

HISTORY THROUGH PLACE NAMES***Ashwannie Harripersaud**

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Abstract

When nations forget or fail to know that which was done before, that nation quickly becomes undone. In Guyana, History is one of the most neglected subjects of study at all educational levels. Indeed, historical facts and analyses are reduced to platitudes, ethnic biases, and one-day “cultural” celebrations. The result is a nation of individuals who remain ignorant of how they came to be and who they are. One’s sense of identity is linked inextricably to one’s history. This research project explores the perception of history as an academic discipline in Guyana. The study examines the views of teachers and students at the Secondary level. Even when history is taught at the secondary level, it is taught in dreary and arid ways, and becomes merely a naming of individuals and dates, quickly forgotten. Students, when they actually read for examinations, quickly become dismissive of the discipline. This research offers up at least one way to make history a living thing, a thing of interest which surrounds us each day of our lives. The study proposes that research into the names of villages and towns that we inhabit may offer unique insights into what and who have gone before, and into how those past actions live in the very names of the places where we live. Aderalegbe (1975) also describes history as “a study of how man influenced and has in turn influenced by his environment, in terms of physical, social, political, economical, psychological, cultural, scientific, and technological environment”. He goes on to refer to history “as a way of life”.

Keywords: History, Teaching methods, Importance of history, Place names, Effective curriculum, Influences.**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a pertinent background for the study. It consists of the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and the significance of the study. The chapter also indicates the relevant research questions that are to be asked and answered; the definition of terms that used in the research topic; and the assumptions and limitations of the study. It is with hope that the assumptions made in this chapter are proven empirically true thereby initiating the necessary attitudinal and practical change that is needed to boost performance. History is one of the subjects in the curriculum that helps in achieving the aims and goals of education. The Comparative Educational Study and Adaptation Centers (CESAC) 1968, defines history as “the study of man and his society with his interplay between him, his environment, and effect of science and technology”. The study goes on to state that the usefulness of history is enhanced when it is seen as a way of looking at the society in order to understand social problems and thereby help to seek solutions to them.

Title of Study

History Through Place Names

Background of study

A knowledge and understanding of history is vital if we are to understand ourselves as individuals and if we are to understand our society, our world, and our place in that world. Without such an understanding, we are walking through our days blindfolded. This fact has been established by historians for thousands of years. Regionally, we owe a great debt of gratitude to Eric Williams, Walter Rodney, Ivan Van Sertima, and Orlando Patterson among many others.

We should also extend our gratitude to Roth Schumberg and even Walter Scott. One of the ways in which we may express gratitude is simply to read and attend to those that we have mentioned. That having been said, the study of history in education institutions at all levels – primary and secondary schools, institutes, trade schools, technical institutes, and Guyana’s single university – has all but fallen by the wayside. Most especially, the study of history in secondary schools is sparse, and the exceptions are few and far between. For the sake of superfluous examination results, educators and administrators have shoved aside the study of history at the CSEC level. Without a doubt, this abandonment of the teaching and learning of history is tied to the fact that results at the CSEC level has been poor; and since our assessment of academic performance is tethered singularly to exam results, we opt for leading students away from the study of history and choose instead to push them towards relatively easily passable subjects like Food and Nutrition, Home Management, Physical Education, Industrial Arts, etc. The latter subjects yield good results but they also lead to a certain aridity of the knowledge of self, society, and the world. Of course, poor examination results in history are inexorably tied to a lack of facility with the English language. That in itself is a subject for a much larger critical examination than such a study as this would allow. We cannot claim to have even a basic understanding of West Indian history without having some idea of the Haitian revolution, for example. The Haitian revolution remains the single successful rebellion of enslaved people since the beginning of slavery, but should we ask students and teachers to speak for thirty seconds on Toussaint l’ouverture or Henri Christophe or Dessaline they would more likely than not be struck dumb. And yet, the successful Haitian revolution was one of the primary reasons for the end of slavery. This is according to West Indian historian and sociologist C.L.R James in his book *The Black Jacobins* (1938). Closer to home in Guyana, we have the Berbice slave rebellion in 1763 which was headed by Acabre and Kofi. Strange enough, there is a

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massive sculpture in Durban Park in the capital city of Guyana – Georgetown (upon which we spell ‘Cuffy’ for Kofi, a popular Ghanaian name). Interestingly enough, a “likeness” of “Cuffy” appears on a Guyana silver dollar that was minted sometime in the late 1960’s but very few of us who are teaching and learning at this point in time have any background knowledge of what the coin stands for and what the sculpture stands for. We have school tours or what is now termed “Educational tours” travelling from Berbice to Georgetown with teachers and hundreds of students going to the botanical gardens, one of the remnants of British colonialism. It is a somewhat famous joke among people in the education circle that students frequently ask about the names of the people who are buried in the botanical gardens. Very few teachers can respond positively when asked “Who is Arthur Chung?” or “Who is Sir Richard Luyt?”

In the words of Robert Nester’s Marley, in a song entitled “Rat Race”:

“Don’t forget your history;
know your destiny:
in the abundance of water,
the fool is thirsty.”

West Indian history remains one of the most, if not the most, brutal histories since the history of the Hebrews as recorded in the book of Exodus in The Old Testament. West Indian history is what makes us, us; and an ignorance of this history leads from ignorance and arrogance, and eventually to bloodshed through ethnic violence. Ethnic tension and violence are extant even as this is being written.

Statement of the problem

Contemporaneous circumstances and conditions can only be understood if properly contextualized. Moreover, an understanding of self in society and society in self can only be grasped through historical analysis. The problem, therefore, remains a historical blind-spot in our education at all levels. Spanish philosopher George Santayana wrote “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” and as Winston Churchill has echoed “Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it”, a sentiment also expressed by Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Junior. The problem: since we have an almost conscious and willful ignoring of history within our educational system, we must find more subtle and less arduous ways to embed in our citizens a sense of (at the very least) West Indian and Guyanese history. This must be done if we are to establish a sense of self, how that sense of self has become so, and how do we proceed to be civic-minded and cohesive members of society.

The purpose of the study

The underlying premise of this study is to suggest ways in which history may be made to be immediately relatable within and without formal educational constraints.

Research questions

How do we inject a sense of our own history in students and teachers without the painful needles of examinations passed or examinations failed?

How can a study of the names of our towns and villages and settlements lead to knowledge of the people who came and went? What, if any, impact they have they had upon us that live today?

Why do we behave as we do?

Why we speak as we speak?

What is it that makes us, us?

Significance of research

This study is significant in multiple ways. It may lead to a basic understanding of how we became to be what and who we are. What and who are the elements that conjoined to make what we call a country, a country. It may give us a sense of self and society that is essential if we are to be grounded citizens of a country. History promotes self-understanding: history needs to be taught to promote self-awareness. Everyone has a heritage which is uniquely his or hers. The cultures of different countries have contributed in one way or the other to the total heritage of mankind. Without enquiry into these historical factors, man will remain a stranger to himself. The knowledge of history is a part of self-awareness and realization of our environment. This is true in nations as well, and Guyana is no exempt from this rule. This study will enlighten parents and the general public, and also help the government to recognize the problems affecting the effective teaching of history in Secondary schools. It will also help in the identification of those problems, and help both the teacher and education planners to rejuvenate the present standard of schools in these areas. This research will also guide policy makers on how to tackle problems facing the teaching and learning of history in Secondary schools. Thus, it will help students understanding of history and thereby improve their interests and performances in history.

