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International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology

Full Length Research Paper

Teaching from the postmodern edge: The intersection of education and cultural studies in the contemporary Caribbean

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This article consists of an examination of programmes at the University of the West Indies (UWI) for cultural relevance. In examining the cultural content and relevance of teaching, a deeper look at the teaching and learning process within the contemporary period will be done. The multicultural nature of postmodern society results in the intersecting dialectics of what is taught being equally important to how it is taught and to whom it is being taught. The works of Jean-Francois Lyotard and Anthony Giddens are used to show how knowledge is perceived in this contemporary period of new capitalism. The cultural studies discourses of these and other writers are used to identify the lacuna - termed the "missing dialectics" - within the teaching and learning process facing educators at the UWI and elsewhere in the contemporary Caribbean. Culture should be at the center of the pedagogic/andragogic process. Teaching and learning are essential to the transmission of culture, while culture will influence what is taught and how, depending on the cultural, ethnographic and demographic make-up of the target audience. The paper concludes that if Caribbean development is to be enhanced in the twenty first century, then the teaching contents and methods of UWI faculty members and other educators in the region must be culturally relevant.

Key words: Capitalism, dialectics, curriculum, culture, postmodern, postmodernism, teaching.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of cultural relevance to any curriculum goes to the heart of the pedagogic process, the curricula of programmes in the department of management studies (DOMS) lack cultural relevance? How important to Caribbean development can the cultural relevance of an indigenous business curriculum be, within this globalized market environment? Other questions to be answered by educators in the contemporary Caribbean are:

1) What are the nuts and bolts of teaching in the 21st Century Caribbean?
2) Are our teachers equipped with 21st century tools? What are these tools?
3) What is the profile of the 21st century learner?
4) Can we transform this learner into a work ready graduate for the global organization?
5) What are the missing dialectics needed to complete

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this process

Many universities in the Third World use huge amounts of literatures that are created and printed in developed countries. The production of textbooks and other academic tools are influenced by the capitalist mode of production and the accompanying cultural behavior associated with it. The emergence of an industrial society referred to as modernity was accompanied by modernism. Modernism referred to the culture that accompanied the period of industrial society arising in the 20th century. This period was called modernity or the modern society. The period of mmodernism, with its many elements such as new types of behaviour, created many factors that tertiary institutions management have to grapple with on a day-to-day basis:

1) Sagging profits
2) Dwindling students' enrolment
3) Increase demands from faculty members
4) Limited commitment from faculty members who are prepared to work-to-the-hours being paid for on a monthly basis
5) Increasing overhead costs.

So many of the factors are affected by capitalism in its many forms. Capitalism is the mode (or type) of production used in Western society. How business is organized for profit involves the exploitation of labor and capital for production efficiency and profit. This was the main modes of production being used, whether in a school, plant or service organization. The environment of our socialization and the realm within which we currently construct a cultural reality is not immune from the capitalist imperative of making a profit and the many social, political and economic superstructures which are shaped by this Marxist notion which was enunciated by Karl Marx (1818-1883) His philosophy saw the quest for high profitability by capitalist firms as involving exploitation of the worker class. The greater the exploitation, the higher the level of profit for the owners Those who think that this period of new capitalism can be characterized as postmodern, also advocate the emergence of post-modernism as another form of capitalism.

POST-MODERNISM

Postmodernism is a very esoteric term with debaters on either side of the divide disagreeing as to whether we are really in the period of postmodernism. Some scholars define it as emerging with the rise/expansion of the internet. This system of connectivity that linked many computers in the United States army was made available to the public at large. With this period of the internet came a major shift in behaviour of humans and how they interact with each other and the resulting culture. It affected all aspects of cultural life from literature, drama, communication, architecture, media, teaching, business, etc. The internet along with the electronic age created a different kind of culture as interaction now represents a lack of linear as well as more diversity in most social interaction in institutions. Teaching was not spared being affected by this emerging technology given the level of technology being used in the educational process. This period of postmodernism also influences educators and facilitators, to examine how colleges approach the teaching and learning process during this era while surviving economically. The teaching and learning process is forced to examine whether the behaviour of students in postmodernism requires different approaches in the teaching and learning process. The constructivist theory of Vygotsky (1962) is revisited and still holds currency as the student is again the focal point of education in this contemporary period.

