

PART II. APPLICATION OF CTRP PRINCIPLES: EXPERIENCES FROM THE FIELD AND GOOD PRACTICES

6. Managing teacher recruitment and migration: A case study of the Barbados experience

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Abstract

This paper seeks to highlight Barbados' experience in managing teacher recruitment and migration. As a small developing state, Barbados has been a leader in the promotion of strategies to manage teacher migration, commencing with the events surrounding the development of the Savannah Accord. Since 2001, the Government of Barbados has been guided by a policy framework on teacher recruitment and migration which was developed following the experience of the period between 1998 and 2001. During this period, a significant number of Barbadian teachers were recruited to work in the USA. Barbados also played a pivotal role in the development of the Savannah Accord in 2002 and the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP), which was adopted in 2004.

An examination of administrative data compiled in the Barbados Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development was conducted. The views of Barbadian teachers who have migrated were sought to facilitate the documentation of their experience. A qualitative approach using telephone and face-to-face interviews was therefore used to collect and analyse data from two former senior ministry officials, teachers and one Barbados teaching union executive. Quantitative data from the ministry's records and the Barbados Immigration Department were also analysed to investigate the migration of teachers to Barbados from other countries.

The analysis of data revealed that between 2000 and 2009 an estimated 3 to 4 per cent of trained and experienced teachers in the public service had either been granted leave to teach abroad or migrated to work in other jurisdictions. This was fairly significant given the size of the public teaching workforce in Barbados. In addition, when gender was taken into consideration, approximately two-thirds of the teachers who were recruited were females. Administrative data revealed that currently 214 non-Barbadian citizens are employed in the public service, while between 2006 and 2010, 127 teachers were granted visas to work in Barbados.

An important finding from the interviews with teachers was that a majority had no knowledge of the CTRP. Future research should focus on conducting a gap analysis on the CTRP's implementation in Barbados to determine what still needs to be done regarding dissemination of information.

Key words

Teacher Recruitment, Migration, Recruitment Policy, Managing Recruitment, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, Barbados

6.1 Introduction and background¹

The recruitment and migration of teachers from developing to developed countries continue to be as much of a concern today as they were a decade ago. The global shortage of teachers poses a negative threat, as developing countries move towards improving their chances of achieving the various internationally agreed goals and targets at the national level. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2009) estimates that by 2015, close to 100 countries would need approximately 1.9 million more teachers compared to 2007 to satisfy

the provision of good quality universal primary education. Several countries face a very daunting task in providing adequate numbers of teachers to service the needs of children in their classrooms. A major question therefore remains: where will these teachers come from?

Many smaller developing countries are aware of the impact of previous movements by developed countries to satisfy their demand for teachers. In 2007, thousands of teachers on temporary visas were contracted to teach in the United States of America (USA). Yet it is recognised that there is a need to protect migrant workers and limit the potential impact of migration on source countries (American Federation of Teachers, 2009). These concerns are reflected in the provisions of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP).

The lure for teachers from developing countries² to pursue more lucrative opportunities in developed countries has highlighted several major disparities. Affected areas include teacher education and preparation, remuneration and career path structures, incentives and retention strategies that give rise to international mobility, 'brain drain' and the depletion of human capital (Ochs, 2007). These factors are known to have an impact on the quality of education in source countries (Sives, Morgan and Appleton, 2005; Appleton, Sives and Morgan, 2006; Sives, Morgan, Appleton and Bremmer, 2006). This raises the important question of how source countries can derive maximum benefit from the international movement of teachers, while also developing strategies that provide mechanisms that, while facilitating international recruitment, encourage the establishment of circular mechanisms.

The Caribbean region has been well known for its high level of emigration, especially of teachers, and subsequent remittances that provide financial support for families who remain, which have been an important factor in stimulating economic growth. Jamaica particularly has been identified as one of the most severely affected source countries in the Caribbean region (Sives *et al.*, 2006). Even though the Caribbean region has certainly been affected by the international movement of human resources to developed countries, it has escaped the 'migration merry-go-round' experienced by some Commonwealth countries (Degazon-Johnson, 2008a and b).