Assumptions of the study

Students and teachers would be interested in their own towns and villages and settlements in which they reside. The ancillary assumption is that they would be interested in having a sense of themselves, in their attitudes, in their language, in their habits, in their cohesiveness or divisiveness. The concept of history plays a fundamental role in human thought. It invokes notions of human agency, change, the role of material circumstances in human affairs, and the very meaning of historical events. It suggests the possibility of better understanding ourselves in the present, by understanding the forces, choices, and circumstances that have brought us to our current situation.

Limitations of the study

The probing of this study will be limited to identifying a finite number of place names, their meanings, and from what peoples they came. There is no certainty as to whether an interest in the names of towns and villages and settlements would extent to an interest in history.

Can we cultivate, through this research, a sense of intellectual curiosity?

There is also no certainty as to whether any governmental or private agencies will be interesting in publishing and/or broadcasting the findings of this study?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review is based on information that supports the notion with regards to the importance of History as a permanent subject in schools' curriculums. The review of literature also highlights the factors that are responsible for undesirable attitudes displayed by both teachers and students in the teaching and or learning of History. It would be useful to bear in mind the significant fact that there is no published research on this topic extant; therefore, the researcher is compelled to depend on more generalized research done and published elsewhere, without the national ken. As in any literary review, the researcher explored the writings of others from sources such as books, journals, and other past published research that are related to the topic. This enabled the researcher to understand more comprehensively the procedure of analyzing and articulating the topic under research. The review also allows the researcher to gain knowledge and insights on the topic generally with the expectation or hope of clarifying issues and concerns within the circumference of this research. In order for the researcher to determine whether attitude influences the absence of History in schools' curriculums, the issue under scrutiny was deconstructed into the following perspectives:

- The theoretical nature of the importance of History as part of the school's curriculum.
- The impact the absence of History has on students.
- The relationship between History and personal growth and self-awareness.
- The purpose for teaching History.
- The appropriate methodologies in teaching History.

The theoretical nature of the importance of history as part of the schools' curriculum

"It is important that we know where we come from, because if you do not know where you come from, then you don't know where you are, and if you don't know where you are, you don't know where you're going. And if you don't know where you're going, you're probably going wrong" (Terry Pratchett, 2010). Teaching for understanding rather than memorization requires, Mansilla and Gardner (1997) argue, an "understanding of the disciplinary modes of thinking embodied in the methods by which knowledge is constructed, the forms in which knowledge is made public, and the purposes that drive inquiry in the domain" (p.382). Other scholars also emphasize the importance of the disciplinary approach to teaching. Wineburg, who was awarded for his scholarly contribution to the teaching and learning of history, and Wilson (1991) make an argument similar to that of Gardner and Mansilla. They stress that if the goals for teaching history are to be realized, it is indispensable for teachers of history to understand the context and the nature of the discipline. Similarly, Seixas (2001) argues that unless models in the discipline of history are identified and used in history teaching and learning, any framework for exploring students' thoughts about history is destined to remain murky (p.546).

The impact the absence of history has on students

The absence of the knowledge of history results inevitably in socio-historical vacuum. This leads, step by step, to a sense of cultural superficiality and the inability to establish the

individual self in fertile historical soil. Our students have a vague sense of our multi-racial complexity from various fleeting celebratory events: Amerindian month; African Descendants' Day; Indian Arrival Day, etc. These events entail the recitation of Guyana's rarely analyzed National Pledge, derivative songs, racial insularity, poorly constructed dances, "cultural" garb, and speeches. These are heard, sang, seen, and soon forgotten. There is a stark absence of background preparedness in terms of sociology or history. Without such preparedness, the accent tends to fall on temporary exclusivity rather than shared legacy. The event defeats whatever noble purpose there may have been in the first place.

The role of colonizers is seldom mentioned; yet, this is the one historical factor that stands a chance of making us all understand the conditions under which our peoples were forcefully brought or came, how they were placed deliberately in antagonistic relationships with each other, and the conditions under which they were made to live. An absence of knowledge of history precludes shared experiences, and confounds any sense of unity. "Amerindian month" is a government-prescribed event that showcases Amerindian "Arts and Craft", foods, figures of thatched roof dwellings, and so on. Some are actually sold, but these items are seldom grounded in the history and social reality in which our First Nations exist. Only a handful of teachers and students, for instance, are able to identify the various peoples that comprise the Amerindian population. Our indigenous languages are all but lost, in spite of small departments like the Amerindian Languages Project at the University of Guyana. There is no mention of one of the greatest genocides that deracinated our first nations upon the landing of Christopher Columbus in 1492. There are some records of these, of course, notably by writers and historians. But we do not teach these and therefore we do not learn of these. We do not read nor are we encouraged to read. And yet, there are first-hand accounts of the slaughter of Amerindians by the priest Bartholomew de Las Casas and by Christopher Columbus. No teaching of history means no interest, and no interest means a tragic perpetuation of ignorance and stereotyping. Indeed, in the only teacher training college in Guyana (The Cyril Potter College of Education), teacher trainees are not taught history, not even perfunctorily. Therefore, they cannot pass down to their students any sort of relevant information and analysis. The CPCE requirement for a teacher trainee to enter the certification program is to have "A basic knowledge of history and geography at the fourth form level at secondary school" (CPCE Guyana website). This sounds reasonable enough, one supposes, except that history is not or is seldom taught in secondary schools. The implied justification for not studying history is contained in a National Center of Education Resources Development (NCERD) document. In the 2009 analysis of CSEC results, Mohandatt Goolsarran, Director for NCERD, lists subjects studied for the CSEC examinations. History and "English B" (Literature) rank the lowest in terms of results: 76% and 64%, respectively.

The highest results are 100% passes in Agriculture Science, Clothing and Textile, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Of course, the explanation for the effectual removal of History as a subject taught and learned for the CSEC examinations is that both subjects necessitate some competence in the writing of the English Language and in critical examination. And our teachers are as weak as our students in the writing of the language, with students scoring a

mere 79% pass rate in English. The percentage passes in English, Literature and History are falling consistently. It is no wonder that schools guide students away from these “hard” subjects, opting instead for subjects such as textiles, clothing and fashion, food and nutrition, and home management. The singular assessment of students’ and schools’ performance is number of subjects gained or failed at the CSEC level. The writing of English as a subject is a mandatory; the writing of English ‘B’ and History are optional. In fact, even if schools are appropriately staffed for the teaching of these two subjects, students are lead away from them because the results are often poor. As most educational scholars would tell us, examination results ought not to be the singular measurement of “success”. In remembering our African ancestors, we dress up in what we think are African garb and do dances that we think are African dances (mere gyrations, really). There is no signal that we realize the dazzling diversity of that enormous continent called Africa. Without our sense of history, we are stunningly and willfully ignorant of why we do the things we do, believe the things we believe, act the way we act. Our appreciation of heritages, tragically, is literally only skin deep. The roots of our rich folklore go ignored, and we are left as rootless trees, floating in cultural ether. We have little or no idea of the origins of “cut eye” or “suck teeth” or “hand scratching” or “stump toe” or “fire rass or ol’ higue;” the horrific origins of “limbo” are forgotten, and this ritualistic torture has been made into cheap tourist entertainment.