The teaching and learning process is now much more complex within this post-modern era. The learning process is filled with different things that assist students in learning as there are other social issues sitting in the classroom with the lecturers and students. These teaching tools include: Language usage, gender, colourism, cultural differences, cosmopolitan student body, and the brighter-than-the teacher INTERNET.

In *The Empire Writes Back (*Ashcroft et al.,2002*),* the authors shows the importance of writing from within as a means of bridging the gap between the language variant of the English and the cultural difference brought to it by the post-colonial, which has been an area often ignored by Caribbean teachers/lecturers. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin went on to explain that: "Thus the alterity in that metonymic juncture establishes a silence beyond which the cultural 'Otherness' of the text cannot be traversed by the colonial language". The use of language and language learning skills is one of the main areas in which post-colonial behaviour is manifested.

The Caribbean's diglossic language situation places the colonial language in a position of control which leads to issues of dominance, power, and the social construction of the 'other' as a point of validation of personhood. How are these hegemonic themes displayed by students in the postmodern classrooms? The classroom no longer represents places of dominance by the teacher/lecturer in postmodernism. The availability of electronic tablets in school may contribute to the situation being made worse.

The student-cantered classroom gives more perceptive room to the students to demand passivity on the part of the teacher in responding to cultural and demographic diversity of the student population. All types of learning styles and associated cultural behaviour had to be accommodated within the teaching and learning process.

The teacher is always on public display due to the

presence of social media on students' devices. These literally controls and dominate the teacher's reaction to various classroom behaviours. These electronic devices are hegemonic over the teachers' impulsive responses which would have been born out of years of teaching experience. This has become the nature of postmodernist behaviour where there is no meta-narrative, meta-discipline, dominant culture, codified behaviour as established by the institutions. Each day brings new decisions and sometimes uncomfortable behaviour for the teacher/lecturer.

Are teachers seeing it manifested in the colourism behaviour of bleaching? This is just one of the many identity complications that are deepened by the postmodernist behaviour of students. Bleaching is evident in many mixed population schools and institutions but the teacher would be best advised to leave this behaviour alone for fear of being ladled as racist, bias, misogynist and intemperate. The teacher can hold open but objective discussions on such issues but must avoid foisting his/her opinion on the students.

How does the teacher/educator deals with colonialism and cultural imperialism that are imported with texts and visual images from the developed country's social structure of where the texts originate? Here the teacher must be schooled in development theories and cultural studies to impose variety and appropriate cultural literature and ideology within the curriculum of the school. The curricula of the school/institution must reflect the people's history and culture for the students to benefit from dialogic of Vygotsky's constructivist approach to teaching.

The language of capitalism has become a whole new area of dialectics in contemporary society. Is it discussed in the business courses of the region's universities and community colleges? Have the colleges done justice to students of business and other programmes by the omission of this important set of dialectics. Fairclough (2013) noted the centrality of neo-liberalism which creates economic insecurity and stress for some developing and underdeveloped countries; coupled with the restrained emphasis on growth, intensification of the exploitation of labour as main areas of the new capitalism.

The implication of neo-liberalism for universities and colleges in the Caribbean is the influx of overseas institutions. They are now part of the competitive landscape of tertiary education. The advantage of these foreign educational institutions is their economic and imperialist might that is facilitated by Third World countries neo-colonial past. The flexibility of capitalism is not only confined to the full exploitation of markets, labour, governments and environmental resources for increased capital accumulation, but also to using/manipulating language as a discourse to sell its objectives and sway people's opinions in favour of new capitalism. These hegemonic manipulations of developing countries economy is done via the international technical bureaucracies such as: The World Bank (IBRD), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organization (WTO). Caribbean universities and colleges now have to strategize as to how they can compete and with what segmentary focus.

According to Sennett (2006) on new capitalism:

One of the real achievements of modern society is to remove the opposition between mass and mental. Education institutions have improved standard of numeracy and literacy on a scale which the Victorians could not imagine; the skills economy still leave behind the majority, more finely the education system turns out large numbers of unemployed educated young people, at least unemployed in the domains for which they have trained."

He further noted that the economic machine of new capitalism can run profitable and efficiently with the use of an even smaller elite. Notice that the organizations that employ your graduates are seeking to do more with less human resources.

Technology and the use of the internet allow organizations to constantly restructure, re-engineer, and down size while increasing output and market share. Who are what is being exploited in the process? The student or the teacher, or both?

