
***The role of The College of The Bahamas in National
Development.***

A. Gabriella Fraser, M.A.
Economist, Principal, The Vivian Group
September, 2011
Email: agfraser@viviangroupbahamas.com

INTRODUCTION

Established by an Act of Parliament in 1974, the creation of The College of The Bahamas (COB) reflected the nation building goals of a newly independent Bahamas [July 10, 1973].

On the occasion of the official opening of The College of The Bahamas, then Prime Minister, Lynden O. Pindling, characterised its role as crucial. "It is one of the very important supportive institutions in our plans for the national, social and economic development." At the time, the professions and high-skilled jobs were dominated by non-Bahamian, expatriate workers. The new College's charge was to build an institution that would meet the national need for better educated and more highly skilled citizens; to support and drive an ever expanding and evolving economy; to help shore up private sector development with improved human capital. Today, the student population hovers around 5,000. The institution offers predominantly four-year baccalaureate degree programmes, with some two-year degree programme offerings. The first graduate degree, a master's in business administration (MBA), was offered in the Fall 2010. The College's alumni population exceeds 13,000.

By an Act of parliament, in 1995, The College became an autonomous entity. While it continues to be supported primarily by public funding (at least two-thirds), it is today "a body corporate". Decisions of policy and administration are at the discretion of the institution. The Government of The Bahamas however retains final discretion in the setting of tuition rates.

The College of The Bahamas Mission is *to support and drive national development through teaching, research & innovation, and service to the community*

This paper is divided into the following areas: The Bahamas in Brief, Post-Independence Development Objectives of Higher Education, Trends in Higher Education Development in The Bahamas, The College's National Mandate, Participation in Higher Education in The Bahamas and Academic Programming for Development.

The Bahamas in Brief

The Bahamas is an archipelagic nation of some 700 islands, less than 20 of which are inhabited, and a population of over 350,000. Its small open economy is service-based, and tourism and financial services, are its largest economic sectors. Tourism alone accounts for more than 60 per cent of the country's GDP and financial services has typically generated the highest paying jobs. The average annual salary in the financial services sector was estimated at \$51,688¹ in

¹The Bahamian dollar is fixed at a 1:1 exchange rate with the United States dollar.

2010, by The Central Bank of The Bahamas, compared to provisional per capita GDP estimates of \$22,201 for the same year. On a per capita basis, the Bahamas has historically enjoyed the third highest, behind the United States (US) and Canada, in the western hemisphere. An economic ranking it has sustained as a sovereign nation.

The Bahamas is an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations. It achieved internal self-government in 1964; 1967 marked the first time that a government was elected on the principles of majority rule; and Bahamian independence was achieved in 1973.

Post-Independence Development Objectives for Higher Education

Higher education has been an integral component of nation building in The Bahamas. The development of which has been an expressed focus of successive Bahamian governments. The new government of 1967 adopted what was at the time termed “Bahamianisation” policy. The aim of which was to ensure that wherever possible, jobs, especially those in the higher ranks of organisational structures throughout the economy, would be held by Bahamians. The principal challenge however was in the supply of skilled human resources; the country’s inadequate supply of secondary school graduates with the requisite capacities to succeed in the higher level training and educational opportunities that were being made available by the government. In 1968, it was observed by the head of state at the time in the annual Speech from the Throne address that “scholarships for higher education and training exceeded the number of people qualified to profit from them”.

The country’s goal then was twofold: to ensure sufficient supply of qualified secondary school graduates who could benefit from further education and training; and to provide further education and training facilities which would allow these students to acquire the skills needed to participate in various sectors of the economy (Bacchus, 1976). One of the first development objectives arising from this situation then was to develop a cadre of well trained and qualified teaching professionals.

The College of The Bahamas, today a multi-campus institution [New Providence, Grand Bahama and San Salvador] amalgamated three institutions: The Bahamas Teachers’ College, the San Salvador Teachers’ College and the C R Walker Technical Institute. Also melded into the new college was a high school programme at the time somewhat equivalent to today’s advanced placement programmes. The College was fully funded by the government. At the time of its establishment, the core objective of The College was to meet the special needs of The Bahamas in education, training and cultural development. The College was intended to provide for the further or continuous education of citizens. The concept of The College was therefore that it would include hotel, technical, business and education studies, the academic arts and sciences and the creative arts (Coakley, 1974).