The enormous importance of the Haitian Revolution 1791-1804 (the only successful slave rebellion on the planet) goes unknown and unacknowledged, as does the heroism of Toussaint L’Ouverture. The Haitian Revolution is recorded in graphic and interesting ways in C.L.R. James’s *Black Jacobins* (1938). And yet, this successful slave rebellion provided one of our few heroes in West Indian history, and was one of the events that precipitated the end of the slave trade. Even our own failed Berbice Rebellion 1763 falls into the dustbin of history as so much unnecessary or ignored information. The rebellion began on February 23, 1763. We celebrate “Republic Day” on that date, but we know not why. At all levels, we fail to read the works of Eric Williams, Rodney, and Rodney. And yet, Eric Williams’ *From Columbus to Castro* (1970) and *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944) are (or should be) essential reading for teachers and students at all levels, irrespective of chosen academic discipline. Our understanding of what our African ancestors were made to endure is but residual sentimentality without even basic historical knowledge. Historical pain becomes a justification of racial resentment, a competition of pain, and extant political/racial hostility and expediency. The knowledge of the history of our Indian ancestors is equally superficial and exploited. We still cling to caste systems, and our ceremonies and gods are misunderstood for the sheer ignorance. We cling to immediately handed-down ceremonies, failing to read, failing to be curious. History does not fail us; we fail history by our ignorance of our own past. These, then, are the true tragedy of not teaching and learning history: ignorance of from whence we came and how we are as we are, how we live as we live, how others live as they do, what things we share as a nation of peoples. And the end result is a cultural void, a sham of events, and a vacuum of self. The end result is racial hostility that boils over for even the slightest provocation or excuse. It persists until this very day. In bright daylight, we huddle in the darkness of our historical and extant ignorance. We feed upon misplaced racial hatred and misdirected racial resentment. Here is a Ministry of

Education-sanctioned information sheet; it purports to educate Grade 4 children on the contributions made by Europeans to Guyana.



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
PRIMARY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME
GRADE FOUR WORKSHEET
SUBJECT: SOCIAL STUDIES
LESSON: 2 WEEK 4

TOPIC: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE EUROPEANS

Name: _____

Date: _____

FACT/TIP: The Europeans made several contributions to Guyana.

- The Europeans built sea-walls and kokers to protect the land from floods.
- They were the first to introduce trading in Guyana.
- They set up trading posts to trade with the Amerindians.
- They introduced the plantation system on the coast.
- They established the first church and the first school.

Picture of a koker:



The Europeans contributed foods such as:

pastries pudding pies

ON MY OWN

Answer the questions:

1. Why did the Europeans build sea-walls and kokers?

2. Which food is not a contribution of the Europeans?

pastries pepper pot pie pudding

3. Who did the Europeans trade with?

4. Which group of Europeans named the village of Mon Repos?

5. Non Pariel is to French as Santa Rosa is to

HOMEWORK:

On the table below list the names of three other places which were named by each European nation.

Dutch	French	English	Spanish
Stabroek	La Belle	Bourda	Santa Rosa
Betervwagting	La Repentir	Lethem	El Dorado
Uitvlugt	Chateau Margot	Land of Canaan	

It must be said that this form represents an admirable attempt to give to students bits of basic information about who came and what they contributed. There are four points made categorically in the “fact sheet” above. While bearing in mind that this form is designed for Grade Four students, we must note that there are no qualifiers to these “statement of facts” regarding “European contributions” to Guyana. The sentences in the “FACT/TIP” box above are stated as fact, and it would be useful to examine each “fact” categorically stated as “contributions”.

1. The Europeans built sea-walls and kokers to protect the land from floods.

This is, of course, correct. The Dutch built the sea-walls and kokers to protect the land from floods. But to state this as simply as it is stated suggests that the sea walls were built to protect the land of people as they exist today, and nothing could be farther from the truth. The Dutch established colonies in three counties: Essequibo, Demerara, and Berbice. They came in 1616 and brought thousands of slaves to work on land owned by the Dutch. They built sea-walls and kokers to protect their own lands, their own enterprises. They used slave labor to grow sugar cane, coffee, and cotton for the Dutch market in the Netherlands. The “Europeans”—meaning the Dutch—therefore, built sea-walls to protect their own economic interests for their own profitability and in order that they may develop their homeland, the Netherlands. Slaves did not and could not own lands! The statement or “fact”, given uncritically to Grade Four students in the twenty-first century would have them believe that the building of sea-walls and kokers was an altruistic act to help Guyana and Guyanese as they exist today—people with their own lands. None of this is meant to negate the fact that as an “independent” nation of people four hundred years later, Guyanese still benefit from the protection provided by the sea-walls built by the Dutch to protect their own investments. Dutch infrastructural ingenuity led to the building of the sea-wall and the kokers; slave labour built the sea-walls and kokers.

2. They were the first to introduce trading in Guyana.

This, again, is true; this again is not the whole story. The Dutch introduced trading in their colony (now Guyana). And the trading of sugar, coffee and cotton—cultivated by slave labour—was done with the Netherlands. This was the first example of what came to be called the Mercantile System in the eighteenth century. The Dutch produced the raw material which were then shipped to the Netherlands, refined and then re-sold at enormous profits. The impulse therefore was not generosity; it was profitability. This system was not exclusive to Guyana; it spanned the colonial enterprise globally. Today, we largely subsist on that very system.

3. They set up trading posts to trade with the Amerindians.

Once again, put like this by the Ministry and read like this by Fourth Grade children does not give a full and accurate picture of what happened in history. It is doubtful whether teachers themselves are capable or learned enough to provide contextual detail. As it stands in the Ministry’s handout, the Europeans “set up trading posts to trade with the Amerindians”. But trading posts for what and for whom? What was being traded? Who were the beneficiaries of these “trading posts”?

The truth is that these so-called trading posts with our first nations were holding centers for runaway slaves. The runaways were captured and held, negligible reward handed over and collected, and the enslaved people made to return to their forced, free labor for the European masters. Amerindians were paid to hunt the runaway slaves. It is interesting to note that the opposite occurred in America: Black “Buffalo Soldiers” were paid (with coins or freedom) to hunt down Native Americans or First Nations. Bob Marley’s popular song “Buffalo Soldier” captures this historical horror, if only we would listen to the sing with informed ears!

These, then, were the “trading posts” in which the oppressed and disenfranchised were made to hunt and capture the more oppressed and disenfranchised. It was a way to pit one group against another to ensure division among the oppressed and enslaved and to consolidate the profitability on the part of the Europeans. Bram Hoonout of the Universiteit Leiden in the Netherlands in an article entitled “The Forgotten History of Dutch Slavery in Guyana” (February 28, 2020) wrote:

The colonialists also formed alliances with the indigenous people and recruited them as support groups. These native support groups tracked down runaway Africans, preventing them from forming their own communities, as happened in the rainforest of Surinam. They were also used to quash potential revolts by the slaves. Without these native support groups, there would probably have been a lot more uprisings against the appalling regime of slavery. These groups helped keep the colonial authorities firmly in place. It is with a sense of profound disappointment that not one single Guyanese historian has written on this, although it is mentioned by Daizal R. Samad in “Caribbean Dish on a Post-Colonial Supper Table” (2001). Ironically, it took a Dutch historian to tell us about the horrors perpetuated by Europeans, the Dutch especially, upon our own ancestors. The handout sent under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in 2020 simply reinforces the European lie of altruism and “contribution”. Our ignorance of ourselves and our own history becomes reinforced and perpetuated.