Literatures use in the classroom during this post-modern period seek to show the restructuring of the production process and profit accumulation as the capitalist went in search of new markets and products as the basis for exploitation. In this regards the lecturers' facilitators should interrogate the literatures in an effort to ascertain the extent to which they addressed certain questions from a Caribbean perspective. Some of these questions are: Has the mode(s) of teaching moved concomitantly with the changing mode of production and the ensuing cultural mode of production? Capitalism to new capitalism: Modernism to post modernism: How is knowledge defined in each era? Does the definition affect teaching at the UWI, Community Colleges or other tertiary institutions?

The works of Jean-Francois Lyotard (1984) and Giddens (1984) are very instructive in how knowledge is perceived in this period of new capitalism. Lyotard saw postmodernism as breaking away from modernism and in doing so resulted in a concomitant severing of how knowledge is constructed. Science was no longer seen as the standard knowledge by which all others were judged. The objectivity of the meta-narrative of scientific theories was now laid bare by Lyotard who questioned the language used in the various disciplines of sciences and their accompanying 'language game'. He drew on Jacques Derrida's deconstructionism to show how knowledge has changed from the structuralism approach of modernity and modernism to the condition whereby

there is no longer a reliance on the stability of language (Derrida, 1976). According to David Harvey, in discussing the conditions of postmodernity, drew on Derrida's deconstructionism as a way of understanding narratives in the contemporary period:

Deconstructionism views cultural life as intersecting "texts"; deconstructive cultural analysis is concerned with "reading" texts by deconstructing them or breaking down the narrative to show how it is composed of different textual elements and fragments (Thompson, 1996).

Lyotard (1984) sees the postmodern period as incredulity towards metanarratives. This now forces lecturers and curriculum developers in this postmodern period to examine how courses are taught and what is taught. How is knowledge perceived and used in the teaching of meta theories? Marxist/conflict, functionalism, Weber social action theory, Porter's five forces model and standard accounting principles among other theories of management are now questioned for stability and objectivity within the search for an etiology in new capitalism.In addition, the emergence of the technological era in modernity with its electronic mode of production has resulted in more fragmentation of language and even more accepted language games under new capitalism. The rise of the technicians with needed technical knowledge has found favour with the new capitalist who seeks to use the anti-essentialist property of technology for greater control, both in the workplace and the wider society.

Giddens added even more dialectics to how knowledge is constituted in the postmodern period. He also challenged the stability of positivists' orientation of science and the existence of dualism of society's influence and the individual passivity in contemporary society. Turner (1986) opined that Giddens is proposing more of a duality in which "people in interaction uses the rules and resources that constitutes social structures in their day-to-day routines in context of co-presence, and in so doing, they reproduce these rules and resources of structures" (Turner, 1986). He questioned the ideology of polar opposites used to explain certain social sciences theories such as Marxism and Functionalism. Both are macro sociological theories that give preeminence to the structure of society over the agency of individuals in determining their actions. Ritzer (1988) opined that Gidden saw structure not only as referring to large scale social structures but noted that "it can also refer to micro structures such as those involved in human interaction" (Ritzer, 1988). He went on further to quote Giddens in his structuration theory as saying that "Every research investigation in the social sciences or history is involved in relating action to (often used synonymously with *agency*) structure … there is no sense in which structure 'determines' action or vice versa" (Ritzer, 1988). This orientation of Giddens relates to knowledge in the contemporary period and how it is interrogated within the

dialectics of the class room. Here is espousing a duality of structure and agency which is similar to the behavior expected of those who design curricula for various programmes at the UWI and other tertiary institutions. Do they give agency to the students for whom the curricula are designed? Do they take into account that as the students and lecturers interact within the teaching and learning space, structure is developed? Students and lecturers interact with the rules and resources of the social structure. Hence, the need to have an approach to teaching that; pays special attention to the cultural space created in the teaching and learning process, the characteristics of all agents involved in the process and the hermeneutics of the learning environment within the Caribbean.