Trends in Education & Higher Education Development in The Bahamas

With the majority of the population falling within the 20 – 54 years, age bracket, the educational profile of The Bahamian population has evolved significantly. Census data, compiled every 10 years, reflect a downward trending in the categories of persons with no schooling or whose highest level of attainment was at primary or pre-primary level; versus upward trending in those with secondary and postsecondary education. In 1980, the respective proportions of persons with secondary and college or university level education were 42.1 per cent and 8.3 per cent compared to 73.6 per cent and 15.2 per cent for the same measures in the year 2000. 2010 census data is not yet available.

Table 1:

| Highest Level of Education Attained, by Age Group | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Educational Attainment | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
| No Schooling | 4.4% | 2.7% | 1.5% |
| Primary & Pre-Primary | 42.9% | 21.1% | 8.8% |
| Secondary School | 42.1% | 63.9% | 73.6% |
| College or University | 8.3% | 11.7% | 15.2% |
| Other | 2.4% | 0.4% | 0.3% |
| Not Stated | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.5% |

Source: Bahamas Department of Statistics

Education as a component of GDP was estimated at 4.4 per cent in 2009 compared to a 3.9 per cent average over the 13-year 1997 – 2009 period. The World Bank (2002) estimates this expenditure in the 4 – 6 per cent range as the global standard. Government operational expenditure on the higher education subsector as a proportion of the corresponding overall expenditure on education was 10.8 per cent in the most recent 2010-2011 fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) below an 11.5 per cent average over the 1994-1995 to 2010-2011) period.

Table 2:

| GDP of The Bahamas, by Industrial Origin | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
| Agriculture & Fisheries | 3.3% | 2.9% | 2.6% | 2.7% | 2.5% | 3.0% | 2.6% | 2.2% | 2.1% | 2.3% | 2.2% | 2.1% | 1.9% |
| Industry* | 9.0% | 8.1% | 8.9% | 9.2% | 7.6% | 8.6% | 8.1% | 8.6% | 7.6% | 7.7% | 7.2% | 6.9% | 7.0% |
| Construction | 8.5% | 9.1% | 7.0% | 7.5% | 5.4% | 5.9% | 6.7% | 5.6% | 7.0% | 8.4% | 5.5% | 6.3% | 6.6% |
| Wholesale & Retail Activity | 11.4% | 11.8% | 10.9% | 11.1% | 12.3% | 10.9% | 10.7% | 11.1% | 10.8% | 11.3% | 11.2% | 11.6% | 11.7% |
| Hotels & Restaurants | 10.5% | 11.2% | 12.8% | 13.3% | 13.7% | 12.7% | 12.9% | 12.7% | 13.9% | 13.6% | 14.4% | 13.6% | 10.9% |
| Transport | 2.8% | 3.9% | 4.1% | 4.2% | 4.0% | 4.3% | 4.7% | 4.7% | 4.4% | 4.1% | 3.9% | 4.2% | 4.3% |
| Storage | 0.4% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 0.5% |
| Communication | 4.4% | 4.1% | 3.1% | 3.7% | 4.3% | 4.2% | 4.1% | 3.8% | 4.3% | 4.3% | 4.1% | 4.0% | 4.5% |
| Financial Intermediaries | 9.6% | 10.4% | 13.6% | 12.7% | 15.1% | 15.3% | 13.2% | 12.2% | 11.8% | 10.0% | 12.1% | 12.9% | 12.0% |
| Real Estate/Rent/Business Activity | 18.0% | 16.5% | 15.8% | 15.4% | 15.1% | 15.0% | 16.0% | 17.0% | 17.2% | 18.1% | 18.9% | 18.3% | 19.7% |
| Public Administration & Defence | 5.1% | 4.7% | 4.7% | 4.6% | 4.5% | 4.7% | 4.8% | 5.2% | 4.8% | 5.1% | 5.2% | 4.9% | 5.7% |
| Education | 4.0% | 4.2% | 3.8% | 3.8% | 3.8% | 3.5% | 4.0% | 4.1% | 4.0% | 3.4% | 3.5% | 3.8% | 4.4% |
| Health | 3.0% | 3.0% | 2.8% | 2.9% | 2.8% | 3.0% | 3.1% | 3.1% | 3.0% | 3.1% | 3.2% | 3.7% | 4.0% |
| Other Communications, Social & Personal Services | 10.0% | 9.8% | 9.7% | 8.8% | 8.6% | 8.6% | 8.7% | 9.3% | 8.6% | 8.0% | 8.0% | 7.5% | 6.9% |

*Industry: Mining, manufacturing, electricity and water & sewerage disposal

Source: Bahamas Department of Statistics

The World Bank (2002) however estimates the global standard for this measure in the 15 – 20 per cent range. Suggesting that compared to secondary and primary school education, government spending in The Bahamas on higher education has not yet caught up to the world's

generally accepted norms. Over this period the higher education expenditure was highest at 12.9 per cent (1997-1998 and 2002-2003) and lowest at 9.1 per cent for 1994-1995 fiscal year.