4. They introduced the plantation system on the coast.

True too. Those identical plantation systems have remained, although they have been localized. The Europeans have been replaced by Guyanese (after Independence in 1966). The structures (infrastructure, marketing, exports, etc.) are identical. Slave labor, replaced divisively by Indentured labor, has been replaced by cane cutters who have magically been transformed into being “cane harvesters.” Centuries later, the primary crops have remained the same: sugar cane and rice, although fruits and vegetables have assumed greater prominence. The basic geography established by the Dutch

also remains unchanged more than 400 years later. Plantations are still sandwiched between front dams or facades and back dams. Polders are still extant, although a few new ones like Black Bush Polder were founded in the 1960's. The Dutch plantations eventually became British plantations (with Independence in 1966, Bookers Sugar Estates became Guyana Sugar Estates or GUYUCO under local control). However, the entire hierarchical and rigid administrative structure remains stubbornly the same. The heavier and more tyrannical the demands from the top, the heavier are the lift for all lower levels, ending with the "cane harvester" at the very bottom. As from the beginning, the brutish nature of the work makes it so that lives are measured in tonnage. Production methods, including the mechanical works, are only slightly modified, and markets are largely the same as they were centuries ago. Our main market is still Europe; and Guyana's sugar industry was thrown into crisis when the European Union removed subsidies in the last decade. Combined with archaic production techniques, a much lower demand for sugar, and ancient administrative structures, the sugar industry seems doomed. There is also little demonstrable care about the labor force. Of course, the unchanging nature of the plantation system cannot be entirely be put upon the Europeans. As a country, we have failed to learn. And we have failed to learn because we remain ignorant of the past, ignorant of history. We know now that the inherited and formerly profitable sugar industry is no longer profitable. The reasons have been briefly outlined above. Having learned of the history of Guyana's most important industry, we need ask what would be the repercussions to Guyana of a failed sugar industry. This is especially a necessary question since there are no discernible alternatives to sugar, now heavily subsidized by the government. We cannot seem to think beyond sugar. There is, for instance, no broadcast ten-year or twenty-five year plan to phase out sugar and strategically phase in some other industry. Since sugar is by far the employer of the greatest number of workers, the folding of the industry would lead to dire consequences for the greater part of the population. Of course, we have seen some of the repercussions when the government of 2015-2020 closed several sugar factories. With no means of income, some 40,000 people became unemployed; the case of domestic violence sky-rocketed; crimes of all sorts spiked; children were made to go to school hungry. Politically and socially, our attention has turned to oil, newly discovered in Guyana. Oil reserves are finite, as the rest of the world has already discovered. But our habit of depending on one source of national revenue has not changed.

5. They established the first church and the first school.

Once again, this is not debatable. Europeans established the first church and the first schools. Specifically, the Dutch founded St. Andrew's Kirk, laying its foundation in 1811. Because of financial difficulties, the Dutch sold the church to the Scottish colonizers. The building still stands today at the north-eastern corner of Brickdam. It was the first church to open its doors to enslaved Africans. Ironically, the church was used as barracks for the Provisional Battalion deployed by the British to suppress the Demerara slave rebellion in 1823. Once again, contextually, it must be borne in mind that European colonization had two primary objectives: to Civilize and Christianize. They were largely successful since our habits, judicial systems, values, our dress and language, sense of worth and self-worth are all consequences of this colonial imperative. Slavery created a void of mythology (or system of

belief); Christianity filled that void. Hinduism came from India and its ritualistic sediments remain. Ceremonies are conducted in Sanskrit, hardly or not understood at all. Islam came from North Africa and India, the latter colonized by the Arabs in the 8th Century. Islamic prayers are conducted in Arabic, also hardly or not at all understood. There are numerous Christian spin-offs from the Reformation Movement that took hold in Germany and France. The Lutheran Church (founded by Martin Luther) and the Baptist Church (founded by John Calvin) are two examples. Many Evangelical churches have their roots in the Southern United States and are among the most thriving in Guyana. Again, the mannerisms and language of worship are almost exclusively derivative, mimicked. All round, the poetry of the King James Bible is ignored and lost. The Bhagwat Gita, Ramayana, and Maharabarta are unread and reduced to meaningless sound. The Koran, similarly, is reduced to the memorization of Arabic symbols and bereft of meaning. And yet, as with Uganda Ghana, with ever greater economic hardships and social ailments, came the greater flourishing of places of worship of many religions. Indeed schools were set up by the colonizers. In fact, churches and schools were essential parts of subjugation and acculturation. In both, the colonized were taught about that which was to be cherished and held up, and what was to be avoided and scorned. The education given by the various denominational religions was very good. Indeed, it was during colonial times that the literacy and numeracy rates in Guyana's history were at their highest. Discipline was a hallmark of that education system, and all Guyanese were the beneficiaries. The motives may have been questionable, but the outcomes were unquestionably good. With Independence in 1963 came the "nationalization" of schools. This meant a new type of indoctrination and began a slide to much lower academic standards. Nonetheless, the structures and strictures remained the same; there were little or no fundamental structural changes to bring the education system in line with the needs of the latter half of the 20th century and the 21st century. What has gone above is by no means meant to demean the Ministry of Education. The plea here is for contextual learning and critical thinking rather than the categorical statement of facts. Facts, taken by them, do not amount to the Truth. And for us to be fully aware of our history takes a critical knowledge of the whole truth about our historical evolution. There are parts of this Ministry Handout that are excellent. For instance, the listing of place names and the questioning of the origins of the names may serve as excellent triggers for greater investigation. This box is a good example:

Dutch	French	English	Spanish
Stabroek	La Belle	Bourda	Santa Rosa
Beterverwagting	La Repentir	Lethem	El Dorado
Uitvlugt	Chateau Margot	Land of Canaan	

Once again, this form represents an admirable attempt to give to students bits of basic information about who came and what they contributed. The impulse for a sense of history—our own history—is there, but it is neither continued nor encouraged. History as a discipline has lost its place in our education system, and we are much the poorer for it.

The relationship between history and personal growth and self-awareness

The entire thrust of this project is that there is a direct link between knowledge of the history of our peoples and the

degree of self-awareness in each Guyanese individual. Who we are as a nation can only be assessed by knowing how we came to be as a nation. And this is inextricably tied to how we see ourselves as individuals in society. Why do we think as we do? Why do we act and speak as we do? What do we believe what we believe? Why do we resent what and who we resent? Each individual is defined by how he/she answers these questions. The problem is that we do not even ask the questions. There are sharp ethnic divisions in Guyanese societies, and these erupt from time to time on a national scale. But it erupts perpetually in our individual daily lives. It is as if our racism has been baked into our national DNA. If we do not know how these divisions were deliberately created and exploited, we stand no chance whatsoever to grow out of these inbred deadly biases: no historical knowledge, no knowledge of self. Therefore, we remain as were made to be; remain as we are: racially ossified. Tragically, our local politicians are quite adroit at exploiting these divisions. At all levels—socially, in primary, secondary, and tertiary education levels—we do not read except when we are made for read for some examination or test. Even those that find themselves in the supposedly noble profession of teaching are unaware of history and of themselves. How then can they teach our children to break free of learned racist tendencies?

A survey of XXX active secondary school teachers revealed the stark facts:

The purpose for teaching history

History teachers need to have a thorough understanding of the nature of History as a domain of knowledge in that epistemological beliefs affect not only their approaches to reading and understanding historical texts but also their instructional practices (Wineburg, 1991; Yilmaz, 2008). If teachers lack an adequate understanding of the conceptual foundations of the subject they teach, they are likely to misrepresent content by simplifying it (Wineburg & Wilson, 1991, p.333). As Matthews (1998) argues, if teachers are to make effective curricular decisions in enhancing a deeper student engagement with the subject, they should have well-developed conceptions of the nature of their subject area. History should not be used as a means to socialize students of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds into the mainstream or the dominant group's world view and culture by transmitting that privileged group's cultural norms and values to students. Rather, history should be used to help students not only recognize their own cultural roots, identity, and heritage, but also gain insight into other people's cultures and world views. School history should instill in students recognition of cultural pluralism and tolerant attitudes toward different ethnic groups.