Recent developments in New York, as reported by Best (2011), bring into focus the continued plight of teachers who migrated to developed countries in the early part of the last decade. It has been reported that New York Department of Education is contemplating reducing the size of its teaching staff by as many as 6,000 teachers. This downsizing forms part of a significant reduction in educational expenditure, which would allow the city to manage its budget deficit more effectively. At the losing end of this exercise appear to be thousands of Caribbean teachers who migrated in the wave of teachers in 2000 to fill a shortage that existed at the time.

The same report by Best highlighted a stark reminder of the negative experiences of some teachers who migrated to the USA. Again the notion of broken promises by the New York authorities has raised its head (Best, 2011; Degazon-Johnson, 2008a). The report revealed that concern was expressed regarding the failure by some recruiters in that city to honour their commitment to teachers, who were promised enhanced career opportunities, higher pay, better conditions of service, a chance to improve their own education and certification at colleges and universities, and securing their immigration status.

While Best reported that some teachers had improved their professional qualifications, obtained green cards, bought homes and generally improved their social and economic status since migrating to the USA, he argued that 'far too many were not so fortunate' (2011, para. 16). It is clear therefore that these experiences need to be considered if we are to chart a new path for the effective implementation of the principles of the CTRP.

The migration of teachers is likely to continue into the foreseeable future, based on the predicted increase in the global demand for teachers. There is support for developing countries, through greater awareness of the CTRP, to leverage more inputs such as

professional development and capacity building into their education systems from developed countries (Degazon-Johnson, 2008b).

The 2011 Commonwealth Research Symposium therefore provides an excellent opportunity to not only share best practice experiences, but to strengthen the resolve of developing countries to ensure the protection of migrating teachers and to enforce the provisions of the CTRP.

6.2 Methodology

6.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to highlight some of the experiences of Barbados, a small island developing state, in its management of the recruitment and migration of teachers to other jurisdictions. The paper seeks to present some limited data to support a discussion of the factors that underpin the steps taken to develop a managed process in Barbados. In addition, it seeks to share some of the experiences of a small number of Barbadians who have taken up the opportunity to serve in other countries.

6.2.2 Statement of the problem

The problem investigated focuses on the strategies deployed by the Barbados Ministry of Education to carefully control the potential loss of experienced teachers from public primary and secondary schools to developed countries. This paper has therefore undertaken to:

1. examine the administrative processes adopted by the Ministry of Education to manage the recruitment and migration of Barbadian teachers in the face of a drive by developed countries to meet the demand for teachers in their education systems; and
2. present a brief analysis to raise awareness about the experiences of teachers who have migrated to teach overseas.

6.2.3 Approach

Telephone interviews were conducted with two former senior ministry officials who were involved in the management of the teacher recruitment and migration process. To corroborate the views and experiences of these officials, administrative data were also collected and analysed. In addition, interviews were conducted with one teaching union official and ten teachers who were conveniently selected from the ministry's database.

6.2.4 Research questions

The research was guided by the following questions:

- What challenges did the Ministry of Education of Barbados face in dealing with the migration of teachers?
- What administrative procedures were used by the Ministry of Education to manage the recruitment and migration of Barbadian teachers?
- What are the views of some of the teachers on their experiences teaching overseas?
- What were the lessons learned?

6.2.5 Instrument

A semi-structured interview schedule was developed for use with ministry and union officials and a structured interview schedule was developed for teachers on the basis of the 2009 review of the research literature undertaken by Ochs and Jackson. The structured interview schedule consisted of two sections: Section 1 collected personal data and Section 2 collected data based on respondents' responses to both closed and open-ended questions. The instrument was pre-tested prior to being used to gather data from respondents. The

interview schedule was then used by the researcher to conduct telephone and face-to-face interviews with participants.

6.3 Discussion of findings

6.3.1 Early developments in managing teacher migration

Barbadian teachers, like other Caribbean nationals, have migrated in search of employment opportunities in other countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) and the USA. The interviews conducted with the former ministry officials and the union executive supported this view. The administrative records of the ministry also revealed that in the early 1990s, regional territories such as Bermuda, Turks and Caicos Islands, Cayman Islands and the Netherlands Antilles recruited Barbadian teachers.

One example of an early experience with the organised recruitment of teachers to a developed country was presented in the interview with a former senior ministry official and supported by a union executive. It was revealed that:

In the early 1990s, the London Borough of Hackney recruited a number of Barbadian teachers who went there on secondment. However, the education authorities in the Borough of Hackney reportedly failed to honour their commitment to transfer to the Treasury of Barbados the agreed gratuity for those teachers.