The new service industries of new capitalism create products which, according to Rutherford (2008), resulted in the "emergence of post materialist values associated with identity, ethics and belonging (Rutherford, 2008). Many goods and services are produced for differentiated consumers who all operate within a globalized environment of sameness amidst multiculturalism. The difference is tied to the economic production of similar but distinguished products appealing to our soft senses and peculiarity. Large numbers of these products which appeal to our emotions and 'difference' are in the service sector and cater to emerging demographic trends and consumer behaviors. The empirical data are retrieved from on-going research and development which has become a constant feature of the information society. Lankshear's discourse included aspects of contemporary organizational changes which are influenced by changes in the economic realm of production. Not many of the writers referenced in this work sought to explain the accompanying organizational changes which are spawned by changes in the productive system and the social relations emanating from these changes.

Lankshear also opined that discourse about educational reform is linked to themes in the discourse on new capitalism (Lankshear and Knobel, 2012). This is not surprising, given the social relations link between capitalism and education. Macionis and Plummer noted that, for Marx, the economy (money and capital) which forms the infrastructure of society determines the superstructure of social institutions, values and behavior of society (Macionis and Plummer, 2008). In other words, "social institutions reinforce the domination of the capitalists, by legally protecting their wealth..."(Macionis and Plummer, 2008) In extending this argument to education, it can be concluded that the education system would support a capitalist system of education. As the system of production changes and restructures itself, a concomitant change to the education system would evolve reflecting and accommodating these requisite changes.

Hence, there are no surprises to see changes in the language of new capitalism. This is in keeping with the

process by which the capitalist class gets compliance for the wider society. Their use of capital and power to influence the polity ensures that changes within the social system that will benefit them can be initiated and enforced by the polity. The use of capital and its associated power can be used to gain acquiescence of the masses in society. These masses are socialized by the educational system in the process of value consensus. Consequently, compliance to dictates of new capitalism will be done via language and education.

In Martin and McIntyre, Danielle Little questions whether this behavioral patterns at the macro level, as espoused by Marxists, stand in need of micro level explanations (Martin and McIntyre, 1994). In other words, should we assume that the macro level of society, such as the economy, affects the behavioral pattern of individuals without some discourse on what is happening at the micro (individual) level? Little opined that:

Some Marxist thinkers have argued that macro explanations stand in need of micro foundations, detailed accounts of the pathways by which macro-level social patterns come about. These theorists have held that it is necessary to provide an account of the circumstances of individual choice and action that gave rise to aggregate patterns if macro explanations are to be adequate. Thus, in order to explain the policies of the capitalist state, it is insufficient to observe that this state tends to serve capitalist interest: we need to have an account of the processes through which state policies are shaped or controlled so as to produce this outcome (Martin and McIntyre, 1994).

This is valid criticism by Little (1994), who sought to show the importance of the micro-sociological analysis. It is important to take into account the part played by individuals in directing their own behaviour. Max Weber, in Macionis and Plummer, pointed to this theoretical perspective long ago in his sociological 'social action perspective (Macionis and Plummer, 2008). Individual situations should be analyzed to understand reasons behind their actions. This proves a bit difficult for some theorists of new capitalism. The overarching nature of capitalism as a dominant mode of production has led them to exclude any analysis of individual actions in response to capitalism. This is in keeping with macro-sociological analyses that focus on the wider society as the unit of analysis. Both Marx and Durkheim were categorized as macro sociological theorists due to their top-down approach to the study of society. Marx saw the economy as being central to the behaviour, values, and social institutions of the wider society.

While, Durkheim opined that it is through socialization and adherence to 'social facts' (rules, regulations, laws) that the society develops value consensus (Gaspard-Richards et al., 2005). Marxists and neo-Marxist theorists would explain the language of new capitalism using Marx's material determinism approach. The fact that

human beings have to purchase material things to survive means that their actions will be driven/determined by the economy.

The above arguments then lead us to conclude that the language of capitalism may be seen from different perspectives by individuals in society. Different individuals may have noted the appearance of new words and phrases in the everyday English vocabulary. Some individuals may not have noticed or attached any importance to these words or phrases as part of a large process of new capitalism to get acquiescence to the ideology of constant capital accumulation. Post-industrial society has seen the introduction of new phraseologies associated with business, as noted by Lankshear. Some of these new terms mentioned by Lankshear, that are now popular in the language of new capitalism are; profit-driven, cost effective, lean and mean, focused on the bottom line, value adding, competitive edge, efficient rationalized, and committed to 'uniform standards across all sites of activity'. Human beings are cultural beings and any attempt to teach/change behaviour in students should take into account both the culture of the students and their surrounding environment. How applicable and practical is this ideology to the teaching and learning process of business related curricula in a cosmopolitan Caribbean? Beckford (Levitt, 2000), in speaking about the importance of social knowledge, opines that "…we should be concerned essentially with the evolution of ideas and the ways in which this evolution influences peoples' perception of their lives and the future of themselves and their societies" (236).

