribution of students across a very highly stratified educational system. The variables expected to reflect stratification would be related to students’ age, gender, religion, race/ethnicity, social class background, family type, family size, and area of residence.
Table 2. Measures of Association, Correlation, and Regression Analysis: Ex & Exhrs By Age & Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AGE</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EX</td>
<td>EXHS</td>
<td>EX</td>
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<td>.43853</td>
<td>.57634</td>
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<td>Lambda:</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>With AGE/FORM dependent</td>
<td>.05042</td>
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<td>.04091</td>
<td>.13636</td>
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<tr>
<td>With EX/EXHS dependent</td>
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<td>.00000</td>
<td>.38235</td>
<td>.00000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goodman &amp; Kruskal’s gamma</td>
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<tr>
<td>With AGE/FORM dependent</td>
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<td>.06807</td>
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<td>.10598</td>
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<tr>
<td>With EX/EXHS dependent</td>
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<td>.16691</td>
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Note. EX = enrollment in extra-lessons; EXHS = # of hours/week attending extra-lessons.

Through statistical analysis, a clear, positive relationship was determined between students’ socio-economic background and distribution across school types. The study found that students attending prestige schools were mainly from families where parents had, overall, higher occupational levels and greater educational qualifications. Students attending junior secondary and senior comprehensive schools, on the other hand, were most likely to originate from families where parents were employed in manual jobs and possessed lower levels of education. These findings are consistent with previous research.
examining the patterns of student stratification across secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago (see Jules, 1994).

School type was found to strongly influence participation in extra-lessons, as students attending prestige schools were 56% likely to attend extra-lessons; almost three times greater than junior secondary students, who were only 19% likely to attend extra-lessons (see Chart 1). Students enrolled in prestige and government secondary schools also spent almost twice as much time (hours/week) at extra-lessons than students enrolled in junior and senior comprehensive schools.

Chart 1. Influence of school type on enrollment in extra-lessons.

Through its influence on school placement, social class indirectly influences participation in extra-lessons. It appears that while middle-class students find their way into superior secondary schools, they must attend extra-lessons to maintain their competitive advantage. Through early selection, at the CEE, working class students are placed in inferior secondary schools where their chances of educational success are greatly reduced. The following diagram illustrates the relationships between social class, school type, and participation in extra-lessons found from analysis of the data set:

Social Class → School Type → Participation in Extra-Lessons

A final assessment of the effects of social class can be summarized by examining the effect of "father's occupation" on participation in extra-
lessons (see Chart 2). As one moves up the occupational scale, students whose fathers had higher occupational scores were more likely to be enrolled in extra-lessons. Students whose parents were employed as professionals were 65% likely, more than twice as likely, to be enrolled in extra-lessons as students whose fathers were employed in unskilled manual labor.

In a plural society such as Trinidad and Tobago, where ethnic groups may hold differential access to power, wealth, status, natural resources, or other forms of capital (cultural capital), such variables as race/ethnicity, religion, gender, family type and size, and so forth, are expected to influence the distribution of students across the secondary school population. These variables are, in fact, good measures of equality and equity of opportunities in any educational system. However, this study found little relationship between these variables and participation in extra-lessons. Students of all racial and religious categories were found to have a 40-50% chance of being enrolled in extra-lessons, with no significant difference between groups. Gender had an insignificant effect on students' decision to enroll in extra-lessons.

Chart 2. Influence of father's occupation on enrollment in extra-lessons.
The findings also show that independent variables such as residence, type of family, family size, and main provider had very little influence on participation in extra-lessons. While previous studies found these variables to have some influence on modes of placement in secondary schools (Jules, 1994), they seem to have very little influence in determining participation in extra-lessons. These findings are not surprising as students from all social backgrounds compete for educational certification; the greatest determining factor influencing participation would be social class and the ability to afford these sessions. This is not to say that extra-lessons, by itself, stratifies the secondary school population, but instead mirrors the modes of stratification found in the formal school system.

It may also be postulated that the expansion of shadow education is approaching its peak, and may soon begin to level off at figures not much higher than current levels. This estimate is based on the rationale behind extra-lessons in the first place; if everyone is enrolled in extra-lessons, it can no longer promise a competitive edge. Also, in the highly stratified secondary school system in Trinidad and Tobago, many students would have dropped out of the system before formal examinations. Finally, the expansion of extra-lessons is limited by the (in)ability of some students to afford its tuition. From the empirical evidence and theoretical models constructed, it can be expected that enrollment in extra-lessons would begin leveling off, but further longitudinal data is necessary to make more concrete statements.

Conclusion

Like the system of juku in Japan, extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago has become a fixed part of the educational system. Indeed, extra-lessons, as a social phenomenon, has its own characteristics and properties that provide scope for significant sociological examination. The popularity of extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago appears to have a definite relationship with the formal educational system, where there is excessive reliance on formal examinations, fierce competition, and great rewards for the few that succeed. And, as for many Japanese students, for whom participation in juku has become just another part of their education, extra-lessons has become almost compulsory for many students in Trinidad and Tobago.