The appropriate methodologies in teaching history

A caveat about learner-centered instruction or active learning needs to be reminded. When employing instructional methods involving active student learning, the teacher should first consider not whether the task at hand demands active student engagement but whether it is intellectually challenging or academically rigorous. Whatever instructional activities the teacher develops should first and foremost promote a sophisticated understanding of the past on the part of students rather than just capture the attention of students who might find the task enjoyable.

Another important point to note is that the teacher should determine how to engage students with active learning by making connections between theory and practice on the basis of his or her experiences. There are different theories and approaches about how to practice learner-centered instruction. They do not necessarily work for every teacher, every learner, and every class in schools. Therefore, rather than insist on practicing a given learning theory or teaching method, the history teacher should test it against his or her own ability and students' abilities, styles, and experiences and then decide whether that method works with him or her and his or her students in practice. Students have a very negative attitude toward history and find history instruction boring, dull, useless, and meaningless. This poses a great problem for history educators to cope with. Without positive attitudes and perceptions, students are unlikely to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviors, and have little chance of learning history. By highlighting the importance of effective factors in learning history, Marzano states: "Psychologists have begun to view classroom climate more as a function of attitudes and perceptions of the learner than elements external to the learner. If students have positive attitudes and perceptions, they have a mental climate conducive to learning. If those attitudes and perceptions are negative, learners have a mental climate not conducive to learning" (1992). One of the most important reasons why students dislike history is the fact that they cannot see the connection between remote past and their immediate experiences in the present (Yilmaz, 2008b). To overcome students' negative views of the subject and to increase their interest in it, history teachers should have students see the relevance of the past to the present in pedagogically meaningful ways by employing such strategies as historical empathy, historical inquiry, oral history, and family history. Making comparisons between the past and the present is central to the efforts to make history relevant and interesting to students.

Summary

The study of history—and therefore the study of the elements that comprise self—as an academic discipline has been broken upon the altar of examination results. The cost of this is inestimable since social cohesion itself is drained of its life-blood. Teachers themselves are adverse to self-examination and are therefore adverse to enlightenment through historical analysis. The syllabus from which teachers are trained is devoid of history as an area of research and study; the only national university offers history only cursorily. This neglect filters down to the secondary and primary schools. It is difficult to find even one in twenty teachers who has read what ought to be mandatory reading for teachers. The old order of biases and ignorance remains with astonishing stubbornness. Our single measurement of success remains examination results rather than the creation and cultivation of civic-minded citizens, "whole" people with a rounded knowledge of their history, a sense of their place in the present, and what they must contribute to the future. We are yet to come to the realization that elements of the present are rooted in the past, and that which came before and what is current determines the future. Not to realize this and not to act on this realization is to condemn any possibility of creating the future. Until we find creative ways of assessing performance in broader ways, we are doomed to remain as we are: divisive, acrimonious, derivative, imitative, and superficial. As we have pointed out above, the Ministry of Education has broadcast a handout

which is meant to allow students to explore some aspects of our ethnological history. This is admirable, but it may succeed in simply reinforcing traditional biases concerning superiority and inferiority. This is so since our teachers themselves are ignorant of history and historical contexts. Furthermore, the handout may well further entrench racial divisions, although the intention is exactly the opposite of the potential consequence. Our assessment of ourselves as a society and as individuals in that society remains skin deep. The infectious puss of racist violence and resentment lurks just beneath the skin, waiting to explode and confound any attempt at originality and creative national harmony. If our teachers, educational administrators, and educational policy makers allow themselves to have a profound understanding of how we became to be as we are, then that understanding will inevitably filter through to our students. The future can be hopeful and harmonious, if only we demonstrate even a basic degree of intellectual curiosity. Our idea of history is simply something of dates and names: history as aridity. If we begin with something as entertaining as place names, we can trigger interest.

METHODOLOGY

The design for a research project is the plan of how the study will be conducted. It involves thinking about, imagining, and visualizing how the research study will be undertaken (Beiger & Gerlach, 1996). Thus, the research design for this project was very important for outlining the steps taken in carrying out this research. According to Beiger and Gerlach, "Researchers must develop procedures that will allow them to conclude confidently that the result they obtained were due to the facts they were studying and not extraneous or irrelevant factors" (1996, p.49). Beiger and Gerlach (1996) also claim that a good research design will help the researcher believe in the validity of the results of the study so that any conclusions about the effectiveness of any new techniques can be made with confidence. One may add that a sound methodological foundation (especially for ground-breaking research) will establish a firm platform upon which future research can be built. In this chapter, the research design in relation to the methodology was clearly stated. The population, sample, instrumentation, procedure of data collection and data analysis were discussed.

Methodology

According to Jerry Wellington (2000), methodology is the activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying the methods used. The researcher gathered data from the students using mixed method research. The mixed research method consists of both qualitative and quantitative data. This method allows for rich data to be gathered, hence stronger evidence for research conclusions. Questionnaire is one of the most widely used tools to collect data. The main objective of questionnaire in research is to obtain relevant information in most reliable and valid manner. Thus the accuracy and consistency of survey/questionnaire forms a significant aspect of research methodology which are known as validity and reliability.

Research design

The researcher selected the descriptive questionnaire to complete this study. This design allowed the researcher to make generalizations from a sample population. Descriptive

research uses qualitative methods to "describe" a situation, subject, behavior, or phenomenon. It is used to answer questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research question or problem. A descriptive survey involves asking the same set of questions (often prepared in the form of a written questionnaire or ability test) of a large number of individuals either by mail, by telephone, or in person. When answers to a set of questions are solicited in person, the research is called an interview (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006). It involves some type of comparison or contrast and attempts to discover relationships between existing non-manipulative variables. Some form of statistical analysis is used to describe the results of the study (Best and Kahn, 2003).

Population

Best and Khan (2003) stated that a population is any group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common which are of interest to the researcher, Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010) shared a similar view by saying a population is the large group about which generalization is made. The target population to which the researcher intended to generalize the results was one hundred and two (102) students and one hundred and ninety six (196) teachers. The accessible sample was fifty two (52) students which were obtained from two (2) Grade 10 classes and forty (40) teachers from five (5) secondary schools. The age ranges of these students were from 14 to 16 years. They were predominantly from the Afro-Guyanese, Indo-Guyanese, and Mixed ethnicity. Twenty (20) of the students were males and thirty two (32) were females.

Sample

Borg (2005) states that a population typically includes too many members to study all of them, so a manageable sample was selected that was representative of the population. Best and Khan (2002) describes a sample as a small portion of the population selected for analysis. They state that sampling makes it possible to draw valid inferences or generalizations on the basis of careful observations or manipulations of variables within a relatively small portion of the population. The sample used in this study was selected using the simple random sampling technique. According to Valerie J. Easton and John H. McColl (1997) simple random sampling is the basic sampling technique where we select a group of subjects (a sample) for study from a larger group (a population). Each individual was chosen entirely by chance and each member of the population had an equal chance of being included in the sample. Every possible sample of a given size has the same chance of selection. The participants in this study were chosen on two main categories: (a) students, (b) teachers. The participants in category (a) were representatives from a secondary school while the participants in category (b) were representatives from five different secondary schools. Questionnaires were given out to a total of fifty two (52) students and forty (40) teachers. The total population for the research was ninety two (92). A total of 52 subjects will be selected, that is, approximately 50% of the population of the two Grades 10 selected and an additional 40 subjects which were approximately 20% of the population of the five secondary schools selected.