There appears to be a lacuna in curriculum design and research whose objectives are focused on the effectiveness of departments at UWI (University of the West Indies) making their programmes culturally relevant in fulfilling the mandate of the institution. Is there a link between cultural relevance and adequate preparation for the world of work? The researcher has not been able to unearth any study linking cultural relevance to the 'readiness for work' of UWI students. Also, how important is this cultural link to the adequate development of UWI students for the 21st century Caribbean? The enduring Mission of the UWI is:

To advance education and create knowledge through excellence in teaching, research, innovation, public service, intellectual leadership and outreach in order to support the inclusive (social, economic, political, cultural, environmental) development of the Caribbean region and beyond. This mission points to the major objective of the UWI which is to so structure its teaching and learning resources "in order to support the inclusive (social, economic, political, cultural, environmental) development of the Caribbean region and beyond"[1]. Reflectively the question lingers as to how then, can the structuring of the

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[1]Taken from the University of the West Indies' (UWI) Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017

teaching and learning resources be done appropriately to support the many types of development in the Caribbean, without a culturally relevant curriculum? Nettleford also supported the need for culturally relevant education by conceptualizing and contextualizing some of "the recurring themes/concerns/issues" of the region as it entered the new millennium (Inward Stretch Outward Reach vii-ix). He noted that: Firstly, for the region to have safe entry into the 21st century, there is the urgent need for an expansion of thought rooted in the Caribbean's historical experience and existential reality and responsive to the unpredictability of rapid change at the end of the century… Fourthly, issues of cultural identity, employment, productivity and the pressing demands for an expanded science-and-technology capability suggest an urgent need for the rational indigenization of an articulated Caribbean educational system at all levels of operation (vii-viii).

The indigenization of the educational system at all levels was Nettleford's perception of what would be required by the Caribbean if it is to carve out a survival strategy within the 21st century. The survival of the Caribbean's identity within globalisation is dependent on how the region educates its tertiary-level students about its culture. In fact, Nettleford (1999) alluded to the need for the people of the region to "create mental structures" with "structural products" of "music, dance, religious expressions, language, literature, appropriate designs for social living" in order for the Caribbean to deal with the challenges of globalization which he described as "the harmonization of inner and outer space" (Inward Stretch Outward Reach 83-84). This meeting of inner and outer spaces exposed the need for the Caribbean people to be properly educated about their culture in all spheres of education so as to create that indelible sense of self and identity formation that can withstand the hegemonic forces, which historically comes from the outer space, during the integration process of globalization. This cultural identity is also needed in such an important area as business education to drive part of the developmental objectives in the Caribbean. The economic domination by the outer space remains a clear and present danger to Caribbean survival and identity. The use of indigenous businesses and a concomitant focus on Caribbean cultural education become part of the region's measured response to the global threat of social, cultural and economic domination. If left unheeded, this threat will perpetuate the economic dependency of countries in the region. Porter (2000) noted that after substantial analysis of various nations, states, and companies "the question is not whether culture has a role but how to understand this role in the context of the broader determinants of prosperity" (14). The role of culture is important to determining how the students of the DOMS construct their perception of Caribbean prosperity. They might want to contemplate the problematique of whether there is/can be a Caribbean prosperity and what the implications to their individual prosperity are, within a globalized

Caribbean.

One of the weaknesses[2] identified in the UWI's strategic plan 2012-2017 is: Work-readiness of graduates. This area of deficiency is perceived as one of the necessary pillars of university reform in Latin America and the Caribbean by Rivera quoted in a UNESCO publication about higher education in the 21st century. She noted that:

Today there is an evident division between the university world and the world of action. The labour world, that of public administration, the business world, are at present very distant from the world of formal higher education and each of them seems to be locked in narrow limits and different logics (Rivera, 1998:163).

Rivera (Lucky, 2011) went on to stress the need for universities in Latin America and the Caribbean region to understand the differences between the two worlds in an effort to deal with the challenges of development in the present era (163). It is possible that central to the integration of the two worlds is the need for students to understand the culture of the environment called 'work' in which they will be pushed for their own economic survival. The problem can be circumnavigated by instilling culture within the university's curricula to ensure that students have practical and applicable knowledge of the work environment before engagement with this very cultural space.