This study is the first academic investigation, pursuing empirical data collection, on the phenomenon of extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago. It challenges the popular notion that more education is better. Instead, the paper portrays extra-lessons as a “quick fix” solution that may actually contribute to the problems of inequity and educational inflation. Based on the empirical evidence and theoretical knowledge relevant to
the study, the researcher believes that shadow education and extra-lessons facilitate inflationary trends, and widen the gap between students of contrasting socio-economic backgrounds. These forces threaten to distort the major goals, objectives, and processes of the educational system.

From all of the empirical evidence and supporting literature, the paper concludes that educational inflation and credentialism are growing problems afflicting the educational system in Trinidad and Tobago. Excessive competition is essentially divisive as students seek all sorts of strategies to top their cohorts. The demographic growth in the numbers of secondary school students is further compounded by the economic insecurity of the post-oil-boom years.

The current status of extra-lessons remains ambiguous and uncertain. Even though the practice receives great social legitimacy, it has yet to be recognized by the formal school system. The formal educational system is unlikely to restrict extra-lessons as it may offer a “safety valve” for dissatisfied and frustrated parents, students, and teachers. Extra-lessons, thus, offers choice and opportunity without challenging the formal school system. Once extra-lessons remains in the “shadows” of formal education, without directly threatening, or confronting the formal system, the practice is likely to persist. Of greater long-term concern is the impending legitimacy crisis that appears to be facing the formal school system in Trinidad and Tobago. The problem is based on widespread social apprehension regarding the mechanisms of student allocation, and perceptions of inequity of educational opportunities. While formal education and educational credentials are accepted as the fairest way of determining placement in the job market, students and their parents have come to realize that one has to go outside the formal system to acquire a real chance for success. This is a serious threat to meritocratic principles where equal opportunities are believed to be available to all.

Overall expansion of educational opportunities, alongside important curriculum reform, is needed to deal with the problems of inflation and stratification. While expansion through school construction is certainly long overdue, extra-curricular and after-school activities are also important initiatives. Curriculum reform needs to address the problem of over-enrollment in academic courses and under-enrollment in more specialized technical and vocational fields. Thus, greater emphasis on developing appropriate human resources appropriate to future manpower projections is an essential aim. Mechanisms for providing equity in student allocation must also be re-examined, taking into consideration the influence of shadow education and changes in the educational system, the workplace, and the broader society. Finally, there must be a reduction in the vast qualitative differences (real and
perceived) between secondary schools. The aim of formal education must be to ensure all students the opportunities to utilize and actualize their human potential.

The intention of this paper is not to argue for the prohibition of extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago; the researcher believes that there are many positive features of the culture of excellence and achievement associated with extra-lessons that should be promoted. Indeed, any organized effort on the part of students, parents, or teachers to promote educational excellence should be supported and recognized as a positive contribution to the betterment of the entire educational system. More specifically, the already established practice of extra-lessons may be modified in a number of ways that would allow greater numbers of secondary-age students to become involved in after-school activities. The researcher believes that the secondary school system is ready for the introduction of various after-school clubs, student activities, and sport and youth programmes that offer young people further opportunities for their development.

Such programmes could conceivably attract funds from the private sector and even become self-sustaining in time. School clubs can be used as a vehicle to increase student involvement beyond just preparation for examinations. Such activities have the potential to deliver a better-rounded education, expose students to various employment possibilities, and allow young people to develop important social skills necessary for interaction in the workplace. Participation in such programmes could also offer students alternative means to prove their abilities beyond educational credentials. A general re-definition of educational success is currently required to reduce excessive competition, and encourage talented students to pursue specialized non-academic courses.

Finally, the researcher believes that there remains much that is not known about the phenomenon of extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago. Since this study stands as the first serious inquiry into extra-lessons in Trinidad and Tobago, there is much room for further research on the topic. The researcher believes that the current study will be a significant contribution to sociological knowledge on educational inflation and social reproduction. The researcher’s most sincere hope is that this study can provide objective and insightful information on an area of educational research that continues to be neglected.

While the current study on extra-lessons is limited to its influence on qualification inflation, student allocation, and social reproduction, the phenomenon of extra-lessons extends into several other areas of sociological interest. Such areas of interest as the culture, economics, and pricing variability of extra-lessons would provide greater insight into the phenomenon of extra-lessons. There should also be some analysis of extra-lessons as a commodity that is marketed and traded, then
consumed by its clients. The process through which students and their parents become "seduced" into, or "dependent" on, extra-lessons would also provide relevant inquiry. Understanding the pedagogy of extra-lessons may also provide critical insight into the differences and similarities between what is learnt in the formal school classroom and the extra-lessons classroom. Finally, longitudinal data on secondary students’ examination scores and participation in extra-lessons may prove valuable in determining, more precisely, the relationship between modes of participation in extra-lessons and academic achievement.

References