Table 3:

| Bahamas Government Expenditure of Education | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 94-95 | 95-96 | 96-97 | 97-98 | 98-99 | 99-00 | 00-01 | 01-02 | 02-03 |
| Expenditure on Education as % of Government Total | 17.3% | 16.5% | 16.2% | 17.8% | 17.3% | 18.1% | 18.8% | 18.3% | 17.8% |
| Exp on Higher Education as % of Education Sector Total | 9.1% | 9.2% | 11.5% | 12.9% | 12.1% | 12.4% | 12.0% | 9.2% | 12.9% |
| Exp on Higher Education as % of Government Total | 1.6% | 1.5% | 1.9% | 2.3% | 2.1% | 2.2% | 2.3% | 1.7% | 2.3% |
| | 03-04 | 04-05 | 05-06 | 06-07 | 07-08 | 08-09 | 09-10 | 10-11 | |
| Expenditure on Education as % of Government Total | 17.8% | 17.2% | 17.1% | 16.9% | 18.7% | 17.5% | 17.3% | 16.5% | |
| Exp on Higher Education as % of Education Sector Total | 12.8% | 11.6% | 11.5% | 10.8% | 12.0% | 12.5% | 11.5% | 10.8% | |
| Exp on Higher Education as % of Government Total | 2.3% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 1.8% | 2.2% | 2.2% | 2.0% | 1.8% | |

Source: Bahamas Ministry of Finance

The higher education system in The Bahamas is differentiated to the extent that its higher educational institution offerings reflect trends in global expansions of higher education. Overall enrolment however is predominantly at The College, the recognised ‘national tertiary education institution’ of The Bahamas. The Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI), also a fully funded public institution is the country’s principal polytechnic institute. They offer short certificate courses and programmes, and one and two-year diplomas in a range of trades and vocational subjects. Annual enrolment approximates 1,500 students. The College (roughly 5,000 person enrolment) and BTVI are the major institutions for higher education in the Bahamas.

Other higher education institutions in the sector enjoy a combined enrolment of about 2,000 persons. There are a few private degree offering institutions; one regional university; a community college headed by a religious organisation; at least one ‘franchise’ university of a US based institution bringing the notion of ‘offshore’ campuses of otherwise established institutions to The Bahamas. ICT advances of course have made distance/online education available to everyone with access to the internet, in the ever-expanding ‘borderless education’ sector.

The College’s National Mandate

“Today, all of us recognise the fact that trained manpower is an important factor in the development process. All of us realise that our plans for national development are likely to be stymied if we do not have the trained personnel to man the proverbial battlefields of industry, commercial and public services. In recognition of this fact, we have since 1967, taken a number of steps to ensure that suitably qualified Bahamians will be available to meet the needs of the

economy”, then Prime Minister Lynden Pindling on the occasion of the 1977 official opening of The College of the Bahamas.

Positioned on the philosophy that *No country should outsource the higher education of its citizen*, The College mission **to drive and support national development through teaching, research & innovation and service to the community**, reflects a continuation of the institution’s earliest principles. Today’s aims place particular emphasis on building capacity in areas of competitive advantage, strategies for innovation and the creation of new knowledge.

Participation in Higher Education in The Bahamas

College of The Bahamas enrolment fares favourably against the number of Bahamian students choosing to study overseas. From 2000 to 2008, Bahamians studying abroad was on average 29.7 per cent of the total number of students enrolled either at The College or in colleges and universities outside of The Bahamas. Thus, all things considered, on average, more than ⅔ of higher education students enrol at The College.