Instrumentation

In order to study the population and gather data which will answer the research questions, the most suitable instrument

was selected. According to Cohen (2000), "The instrument selected must yield precisely what data you wish to collect". In order to collect the numerical data required for this research, questionnaires and interviews were used. Interview schedule and questionnaires are basically the same kind of instrument – a set of questions to be answered by the subject of the study (Fraenkel and Wallen 2006). Questionnaires are research instruments consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. They are often designed for statistical analysis of the responses. Questionnaires have advantages over some other types of surveys in that they are cheap, do not require as much effort from the questioner as verbal or telephone surveys, and often have standardized answers that make it simple to compile data (Fisher *et al.*, 1991). Further, according to Milne (1999), the standardized responses in questionnaire make them more objective than interviews. Questionnaires ensure that no meaning was added to the questions and that they were neutral in tone. Another advantage that Milne points out is that with questionnaires the potential exists to collect information from large numbers of people especially if the questionnaire is delivered and responded to in time. Interviews were conducted orally, and the answers were recorded by the researcher. The advantages of this instrument are that the interviewer can clarify any questions that are obscure and also can ask the respondent to expand on answers that are particularly important or revealing. A significant disadvantage, on the other hand, is that it takes much longer than the questionnaire to complete. Furthermore, the presence of the researcher may inhibit respondents from saying what they really think (Fraenker and Wallen, 2006).

Validity

Validity explains how well the collected data covers the actual area of investigation (Ghuri and Gronhaug, 2005). Validity basically means "measure what is intended to be measured" (Field, 2005). If a research has a high validity that means it produces results that correspond to real properties, characteristics, and variations in the physical or social world. The research was valid since all questionnaires were completed and returned in a timely manner. Participants answered questions to the best of their ability and were honest in their responses. The instrument chosen allowed for all participants to answer the same set of questions.

Reliability of the instruments

Reliability concerns the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consistent result (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). Reliability is also concerned with repeatability. For example, a scale or test is said to be reliable if repeat measurement made by it under constant conditions will give the same result (Moser and Kalton, 1989). The results of the research were reliable because the instrument catered for all participants to answer the same set of questions. However, to increase the reliability of the results, the majority of participants were asked the same set of questions via telephone and a comparison was made to the questionnaire. The responses for both the questionnaire and telephone interview were almost the same. To further increase the reliability of the results, the researcher requested on-the-spot completion of the survey. This ensured that participants answer questions to the best of their ability without any additional resource medium such as Google.

Procedure for data collection

The researcher sought permission from teachers, parents, and students to participate in this study. A brief outline of the study was given to each participant. They were also informed that their participation in voluntary and their identity will remain confidential. The researcher issued questionnaires to each participant who completed the questionnaire when it was convenient for them. This task lasted one week. The researcher then collected the completed questionnaires and completed analysis and discussions based on them. The researcher requested permission to conduct an interview with the respondents. The interviewees were allowed to choose the time and date that was convenient to them. The researcher prepared questions and conducted the interview at the decided time and date. The responses were recorded by the interviewer and analyzed and discussed.

Proposed data analysis

To adequately answer the research questions the following statistical analysis were done:

Descriptive research "focused on providing an accurate description or picture of the status or characteristics of a situation or phenomenon" (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Some data collected from the questionnaire were categorical data. Frequencies for categorical data involve providing the numbers pertaining to each category. The frequency and percentage for the categorical data were computed by means of the Statistical package for Social Science (SPSS) software 23. The data from this study included results from structured interviews based on the topic. In some cases, follow-up questions were asked for further explanation by the participant. The results of the questionnaire have been combined into categories according to evolving themes. The categories provided organization of the participants' responses into five main areas:

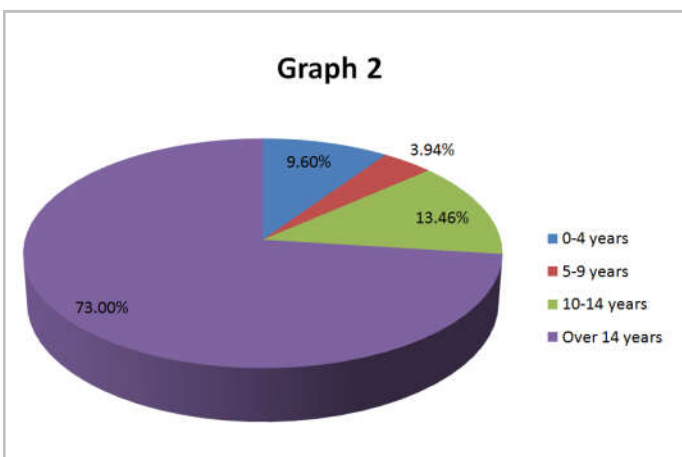
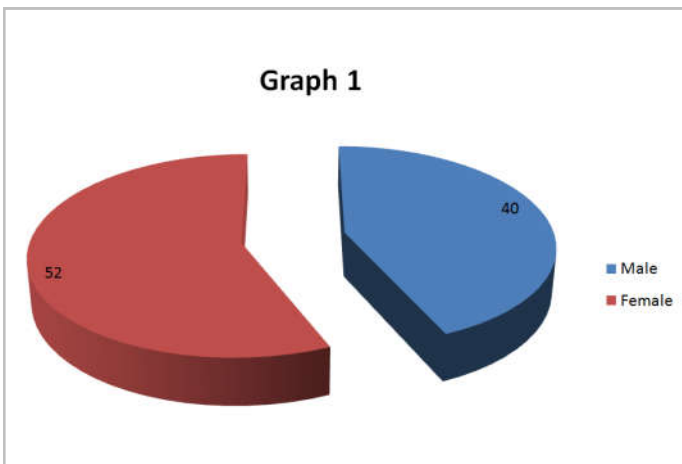
- The theoretical nature of the importance of History as part of the school's curriculum.
- The impact the absence of History has on students.
- The relationship between History and personal growth and self-awareness.
- The purpose for teaching History.
- The appropriate methodologies in teaching History.

DATA ANALYSIS

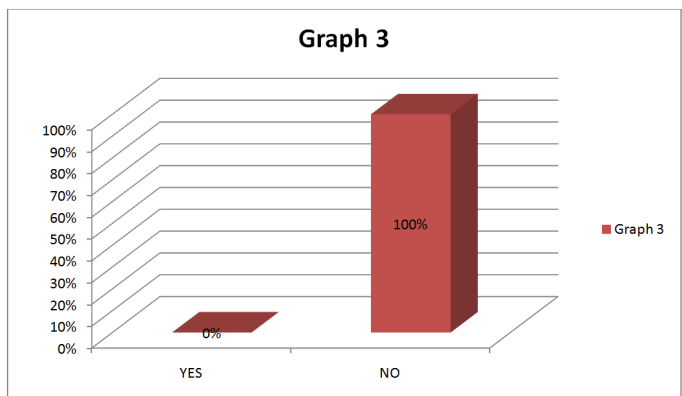
This chapter consists of the analysis of the data gathered (qualitative and quantitative) from the survey carried out. Data analysis is important so as to find answers to the research questions. These answers can be used by educators to transform or adjust their teaching methods in their classroom to enhance the teaching and learning process.

