CARIBBEAN STUDIES
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2003

GENERAL COMMENTS

This was the sixth year in which Caribbean Studies was examined. There were 2188 candidates this year compared with 1468 in 2002, an increase of 49 per cent. There was an increase, both in the number of schools, and in the participating territories.

There was a slight improvement in candidate performance with 95 per cent of candidates achieving Grades I to V.

DETAILED COMMENTS

PAPER 01

Module 1 – Caribbean Society and Culture

There were five questions in this section, each carrying 6 marks. Performance was generally satisfactory.

Question 1

While there were some completely correct answers for both parts (a) and (b), many candidates experienced difficulty in explaining what is meant by plural society, and in describing two features of a plantation society.

Examples of the type of responses expected for plural society were

- ethnically and culturally diverse
- enclave societies
- societies in which groups of people tend to lead separate lives – little or no social interaction with each other
- fragile societies because of conflict and social tensions.

Some of the correct features of a plantation society given by candidates included:

- low level of community integration
- hierarchical class relations
- society organized to fulfil plantation goals
- unstable family organization
- monocrop society or society depending on one main industry.
Question 2

Generally this question was well answered. Most candidates were able to outline that practices of deforestation, such as overgrazing or ploughing up and down hillsides accelerated erosion, and that contour ploughing, windbreaks, reforestation and strip cropping were some of the methods of soil conservation.

Question 3

Part (a) was expected to pose very little challenge but surprisingly it did. Several candidates did not understand the term “indigenous”, hence the difficulty in responding. Many of them cited Jamaica, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts and Nevis as Caribbean countries in which there are still significant number of indigenous people today. Candidates were expected to give any two of the following since the emphasis was on “significant”:

- Guyana
- Belize
- Dominica
- Suriname.

Question 4

Most candidates were able to identify ways in which the education of Caribbean nationals influences Caribbean culture. However, they experienced difficulty in the description of these ways. Candidates mentioned food, dress, and development issues, but most of them failed to expand on any of the concepts.

Question 5

The majority of the candidates understood the objective of this question. However, the response should have gone beyond the definition of cultural erasure. The question required candidates to describe three ways in which enslavement of Caribbean people has contributed to the erasure of their cultural practices.

Examples could have been chosen from the enslavement of the Amerindians, or the Africans, or both. Candidates could then have considered ways such as

- genocide of the Amerindians
- the conversion of Amerindians to Christianity
- African slavery bringing together persons from different tribes on a plantation, and the effects of the process
- Africans giving up their native customs because of harsh treatment by European slave masters.

Module 2 – Challenges of Development

There were five questions in this section of Paper 01, each carrying 6 marks. Performance was generally satisfactory.
Question 6

A very small percentage of candidates correctly interpreted Sections (a), (b) and (c) of this question. “Social and economic equalization”, “increase in modern knowledge”, and the difference between “Gross Domestic Product” and “Gross National Product” all posed problems in the interpretation of meanings.

Among the responses accepted were:

(a) the difference between social classes in terms of the income earned and the quality of life experienced

(b) the index, ‘increase in modern knowledge’ refers to the influence of ‘modernizing’ institutions such as schools and factories which are thought to promote urban industrialized societies.

Question 7

The candidates were required to describe two factors or relationships in Caribbean countries that tend to maintain inequities in wealth. These relationships could have been in the interactions of factors or processes that are

- political
- social
- economic
- technological
- historical.

The question was reasonably well answered with 53 per cent of candidates earning between 4 and 6 marks.

Question 8

This question was very well done. Eighty per cent of candidates scored between 4 and 6 marks. However, some candidates interpreted urbanization as a widening of the city area, rather than as an increase in the population of a country living in the urban and the periurban area. Candidates provided several positive effects of urbanization on development in the Caribbean. Some of these were:

- a large proportion of the people in the country exposed to ‘urban’ values
- the growth of persons now living and working in towns increases the efficiency and supply of a myriad of service industries for workers and employers. Economies of scale make these services cheaper and more affordable to a larger public
- cultural development in all the art forms tends to have a better chance of flourishing in areas where there are large numbers of persons who can participate and pay the artistes for their services and products.
Candidates also gave the following as negative effects of urbanization:

- land degradation
- traffic congestion
- rise in crime.

**Question 9**

Most candidates were strong in their ability to suggest three factors which prevent sportsmen and sportswomen in the Caribbean from becoming fully professional. Forty-one per cent of the candidates earned full marks. The mean for this question was 4.47.

**Question 10**

Although candidates were knowledgeable about examples of social injustice in the Caribbean, they appeared unable to show how each impacted negatively on economic growth and development. Examples of acceptable or relevant responses were

- child labour/abuse – deterioration in family life; street children, destitutes who become a charge on governments and social welfare organizations
- gender inequalities – selective admission to jobs (above the ‘glass ceiling’) has stifled the ambitions and potential of professional women and the contributions they could make to development
- racial discrimination – this creates social tensions which may arise from selective hiring and firing practices, restricting the talents and potential of certain groups thereby contributing to lower productivity in the country.