Table 4:

| COB Versus Overseas Enrolment | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Year | COB Fall Enrolment | Overseas Enrolment | Total Enrolment | Overseas as % Total Enrolment |
| 2000 | 3,156 | 1,762 | 4,918 | 35.8% |
| 2001 | 3,318 | 1,973 | 5,291 | 37.3% |
| 2002 | 4,421 | 2,012 | 6,433 | 31.3% |
| 2003 | 4,613 | 2,030 | 6,643 | 30.6% |
| 2004 | 4,173 | 1,638 | 5,811 | 28.2% |
| 2005 | 4,752 | 1,631 | 6,383 | 25.6% |
| 2006 | 4,500 | 1,681 | 6,181 | 27.2% |
| 2007 | 4,894 | 1,542 | 6,436 | 24.0% |
| 2008 | 4,686 | 1,773 | 6,459 | 27.5% |

Source: The College of The Bahamas and Open Doors

Bahamas tertiary education enrolment however compares unevenly with regional trends and international standards. The global average annual increase in tertiary education enrolment from 1970 to 2007 was 4.6 per cent (UNESCO, 2009). College of The Bahamas enrolment from 1977 to 2010 rose on average by 4.6 per cent, matching the global trend. The UNESCO (2009) report however shows enrolment growth in Latin American and the Caribbean accelerating at a higher pace, averaging 11.0 per cent from 1970 to 1980 and 6.8 per cent from 2000 to 2007.

Another widely used statistic to gauge expansion of the subsector is the time it takes for student enrolment to double. Globally, the measure was estimated as every 15 years, including regional estimates of 27 years for North America and Western Europe; Sub-Saharan Africa, 8.4 years; Arab States 9.3 years; East Asia and Pacific and the Latin America and Caribbean regions, both 10 years; The Bahamas compares with an estimated 18 years. In the case of the gross enrolment ratio, the Kapur and Crowley (2008) definition is used for The Bahamas. They describe it as the total enrolment at a given education level, regardless of age, divided by the population of the age group that typically responds to that level of education. For these purposes, the 20 – 24 years age group is used.

Table 5:

| Tertiary Education Gross Enrolment Ratio | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| | Population aged 20 - 24 | COB Fall Enrolment | Gross Enrolment Ratio | Latin American & Caribbean Region (UNESCO, 2009) |
| 1980 | 20,839 | 1,448 | 6.9% | 13.0% |
| 1990 | 23,512 | 2,009 | 8.5% | 17.0% |
| 2000 | 24,772 | 3,156 | 12.7% | 23.0% |
| 2001 | 24,900 | 3,318 | 13.3% | na |
| 2002 | 25,000 | 4,421 | 17.7% | na |
| 2003 | 25,300 | 4,613 | 18.2% | na |
| 2004 | 25,700 | 4,173 | 16.2% | na |
| 2005 | 26,000 | 4,752 | 18.3% | na |
| 2006 | 26,400 | 4,500 | 17.0% | na |
| 2007 | 26,600 | 4,894 | 18.4% | 34.0% |
| 2008 | 26,900 | 4,686 | 17.4% | na |
| 2009 | 27,300 | 5,025 | 18.4% | na |
| 2010 | 27,800 | 5,004 | 18.0% | na |

Note: Population estimates from 2001 – 2010 are projected estimates by the Bahamas Department of Statistics

The gross enrolment ratio for The Bahamas is projected to have risen from 6.9 per cent in 1980 to 18.0 per cent in 2010. For select years however, The Bahamas' gross enrolment ratio appears to consistently fall short of the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean region.

With tuition rates heavily subsidised by The Bahamas government, which also provides merit scholarships and financial aid in significant numbers, in addition to the teacher-education and nursing student grants, The College has had to address a different question of access. Up until 2008, there was also an additional barrier to access: Children born in The Bahamas to Haitian parents residing illegally in The Bahamas. Illegal immigration from the neighbouring of Haiti, has been an on-going challenge for The Bahamas for more than three decades, including a speculated tens of thousands of people fleeing abject economic hardship. Haiti, the oldest independent country in the Caribbean, is among the poorest in this hemisphere and among the poorest of the world.

This constituency of children in The Bahamas have been described as “stateless”. Denied access to The College of their birth home and thus denied the opportunity to reach their productive potential in the economy, because they lack Bahamian citizenship.

In the absence of government policy to address this persistent crisis, in February 2008, The College mandated that any student, regardless of category of citizenship, able to demonstrate attendance at a Bahamian secondary school for six consecutive years was also entitled to attend The College at the Bahamian resident tuition rates. In so doing the kinds of social leadership that can be taken by an institution of higher learning is demonstrated.