This area of the UWI strategic plan which links teaching and learning to the world of work must be supported by all the faculties and departments which are engaged in the teaching and learning process, whether directly or as support staff.

The cultural relevance of programme curricula would assist in the accomplishment of this endeavor. Having DOMS curricula that are culture-focused would contribute immensely to the adequate preparation of students, who become graduates that are ready for the world of work. Work-readiness of the UWI graduates is one of the true tests of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process in the DOMS and by extension the university's academic, technical, administrative and technological systems. Hence, the need for research into cultural relevance of the DOMS programmes could be a starting point for the overall evaluation of other programmes at the UWI.

Businesses in the Caribbean are involved in global competition for the production and marketing of their goods and services. But can they prepare for global competition without first knowing their local market and its culture? Lucky[3] noted that, "Thus, the great lesson of the last half of the twentieth century is that the values, beliefs

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[2]Taken from the University of the West Indies' (UWI) Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017

Esuh Ossai-Igwe Lucky was discussing practical approaches to nurturing entrepreneurship development in the 21st Century.

and practices embodied in a nation's culture are not only an important productive resource, but often the most important resource" (221). This frame of reference which ranks culture as the most important resource is necessary for ensuring the cultural relevance of a business programme. If the students have no cultural frame of reference within which to understand the material being taught, how practically relevant will be the curriculum in the teaching and learning process? Can they relate what is being taught and the examples used to their own cultural realities? The pervasive use of texts produced in other cultural jurisdiction compound the need for the students to have their own cultural frame of reference as a tool of analysis and intervention. The practicality of this approach to curriculum design can be seen by exploring some questions related to how the marketing of goods and services would be considered in a number of courses within business curricula in the DOMS.

Questions that require careful thought as part of any long-term business plan of a local or regional firm would include:

1) Who are our customers?
2) How often and where do they buy our products?
3) What do they expect of our products?
4) Are there differences between local and international consumers of our products and services?
5) Who are our competitors, and how do they behave locally, regionally and internationally?

Students graduating from any business programmes at the UWI or other tertiary institutions in the English-speaking Caribbean should be in a position to answer all of the preceding questions for any potential business in which they are employed. In fact, such questions could be asked at different stages of a recruitment process for new managers or marketing technicians.

GLOBALIZATION

The multiculturalism of globalization does not obviate the need for further cultural relevance of an indigenous programme from small regions like the Caribbean. The region's culture has not disappeared with the advent of contemporary globalization. It is still needed as a base from which to negotiate the international competitive environment. While no one can escape the consequences of globalization as Barker (2005) noted, "We remain unequal participants and globalization remains an unequal process" (175). The strength of the region's response to globalisation will depend, in part, on the quality of the UWI graduates and their ability to see the relevance of culture not only in their curricula but also as the basis for regional integration and success.

Globalisation has been defined by Benn as "the increase integration of trade, production and finance

across national boundaries" (Benn, 2000: 23). Entwined within this definition are many social and cultural issues of power, dominance/hegemony, colonialism, dependency and imperialism - just to name a few dialectics associated with a commonly used term in business. The term globalisation is constructed differently by people in disparate nation states. Hall, quoted in Barker, argues that "diasporic identities are constructed within and by cultural power" (Barker, 2005:175). The Caribbean is described as a diasporic region with people from many different Diasporas historically meeting in the Caribbean (Campbell 120). The cultures of the different diasporic groups are suggested by Hall to be the power behind identity formations. Here, Hall is raising culture to the point of relevance in the construction of identities. Discussion about markets and customers must unavoidably incorporate notions of culture as being central to identifying individuals or groups of like-minded individuals.