**Module 3 – Conducting an Independent Study**

This section of the paper consisted of five questions, each carrying 4 marks. Performance was generally acceptable.

**Question 11**

This question looked at aspects of sampling. It is possible that candidates did not understand the concept ‘sampling’. Some candidates stated that sampling is when different pieces of information is taken from different sources. Answers that could have been given are:

- **Part (a)** Sampling is a procedure used in research in which a portion of the population under study is selected to represent the entire population.

- **Part (b)** It is usually done because the entire population is often too large for all members to be able to take part in the research.

- **Part (c)** Reasons for random sample to be used in a research project include:
  - the researcher wants to ensure objectivity and reduction of bias in the information collected. Any randomly chosen set of persons could be used
- where the researcher may want to justify a claim to generalizable conclusions.

**Question 12**

While this question was the best answered in Module 3 with a mean score of 2.75, several of the responses were disappointing. Candidates were required to identify two elements or parts in writing up a research report and explain what should be included in each.

Examples of the elements or the responses given included:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Findings/Results
- Discussion/Analysis
- Conclusion/Summary
- References and Bibliography
- Appendix

**Question 13**

Part (a) of this question, which asked for an explanation of the term “variables”, was not well done. Examples of the poorer responses given were:

- variables are aspects of research that are determined by what is being researched
- varying responses received from samples in the research.

Better responses received, included:

- the factors, groups or entities that a researcher wants information on and especially how one set interacts with the other.

In Part (b), very few candidates were able to formulate the hypothesis as required. The response must state an expected outcome between two variables. Examples of acceptable responses are:

- sugar production is low in countries with low rainfall
- there is a direct relationship between low rainfall and low sugar production
- tourism results in inflation
- in countries where tourism has increased, the prices of goods and services also increased.
Question 14

This response calls for the construction of two questions which could be used in an interview on gender issues. Most candidates understood the question but could not formulate the response.

Question 15

This was the worst answered question in the paper. Candidates were required to state two advantages and two disadvantages of using surveys in research. It appears that most candidates did not know the advantages or disadvantages. Examples of the advantages and disadvantages which might have been used are -

**Advantages:**
- flexibility and broad based in scope
- can be applied to many populations
- information can be used for many purposes

**Disadvantages:**
- information is relatively superficial
- there is not much scope for cause and effect inferences.

**SUMMARY**

Although there was some improvement in this paper especially in Module 2, candidates found Module 3 more difficult. It is quite clear that teachers need to pay closer attention to the concepts in Module 3.

**PAPER 02**

This is an essay paper consisting of four sections – A, B, C and D. Each section consists of two questions. Sections A and C are based on Module 1 (Caribbean Society and Culture). Sections B and D are based on Module 2 (Challenges of Development). Candidates are required to choose one question from each section. Questions in Sections A and B were designated Type A, and worth 20 marks each. These assess candidates’ ability to explain and elaborate on conceptual issues and apply general principles to a problem situation. The Type B questions, Sections C and D, are worth 30 marks each and require candidates to analyse problem cases, discuss and make evaluation comments on issues and present arguments for, or against, a particular view.

**Module 1 – Caribbean Society and Culture**

**Question 1**

This was the more popular question in this section. However, the question was only satisfactorily answered. Most candidates misinterpreted what the question required. The concept ‘home away from home’ posed problems for candidates. There were lengthy essays explaining push factors instead of discussing how factors in these metropolitan countries
create a home away from home. Some candidates described reasons for migration rather than for creating a home away from home.

Question 2

The response to this question was also satisfactory. Most of the candidates who attempted this question seemed to have had a fair knowledge of geography, which they used well. However, they failed to discuss the historical aspect of the question. Candidates must be able to identify the key concepts in the question, explicate and apply these concepts in the response.

Candidates were expected to give an overview of the diversity of landscape across the Caribbean, explaining the relationship between settlement and historical practices of the first inhabitants – fishing, agriculture. Many candidates focused on contemporary settlement patterns.

Module 2 – Challenges of Development

Question 3

This was a more popular question than Question 4. The question required candidates to describe how one art form or popular culture has contributed significantly to the economic development of Caribbean countries. However, candidates spent the time describing the popular culture they proposed.

Candidates’ responses could have included the contribution to

- foreign exchange
- employment variety
- world acclaim/recognition
- spread of Caribbean culture

Question 4

This was not a popular question. Although candidates understood the term “mass media”, they experienced difficulty in relating it to the indices of development. The concepts of development and political interference presented difficulties for some candidates.

The responses could have included concepts such as libel, development, rights and freedom of the press, newsworthiness and political interference. Candidates could have given consideration, for example, to how the policies and laws of the state hinder or influence how the mass media operate.