Academic Programming for Development

The College of The Bahamas’ academic programming today, fits that of any traditional liberal arts model. It has expanded from a two-year degree institution to a predominantly four-year degree programme college.

Early Years

COB produced its first class of graduates in 1977. In that class, more than half of the graduates were in teacher education programmes, reflective of the country’s goal to strengthen the quality and thus productivity potential of secondary education graduates, by strengthening the subsector’s capacity to deliver education services of standards and qualities commensurate with the country’s needs and goals. These developments directly influenced the changed profile in educational attainment of persons, creating greater opportunities for higher education and employment. The College still graduates more teacher-education professionals, than any other academic discipline although not in as commanding proportions as before. Earlier trends in graduation numbers also showed a fairly significant concentration in applied science fields, and in that first 1977 graduating class, education and applied sciences accounted for more than three-quarters of the group.

Trending Profile

Graduation numbers in applied sciences however has diminished over the years, as The College expanded its degree offerings. Business subjects with degrees principally in banking and finance, accounting and economics gained momentum as the financial services industry expanded and required more skilled resources. In the year 2000, The College introduced its culinary and hospitality programmes, which since then have seen steady enrolment growth as each year, graduates are absorbed into the country’s largest economic sector.

In 2011, 31.7 per cent of COB graduates received degrees in teacher education, 27.1 per cent in business and finance disciplines, 9.0 per cent in culinary and hospitality subjects. The ratios are similar to the 35-year averages of 32.3 per cent and 27.6 per cent respectively and for culinary and hospitality fields, slightly higher than the 12-year average (6.4 per cent), which since its first graduating class in 2000 (0.8 per cent) has been growing steadily.

Table 6:

| COB Graduates by School | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 1977 | 1978 | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 |
| School of Business | 10.6% | 12.7% | 17.0% | 11.9% | 18.8% | 13.0% | 47.4% | 46.9% | 41.9% | 44.3% | 36.3% | 37.4% | 39.2% | 36.5% | 40.0% | 30.3% | 33.3% | 26.0% |
| School of Chemistry, Environmental & Life Sciences/Natural Sciences | 5.8% | 11.2% | 6.9% | 5.2% | 5.0% | 4.6% | 2.6% | 11.1% | 7.4% | 5.3% | 14.2% | 12.9% | 13.1% | 14.6% | 12.8% | 10.1% | 12.4% | 12.1% |
| School of Communications and Creative Arts | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| School of Education | 55.1% | 51.8% | 45.1% | 61.9% | 53.5% | 66.0% | 29.5% | 23.9% | 33.8% | 19.8% | 22.1% | 22.5% | 26.1% | 25.7% | 28.0% | 35.4% | 24.4% | 26.0% |
| School of English Studies/Humanities | 8.7% | 4.0% | 5.5% | 5.2% | 5.0% | 3.4% | 5.1% | 5.8% | 4.7% | 7.3% | 5.0% | 3.3% | 3.8% | 5.6% | 3.3% | 2.0% | 6.3% | 4.1% |
| Culinary and Hospitality Management Institute | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| School of Nursing & Allied Health Professions | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 5.2% | 3.3% | 9.0% |
| School of Sciences and Technology | 18.8% | 17.4% | 19.0% | 8.3% | 12.6% | 9.2% | 10.3% | 6.6% | 6.8% | 13.4% | 9.5% | 13.7% | 8.6% | 9.8% | 6.9% | 7.8% | 9.9% | 7.0% |
| School of Social Sciences | 1.0% | 2.9% | 6.6% | 7.4% | 5.0% | 3.8% | 5.1% | 5.8% | 5.4% | 9.9% | 12.9% | 10.2% | 9.2% | 7.9% | 9.0% | 9.2% | 10.3% | 15.7% |
| LLB: U.W.I./COB | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Avg |
| School of Business | 38.0% | 27.2% | 26.8% | 25.0% | 42.6% | 30.8% | 34.3% | 27.6% | 25.8% | 19.5% | 25.7% | 24.7% | 14.2% | 20.8% | 21.2% | 16.1% | 27.1% | 27.6% |
| School of Chemistry, Environmental & Life Sciences/Natural Sciences | 13.6% | 9.5% | 9.1% | 8.9% | 9.9% | 7.2% | 10.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.5% | 6.3% | 6.7% |
| School of Communications and Creative Arts | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.3% | 2.8% | 3.4% | 3.6% | 2.1% | 2.6% | 4.3% | 4.9% | 5.8% | 5.7% | 5.3% | 5.0% | 4.1% |
| School of Education | 21.7% | 37.8% | 32.1% | 37.1% | 22.4% | 17.7% | 21.3% | 31.5% | 33.9% | 32.3% | 29.2% | 34.1% | 29.7% | 32.3% | 32.7% | 29.3% | 31.7% | 32.3% |
| School of English Studies/Humanities | 2.2% | 4.3% | 3.7% | 4.1% | 2.5% | 1.8% | 1.7% | 0.2% | 0.8% | 1.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.0% | 0.2% | 0.9% | 0.2% | 3.1% |
| Culinary and Hospitality Management Institute | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.8% | 3.9% | 4.9% | 6.9% | 4.7% | 5.8% | 5.2% | 7.6% | 7.8% | 9.2% | 10.8% | 9.0% | 6.4% |
| School of Nursing & Allied Health Professions | 3.3% | 6.3% | 8.4% | 10.6% | 5.1% | 11.7% | 9.1% | 10.7% | 5.2% | 16.5% | 7.2% | 6.1% | 22.7% | 15.3% | 6.7% | 13.8% | 6.1% | 8.7% |
| School of Sciences and Technology | 7.6% | 4.5% | 5.2% | 5.0% | 4.9% | 12.9% | 6.5% | 7.5% | 15.7% | 13.3% | 16.9% | 13.0% | 8.7% | 6.8% | 10.5% | 5.5% | 5.9% | 9.7% |
| School of Social Sciences | 13.6% | 10.4% | 14.5% | 9.3% | 12.5% | 13.8% | 10.0% | 9.0% | 8.1% | 7.0% | 9.5% | 12.8% | 12.2% | 10.3% | 13.7% | 14.7% | 8.6% | 8.9% |
| LLB: U.W.I./COB | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 5.1% | 0.0% | 3.3% | 3.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.8% |