Presentation of data and results on analysis

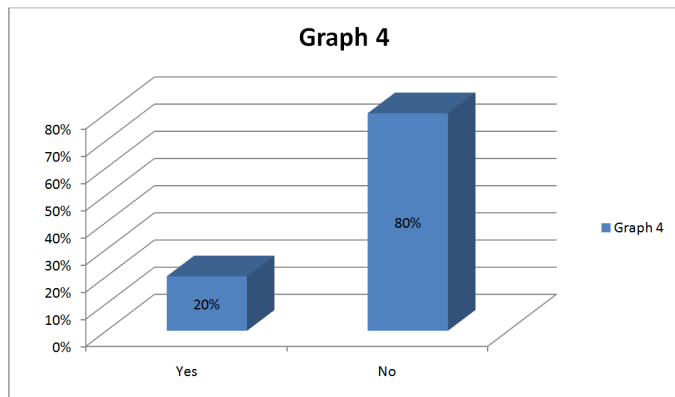
Graph 1 shows the gender distribution of the research. Participants chosen for the research were through the simple random system. It may be true that because of the higher female population in schools, the sample of females was 61% while the males were 39%. This, however, had no negative impact on the results of the research.



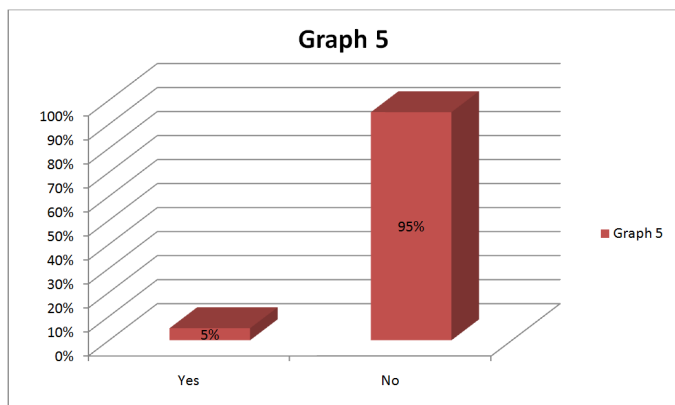
Graph 2 shows respondents' response on how long they resided in their village/town. From collected data, it was observed that an overwhelming 73% of participants resided in their community for over fourteen (14) years. This may have an impact on the research since it is expected that after living in a community for over fourteen (14) years one would have fundamental knowledge of his/her community; at the very least, the meaning of that community's name or which group of people named that community ought to have been learned.



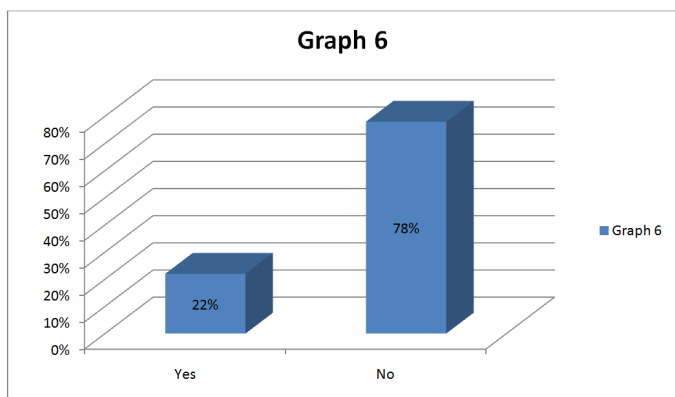
Graph 3 shows whether respondents were aware of the meaning of the name of their village/town. From the survey carried out, it was evident that majority of the participants were able to name their village/town. However, none of these participants were able to say what that name means. From interview, these participants recalled that they were not aware that names of villages/towns had meanings. They claimed that a factor that may be responsible for this is the fact that they were never taught or made aware of this.



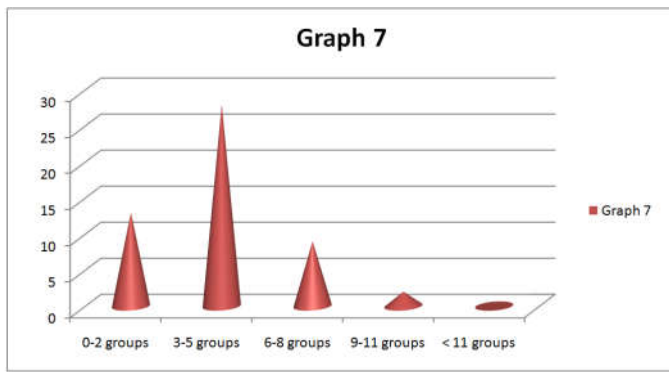
Graph 4 shows whether History is taught as part of the curriculum in schools. Participants were concerned about the absence of History as part of the school's curriculum. From the survey carried out, it was evident that a mere 20% of secondary schools included History as part of the curriculum. And even with this small percentage, those schools that offer History do not include the subject as a compulsory subject for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate.



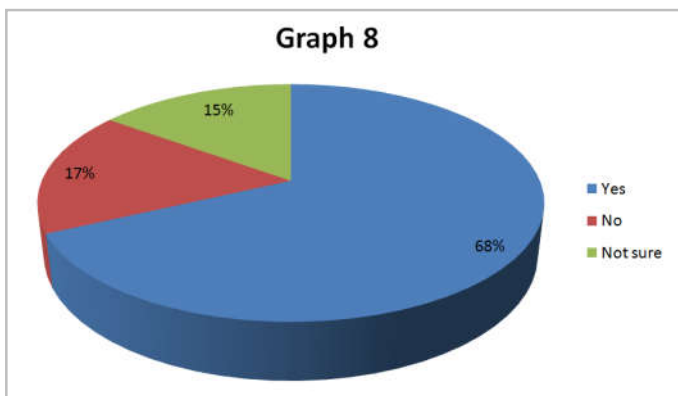
Graph 5 shows whether respondents can link the name of their town or village to the people who came or were brought to Guyana. 5% of participants were able to link the name of their village/town to the people by whom these villages/towns were named. Strangely, this proportion of participants was living in villages/towns named by the English.



Graph 6 shows whether respondents were able to identify how their towns or villages got their names. 22% of participants were able to state how their villages/towns got their names. Of this 22%, 20% of the participants were teachers while only 2% were students. From this result of data it may be safe to conclude that teachers also lack the common knowledge of the History of Guyana and the West Indies.



Graph 7 shows the number of people who the respondents thought came or were brought to Guyana. Results gathered showed that over 50% of participants were able to list at least 3-5 groups of people who came to Guyana. They revealed that this information might have been gleaned from common knowledge via television or radio broadcasts about the six groups of people who came to Guyana. At the Primary level, this is also part of the Social Studies curriculum. However, 21% of participants were able to list 6-11 groups of people who came or were brought to Guyana. Predictably, these were all teachers.



Graph 8 shows the percentage of respondents who think History should be part of the school's Curriculum. It was evident from data collected that the majority of the participants involved would like to see History as part of the Secondary schools curriculum. This, they said, will promote the teaching and learning of History of Guyana and the West Indies region. These participants viewed History as a vital part of the development of Guyana as a cohesive nation.

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the summary of the main points of the analysis, findings from the investigations, and conclusion based on data presentation. Also, the implications arising from findings are stated and recommendations are made.