Skills are required in the curriculum design for the DOMS to ensure that the understanding of cultural relevance in all aspects of their programmes is not inchoate. If little or no attempt is made to cement the Caribbean's culture in the cognitive psyche of the students of the Department of Management Studies (DOMS) then the concept of a Caribbean identity will soon be lost forever as Caribbean cultural sovereignty is surrendered along with political sovereignty in the demands of contemporary globalization. Porter, however, provides a more optimistic future outlook for the benefits of globalisation by pointing to the need for countries to pay attention to those industries that produce goods and services "in which their culture gives them a unique advantage". The Caribbean's culture is known and admired worldwide, but not enough use is made of the many cultural industries in crafting sustainable development plans, programmes and policies. Porter[4] further concluded that:

Thus, although global convergence around the productivity paradigm is increasing, cultural differences will certainly remain. Globalisation will not eradicate culture, as some have feared. However, instead of isolating some people in their economic disadvantage, these cultural differences can contribute the special advantage so important to improving the prosperity of nations in the global economy. In a global economy in which so many things can be easily sourced from anywhere, cultural differences that give rise to distinctive products and services should become more celebrated. (28).

This argument by Porter had been put forward by Nettleford (2003), many years before. The general

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[4]Porter's publications are frequently used at both the graduate and undergraduate levels in the DOMS which is now part of Mona School of Business and Management (MSBM.)

philosophy of this perdurable thinking by Nettleford and Porter derives from an epistemological background in which culture is treated as a necessary tool for teaching and learning. In fact, cultural dialectics embedded within universities curricula is the *sine qua non* for the way forward in the contemporary period for small regions and states like those of the Caribbean (Nettleford, 1997).

The social sciences provide critical analysis of social life's most important questions and concerns. These concerns vary from 'why am I poor' to questioning whether Marx's theory of economic determinism (Macionis and Plummer, 2008)[5] can apply to the Caribbean or to my business. The social scientist will not always provide a definitive answer to this and other epistemic concerns of society, but he/she should provide the dialogic or sow the seed of thought-formation to enable the ordinary folk to start pondering his/her own answers to such perplexing questions. In doing this, the social scientist is utilizing the culture of the individual as part of the solution to questions. The individual's critical response would be a product of his/her perception and experiences if we are to assume that Piaget (1959, 1968)[6], as referred to by Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner, is correct about human perception in learning theories (Merriam et al., 2007: 285).

CONCLUSION

Lev Vygotsky's constructivist approach seems quite appropriate to the art of teaching and learning at the tertiary level in this cosmopolitan twenty first century Caribbean.   Vygotsky's theory can and should be assimilated to the UWI and other tertiary institutions curricula. The relevance of Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development (ZPD) to teaching and learning in the Caribbean comes from an approach to teaching and learning in which integration for learning means development for both learner and facilitator. The zone of proximal development starts with collaboration for learning and has been defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers". This approach is in contradistinction to the one way 'chalk and talk' which structures the learner to wait on instructions to develop ideas. Vygotsky also indicated that "what is in the zone of proximal development today will be the actual developmental level tomorrow". In the Vygotskian approach, instructional strategies used to scaffold include (but are not limited to)

hints, prompts, and cues given and later removed by the lecturer. Scaffolding can also involve orchestrating social contexts known to support student's learning, such as make-believe play or specifically designed group activities. This ideology of education pulls the lecturer into the teaching and learning process for greater use of strategies that are culturally relevant and suitable for the cosmopolitan student body that is currently at the UWI.

Vygotsky's social constructivist view of education and curricula incorporates the multi-cultural nature of modern society as well as the many factors (internally and externally) that determine the final out come from the teaching and learning process- a work ready graduate from the UWI. Students plays an active part in the teaching and learning process as lecturers collaborate with students to facilitate meaning constructions and develop the environment for cultural mediation for better understanding and outcome of the pedagogic process. Cultural development of the individual is the apogee for Vygotsky and should be assimilated to UWI strategic objective to prepare work-ready graduates.

The tertiary level classroom of the twenty first century has a wide mix of students for whom meanings are created in various ways. The creation of meaning stems from past experiences, cultural meanings, cultural images, perceptions, activities and many other sources. The lecturer facilitator must play the role of cultural worker (Freire, 2005). Donaldo Macedo and Ana Maria Araujo Freire noted that Paulo Freire opines that "A humanizing education is the path through which men and women can become conscious about their presence in the world." (Macedo et al, 2005; Freire, 1998).

Teaching in the twenty first century requires educators who are interested in seeing their students as social beings from diverse backgrounds and culture.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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[5]Macionis and Plummer discussed this concept as part of the philosophy of Karl Marx in which the economy forms the base of society or infrastructure, which then creates a superstructure of values and beliefs systems (102-103).
[6]Piaget proposed a four stage theory showing how human learning starts with mental processes. He went on to show how mental development precedes learning.

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