Source: The College of The Bahamas

The Bahamas government provides full scholarship grants to COB students studying in teacher education fields. Upon graduation, persons are absorbed automatically into the public education system, where they are bonded to employment for a time equivalent to their financially supported length of study. Over the 30-year period from 1977 to 2006, The College produced 3,836 teacher education graduates, compared to a combined 2007 total of 5,546 teachers in public and private sectors; underscoring the significance of The College's contribution to building capacity in the sector.

Similar facilitations are made for the health services sector, whereby the government also provides full scholarship grants for studies in nursing. The nursing programme came a few years after teacher education and in 1992 saw its first graduates. From 1992 to 2010, 847 College of The Bahamas nursing graduates compared to roughly 1,000 nurses in the public and private

health system. The College's teaching and nursing degree programmes were established precisely to meet expressed needs of The Bahamas government, for the national economy.

Other degree programmes emerging from direct collaborations with government ministries and other public agencies include the 2009 launch of a bachelor in pharmacy degree, and various master degree programmes of US based colleges and universities that are facilitated by The College of The Bahamas on a cohort basis, including:

- Master of Arts (MA) in Health Administration, Western Connecticut State University, USA
- MA in Teaching and Learning with Technology, Ashford University, Iowa, USA
- Master in Library Information Science (MLIS), University of South Florida, USA
- Master in Education (MEd), School Counselling, Kent State University, Ohio, USA
- Master in Education (MEd), Special Education and Educational Administration, Kent State University, Ohio, USA
- Master of Science (MSc), Early Childhood and Elementary Teaching, Wheelock College, Massachusetts, USA

Enrolees and graduates have predominantly been public sector employees. Following collaborations with the country's Department of Social Services, The College expects to add the Florida, USA based Barry University's Master's degree in Social Work, next Fall. Also following extensive collaborations with the Ministry of Education, The College will begin its own MSc degree in Reading this Fall 2011 semester. The College also, through its continuing education programme facilitates an Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) through which it has trained numerous teachers and administrators in the public school system for higher levels of responsibility in school administration.

The College's Schools of Business and Culinary and Hospitality Management are largely supported by private industry. In the case of culinary and hospitality management, an external advisory board comprising industry stakeholders provides input on programming matters to reflect the sectors needs and growth areas. Corporate entities are very involved in providing internships and job experience opportunities for business school students.