Summary of main points

The total sample for this research was 92 participants; 52 students; 40 teachers; 40 males; 52 females. They were from ages fourteen (14) to Fifty (50). Participants chosen for the research were through the simple random system. It may be true that because of the higher female population in schools, the sample of females was 61% while the males were 39%. This, however, had no negative impact on the results of the research. From collected data, it was observed that an

overwhelming 73% of participants resided in their community for over fourteen (14) years. This may have an impact on the research since it is expected that after living in a community for over fourteen (14) years one would have fundamental knowledge of his/her community; at the very least, the meaning of that community's name or which group of people named that community ought to have been learned. From the survey carried out, it was evident that majority of the participants were able to name their village/town. However, none of these participants were able to say what that name means. From interview, these participants recalled that they were not aware that names of villages/towns had meanings. They claimed that a factor that may be responsible for this is the fact that they were never taught or made aware of this. Participants were concerned about the absence of History as part of the school's curriculum. From the survey carried out, it was evident that a mere 20% of secondary schools included History as part of the curriculum. And even with this small percentage, those schools that offer History do not include the subject as a compulsory subject for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate. 5% of participants were able to link the name of their village/town to the people by whom these villages/towns were named. Strangely, this proportion of participants was living in villages/towns named by the English. 22% of participants were able to state how their villages/towns got their names. Of this 22%, 20% of the participants were teachers while only 2% were students. From this result of data it may be safe to conclude that teachers also lack the common knowledge of the History of Guyana and the West Indies. Results gathered showed that over 50% of participants were able to list at least 3-5 groups of people who came to Guyana. They revealed that this information might have been gleaned from common knowledge via television or radio broadcasts about the six groups of people who came to Guyana. At the Primary level, this is also part of the Social Studies curriculum. However, 21% of participants were able to list 6-11 groups of people who came or were brought to Guyana. Predictably, these were all teachers. It was evident from data collected that the majority, sixty-eight (68) percent, of the participants involved would like to see History as part of the Secondary schools curriculum. This, they said, will promote the teaching and learning of History of Guyana and the West Indies region. These participants viewed History as a vital part of the development of Guyana as a cohesive nation. On the other hand, Seventeen (17) percent revealed that they do not think History is need on the curriculum since it is a "needless" subject. Fifteen (15) percent was unsure whether this discipline should be part of the school's curriculum.

Findings from the investigation

There is a distressing absence of curiosity when it comes to historical occurrences. Overwhelmingly, history is seen as the sum total of people's experience, and the foundation of what occurred in the past is anecdotal incidents which revolve around what they were told by parents and grandparents. Even national political history is restricted to what people remembered of what happened to them personally. When we realize that if the sum total of what one experiences becomes the sum total of history and that if those experiences are restrictively narrow, then the base of historical becomes miniscule. Educational policy-makers and teachers are as guilty as most of society of this ever-narrowing concentricity. One may draw a straight line to this lack of curiosity in what happened in history to the ignorance and indifference of

students. This dire situation is exacerbated by the fact that reading is restricted to “school books” and various social websites. Breadth of reading is not considered a virtue and is even discouraged at all educational levels. The few who opt to major in history at the university level have but one career path: teaching. Simply put, there is little or no premium placed on history or historical analysis. One would be hard put to meet even one individual at the one university in Guyana who would know of or read Cardinal John Henry Newman’s *The Idea of a University*, for instance. If one mentions an important character in history, the ready response is “Miss, I wasn’t even born then!” This may be laughable at one level, but it is tragic on many other levels. We are quite unaware of figures that have played a vital role in our history in the West Indies: Toussaint L’ouverture; Henri Christophe; Eric Williams; Alexander Bustamante; Acabre; Martin Carter, etc. The complex issues and real suffering of our enslaved ancestors and our indentured ancestors are mere political and racial by-lines. The talk and self-dramatizing wails of suffering are triggers for ethnic divisions, resentment and violence. Our ignorance of history has real-life current consequences. One of those consequences is the absence of insight into self. Teachers, students, politicians, administrators—the whole pack—share this void of self-awareness. This is the sad inheritance we hand down to our youth and our students. Even when we require studying history, our method of teaching is woeful. History is simply not made to be interesting because it is removed from the lives that students live. The subject is just something to be taught and learned willy-nilly and forgotten quickly. History is seldom connected to other disciplines as well. This is why it is quickly being seen as tedious and irrelevant.

Conclusion based on data presentation

History is seen by secondary students to be both boring and needless. Teachers themselves share this view, implicitly. Policy makers, administrators and educators at the highest levels seem to have an unhealthy disregard for history and historical analysis. The indifference is ubiquitous, and filters through to students at their most impressionable ages. This research project has suggested at least one way to generate interest in history as a discipline. If students were asked to investigate how their towns and villages and settlements came to be named as they are, the historical and anthropological yields would be enormous. The dividends will be measured in students being enlightened as to what has occurred in history and the parts played by various cultures that, together, created the culture we call ours.

Implications arriving from findings

History is not perceived to be a subject of import on the curriculum. As a result, both teachers and students shy away from the subject. Teachers are not trained in the teaching of history neither are they enthusiastic to learn the subject themselves. This results in poor delivery of the subject content. Because of teachers’ lack of interest of History, they are not equipped to teach the subject nor are they capable of the delivery of the content of history using appropriate teaching techniques. Teachers tend to continue using traditional teaching strategies “chalk and talk” and only carry out summative assessments. Because History is not compulsory at the CSEC level, students tends to demonstrate no or little interest towards the subject.

Recommendations

What follows is a set of recommendations:

1. Educational policy-makers at all levels must place renewed emphasis on history (if only West Indian history) as a valid area of educational development across the board.
2. This renewed emphasis must be clearly established in written policies and implemented sans exception in all schools.
3. History teachers must be trained in imaginative techniques tying history to current social and individual lives. One of the ways to garner interest is the study of place names.
4. Teachers must ensure acquisition of content knowledge, knowledge of learners, adequate planning, and collaboration with other teachers such as teachers in Geography, Social Studies, English, etc.
5. Teachers must demonstrate a mastery over content, show enthusiasm, relate lessons to students’ prior knowledge, use multiple instructional methods and resources in conveying content, create a conducive, comfortable, and supportive teaching/learning environment.
6. Use alternative assessment techniques. There should be in-class assignments and exercises at the end of every lesson to inform teachers on whether what they taught has been assimilated or not.
7. Teachers need to be “open” to students concerns, seek feedback from students, and update their knowledge in content and pedagogy.
8. Teachers of history ought also to link current global and local events to historical occurrences.

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APPENDIX

Dutch

Goed Fortuin
 Vryheid
 Goedverwagting
 Sparendam
 Uitvlugt
 Stabroek
 New Amsterdam
 Beterverwagting
 Wakernaam Island, Essequibo River
 Vreed en Hoop
 Weldaad
 Zeeburg
 Zeelandia
 De Kinderen
 Kyk-over-al
 Vergenoegen
 Naarstigheid
 Onverwagt
 Zorg

Scottish

Lochaber
 Cummingsburg
 Edinburg
 Graeme Hall
 Montrose
 Fairfield
 Lodge
 Paradise
 Rose Hall
 Fyrish

Syrian

Palmyra
 BRITISH
 Kingstown
 Queenstown
 Georgetown
 Albion
 Victoria
 Buxton

Spanish

El Drado
 Santa Rosa
 Anna Catherina
 Anna Regina

French

Chateau Margot
 La Bonne Intention
 Mon Repos
 La Belle Alliance
 La Jalousie
 Le Destin
 La Grange
 La Parfaite Harmonie
 La Penitence
 La Ressouvenir
 Belle vue

Amerindian

Guiana
 Bartica
 Cuyuni
 Mazaruni
 Kaieteur Falls
 Waratuk Falls
 Amatuk Falls
 Santa Cruz
 St. Ignatius
 Mainstay/Whyak
 Orealla