Module 1 – Caribbean Society and Culture

Question 5

This was a very popular question and was satisfactorily answered. A good response required candidates to show that for the past three decades, Caribbean music and festivals have gained widespread acceptance internationally and to give an analysis of the nature of the impact. However, many of the responses showed their weakness by discussing how the acceptance of Caribbean music and Caribbean festivals have impacted on the Caribbean.
It was also clear that candidates’ knowledge of Caribbean music and festivals was very limited. A large number of them gave detailed information on reggae while no mention was made of other festivals in the region.

**Question 6**

Although not as popular a question as question 5, it was better answered. While some candidates approached it from the perspective of the Caribbean as a nation and considered cultural diversity as the hindrance to unity, others examined the cultural diversity within respective Caribbean countries and the problems they posed. Candidates spent much of the time outlining attempts at integration and failed to look at challenges faced in the context of cultural diversity.

A possible approach would have been for candidates to explicate the concepts of

- cultural diversity
- pluralism/hybridization of Caribbean people and culture understanding which relate to national unity and solidarity

They could have discussed and analysed these concepts in relation to understanding the reasons for cultural diversity, knowledge of the social tensions, relationship between these tensions, and sensitivity to different notions of national unity.

**Module 2 – Challenges of Development**

**Question 7**

This was the more popular question in this section. Many of the candidates were able to identify the major sports in the Caribbean but they failed to relate them to development. They could have considered the major contributions. In the analysis of the concepts, consideration could have been given to the Caribbean being marketed as a tourist destination, the Caribbean being promoted internationally, a development of a sense of discipline among Caribbean people, generation of income, and the improvement of educational opportunities for nationals.

The candidates demonstrated weak analytical skills in the responses.

**Question 8**

This was not a popular question and while a few of the responses were fairly well done, the majority were barely satisfactory. The question focused on imported technology and candidates were required to discuss whether or not imported technology has marginally improved the economies of the Caribbean. Candidates understood the term technology and related it to the indices of development. However, they did not relate to ‘marginally’ or ‘to what extent’ as they were used in the question.

Candidates could have considered both indigenous and imported technology and given definitions and examples of each. Economic concepts such as labour, production, consumption and market could have been considered.
Instances, for example, where inappropriate technology was imported, could have been cited. Other examples are technology supplanting labour, misuse of modern technology and few or no attempts to advance indigenous technology.

**PAPER 03 – Internal Assessment**

The Internal Assessment consists of two assignments/essays, based on Module 1 and Module 2, and the Independent Study based on Module 3.

**Module 1**

The topics were relevant to the module. The variations in topics were excellent and were very interesting to read. Candidates demonstrated a good grasp of the Module 1 content. A few essays were without topics and the moderators therefore had to deduce the topic from the information given. The topics were also relevant to the candidates’ field of experience and interest. In general, candidates performed fairly well. The main criticisms were in the following areas:

- **“Understanding”**

  The definition of terms was done in isolation. In some instances they were not linked to the overall essay.

- **“Analysis”**

  The overall analysis and evaluation were satisfactory. Candidates should be encouraged to do more in-depth discussion of issues under consideration. While introductions were strong, conclusions were sometimes weak.

- **“Reporting”**

  Candidates generally exceeded the word limit. In addition, some of them did not acknowledge the sources from which they had received the information, even when they quoted extensively.

**Module 2**

Generally, candidates performed fairly well. Some candidates were exceptional in their presentations and this also indicated that the material was well researched.

- **“Understanding”**

  Generally, most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the topic they were researching, but the analysis was weak. Candidates devoted most of the essays to writing about the background of the individual instead of commenting on the contribution the individual had made to the social, political or economic development of the country.

- **“Reporting”**

  Candidates demonstrated a good command of the language but there were still too many spelling errors.
Module 3

Teachers and candidates are reminded to follow the guidelines and format set out in the CAPE syllabus for Caribbean Studies.

Many research questions/statements were not properly constructed. The research question/statement needs to show a relationship between variables.

- **“Introduction”**

  Some candidates did very well on this section. However, many of them only gave the purpose of the research and, in some cases, technical terms were not defined.

  Candidates should be encouraged to write problem statements as this will give the research some focus and enable them to write better conclusions.

- **“Literature Review”**

  More research could be done for this section. The studies submitted reflected very little reading by the candidates. Candidates should also relate the literature to the study.

- **“Presentation of Data”**

  The Presentation of data was in most cases well done.

- **“Analysis/Discussion”**

  Candidates need more guidance in writing up the analysis and discussion. Analysis required more explanations, while discussions needed to show more comparisons with previous studies and literature review.

- **“Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations”**

  Conclusions in most cases were unsatisfactory. Most candidates experienced difficulties because they had no clearly-stated objectives in the introduction to guide them.

- **“Recommendations and Limitations”**

  In most cases these were satisfactorily done.