In Fall 2009, The College launched its Small Island Sustainability baccalaureate degree programme, including a bachelor of arts in small island sustainability with options in Ecotourism & Development or Policy Studies; and a bachelor of science in small island sustainability in either of two options: Environmental & Ecosystem management and Integrated Development Planning. This programme, interdisciplinary in design was driven by a then prospective corporate donor who invited The College to explore academic alternatives on the broader subject of sustainability and how it might be tailored to the Bahamian context. The donor responded to the final proposal with a \$10 million gift commitment. Similarly, in response to private industry demand, The College expects to introduce a baccalaureate programme in

maritime studies in the Fall 2012 semester. The Bahamas enjoys a vibrant international shipping registry sector. The number of university trained and qualified Bahamian professionals in the maritime fields, however is remarkably few.

Last Fall, The College also began its first graduate degree programme, an MBA, which was designed and developed in conjunction with business industry partners, which provided input on various needs with particular relevance to the Bahamian context as a small and open service-based economy. These examples are demonstrative of a teaching component in The College's delivery of tertiary services that remains strong, and is reasonably responsive to the needs of the national economy.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

College developments over its 37-year existence strongly suggest purposeful and tangible ties to national development; including, national capacity building efforts in core human resource infrastructure areas of education and health, and workforce enhancements in growth areas of the economy including tourism and financial services sectors. Diversification into disciplines of sustainability and maritime studies add dimensions that speak to development policy and economic opportunity. The Bahamas' evolving development vis-à-vis The College's contribution of higher education matches in purpose and need, to arguments defining the role of higher education in developing countries. The life span of The College also matches the span of economic achievement and stability enjoyed by The Bahamas which over time has, by measure of per capita income, likewise enjoyed ranking ahead of its developing regional neighbours and behind the hemisphere's two industrial powers, the USA and Canada.

With rising skills and continuously evolving skill requirements across sectors amid continuous technological advancements, one can intuitively deduce the rising importance of higher education for sustainable economic development and further still, reason then that a country among the less advantaged and lesser developed will by virtue of already being behind more developed global neighbours in terms of economic and developmental achievement, find it a virtual impossibility to achieve such sustainability without purposeful, consistently relevant and meaningful higher education. Undeniably, and The College of The Bahamas has been a meaningful role player in national development.

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

An Economist by profession, Ms. Fraser is a proven researcher and analyst. The founding Principal of the Vivian Group, her career achievements cross key sectors of the Bahamian economy, including, Higher Education, Tourism, Financial Services and the Electronic Communications Sector, in core responsibility areas of administration, policy and regulation. At The College of The Bahamas she was the Associate Vice President with responsibility for External Affairs and a part time faculty member in the School of Business; at the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation she was the Director for Onshore Communications; while at The Central Bank of The Bahamas, she held various positions including Economist and Assistant Manager of the Bank's Research Department; at the Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority she was the Corporate and Consumer Relations Manager.

Trained by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), The World Bank, The Bank of England, The Commonwealth Secretariat, The Centre for Latin American Monetary Studies (CEMLA) and the University of Florida's Public Utility Research Center, she holds a Master of Arts degree in Economic Development and Policy Analysis from the University of Nottingham (UK), a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics and Finance from Barry University (USA), and an Associate of Arts degree in Pure and Applied Mathematics from The College of The Bahamas. Ms. Fraser has a postgraduate Diploma in Financial Economics from the University of London and a certificate from the London School of Economics and Political Science for studies in Unemployment, Inequality and the Welfare State and Economic Perspectives on Society. She is currently completing a Doctorate in Business Administration degree (DBA) with the University of Bath (UK).

REFERENCES

Bacchus, M. Kazim, 1976, *Tertiary Level Education in The Bahamas with Special Reference to the Development of The College of The Bahamas*.

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 1980, *Bahamas Population Census*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 1990, *Bahamas Population Census*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 1991, *Labour Force and Household Income Report*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 1996, *Labour Force and Household Income Report*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 2000 *Bahamas Population Census*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 2001, *Labour Force and Household Income Report*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 2006, *Labour Force and Household Income Report*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 2009, *Labour Force and Household Income Report*

Bahamas Department of Statistics, 2010, *Bahamas Population Census Preliminary Data 2010*

Bahamas Ministry of Finance, 2011, *Fiscal Year Budget 2011-2012*

Bahamas Ministry of Finance, 2006, *Fiscal Year Budget 2006-2007*

Bahamas Ministry of Finance, 2000, *Fiscal Year Budget 2000-2001*

Bahamas Ministry of Finance, 1994, *Fiscal Year Budget 1994-1995*

Batagan, L., 2007. *Indicators for Knowledge Economy*. Revista Informatica Economica 44 (4). *Beyond the ABCs: Higher Education and Developing Countries*

Blackwell, M., Cobb S. and Weinberg, D., 2002 *The Economic Impact of Educational Institutions: Issues and Methodology*. Economic Development Quarterly. 16 (1), pp 88 – 95.

Bloom, D. E. and Rosovsky, H., 2003. *Why Developing Countries Should Not Neglect Liberal Education*. Liberal Education 89 (1).

Central Bank of The Bahamas, 2011, *Gross Economic Contribution of The Financial Sector in The Bahamas (2010)*. Quarterly Economic Review. March 2011, pp 32 – 40.

Coakley, Livingston N., 1975, *Communication to Parliament – Report on Educational Development in an Archipelagic Nation*.

Cohen, D. and Soto, M., 2007. *Growth and Human Capital: good data, good results*. Journal of Economic Growth 12 , pp 51 – 76.

Copestake, J., 2007. *Mission Drift - Understand it, Avoid it*. ESR Fall

Fong, B., 2004. *Looking Forward: Liberal Education in the 21st Century*. Liberal Education 90 (1), pp 8 – 13.

Fragidis, G., Paschaloudis, D. and Tsourela, M., 2008. *Towards an Educational Model for The Knowledge Economy*. Communications of the International Business Information Management Association (IBIMA) 3.

Healy, H. and Côté, S., 2001. *The Well-being of Nations: The Role of Human and Social Capital*. Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Jones, M. B., 2007. *The Multiple Sources of Mission Drift*. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 36 (2), pp 299 – 307.

Kapur D. and Crowley, M., 2008. *Beyond the ABCs: Higher Education and Developing Countries*. Centre for Global Development, Working Paper Number 139.

Lutz, W., Cuaresma, J. C. and Sanderson, W., 2008. *The Demography of Educational Attainment and Economic Growth*. Science, 319, pp 1047 – 1048.

Mosha, H. J., 1986. *The Role of African Universities in National Development: A Critical Analysis*. Higher Education, 15 (1/2) pp 113 – 134.

Nespoli, L. A., 1991. *Investing in Human Capital: State Strategies for Economic Development*. In G. Waddell, Ed. *Economic and Workforce Development: New Directions for Community Colleges*. Chapter 2 pp 17 – 24.

Pencavel, J., 1991. *Higher Education, Productivity and Earnings: A Review*. The Journal of Economic Education, 22 (4), pp 331 – 359.

Peters, M. A., 2010. *Three Forms of the Knowledge Economy: Learning, Creativity and Openness*. British Journal of Educational Studies, 58 (1), pp 67-88.

Psacharopoulos, G., and Patrinos, H. A., 2004. *Returns to Investment in Education: A Further Update*. Education Economics, 12 (2).

Psacharopoulos, G., 1972. *The Economic Returns to Higher Education in Twenty Five Countries*. Higher Education, 1 (2), pp 141-158.

Ross, A. M., 1973. The Role of Higher Education Institutions in National Development. *Higher Education*, 2 (1), pp 103 – 108.

Stearns, J. M., and Borna, S., 1998. *Mission Statements in Business Higher Education: Issues and Evidence*. *Higher Education Management*, 10 (1).

Task Force on Higher Education and Society, 2000. *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise*. The World Bank and UNESCO.

The World Bank, 2002. *Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education*.

Thompson, K. W., 1972. *Higher Education for National Development: One Model for Technical Assistance*. International Council for Educational Development, Occasional Paper number 5.

Tilak, J. B. G., 2000. *Higher Education in Developing Countries*. *Minerva*, 38, pp 233 – 240.

Tilak, J. B. G., 2010. *Higher Education, Poverty and Development*. *Higher Education Review*, 42 (2), pp 23 – 45.

Todd, K., 2009. *Mission Drift*. *Research in Action*

UNESCO, 2009. *Global Education Digest: Computing Education Statistics Across the World*.

Wolf, A., 2004. *Education and Economic Performance: Simplistic Theories and Their Policy Consequences*. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 20 (2).

Yusuf, S., Saint, W. and Nubeshima, K., 2008. *Accelerating Catch up: Tertiary Education Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Draft World Bank Report.