This experience resulted in the Ministry of Education instituting a policy of 'no-pay leave' for public service teachers who undertook overseas teaching contracts. The administrative records of the ministry revealed that in 1992, 11 teachers were subsequently granted no-pay leave to take up teaching contracts in the Cayman Islands.

From the interviews conducted and the administrative data, it was evident that the ministry and the union supported the desire of teachers to undertake contracts to teach overseas. A typical response was that 'teachers would benefit through the acquisition of new skills, further training and professional development and postgraduate qualifications. Barbados would also benefit from remittances of foreign currency'. There was also the view that opportunities would be created for younger teachers. The ministry was reluctant to 'tie-up' established teaching posts for prolonged periods since temporary teachers would not have security of tenure.

The administrative records of the ministry showed that during the 1990s, a combination of approaches was used by recruiting countries to attract local teachers. In some instances, the ministries of education of the recruiting countries wrote to the Ministry of Education in Barbados indicating an intention to recruit teachers. For example, in 1993, the Government of the Netherlands Antilles wrote to the Ministry of Education, Barbados, seeking the release of teachers and stated: 'it was prepared to agree to any reasonable conditions under which the Government of Barbados may be willing to release teachers'.³ In 1998, Anguilla wrote to the Ministry of Education Barbados, seeking to recruit trained teachers in five disciplines (English, mathematics, geography, social studies and Spanish).⁴ The Anguillan offer for professionally trained teachers included 25 per cent gratuity of basic salary, a housing allowance of US\$800 per month, and paid return passages for the teacher, spouse and up to four children under 19 years.

While the number of teachers sought by the Anguillan government was small, the request came just before the new school year, which started in September. The Barbados Ministry of Education indicated that it was too late to accommodate the request and suggested that the Anguillan government advertise in the local press.⁵

The records of the ministry revealed that over the years, concern was expressed that various regional governments were not negotiating with the Ministry of Education in the recruitment of teachers, but appeared to be communicating directly with individual teachers. This concern was confirmed in an interview with a former senior ministry official, who also noted that 'at the time the government was spending large sums of money on the training of its teachers and should be consulted'.

Some countries advertised in the local newspapers and recruited directly. For example, ministry officials from Bermuda met with ministry officials in Barbados only after advertising to recruit teachers in the local press. In other cases, some recruiters made direct contact with individual teachers.

The Ministry of Education in Barbados demonstrated some flexibility and restraint in managing the migration of teachers at the time, especially given that the numbers sought were small. Administrative data showed evidence of an intention by the Ministry of Education to formulate a policy on teacher migration in the early 1990s.

Over the years, the Ministry of Education facilitated the release of teachers, particularly in subject areas where there would not have been any adverse impact on the system. However, a wave of large-scale recruitment of Barbadian teachers to serve in New York, which started in the late 1990s, was the catalyst for urgent and strategic action on the part of the Ministry of Education to properly manage the recruitment process.

Such was the case in 2001 when approximately 38 teachers, with an average of 20 years' teaching experience, went to work in New York. More than 50 per cent of those teachers eventually resigned from their teaching posts in Barbados or refused to return to work in Barbados. This resulted in a loss of some very experienced teachers. One former ministry official pointed out that:

In the absence of a detailed policy to govern the process, the ministry sought to put measures in place to mitigate the negative impact of such large-scale recruitment on the teaching service.

The records of the ministry have revealed that between 2000 and 2009, an estimated 3 to 4 per cent of teachers in the public service either have been granted leave to teach abroad or have migrated to work in other jurisdictions. While this may appear to be a small number, it is fairly significant given the size of the public teaching force. While there has not been any study in Barbados to quantify the loss of teachers through migration, the Ministry of Education considers the loss of teachers to be considerable, given the investment by the state in the training, preparation and professional development of the teachers, as well as the years of teaching experience gained by them.

6.3.2 Developing a policy framework for managing the migration process

In the late 1990s, especially since 1998, there was an increase in demand for Barbadian teachers to be contracted in the USA. The Ministry of Education therefore considered it prudent to establish a policy framework to guide the recruitment and migration process. An interview with a former senior education official revealed that initially:

The Board of Education, City of New York, visited the island and independently set about its recruitment drive without prior consultation with the ministry. However, public service teachers who sought to undertake contracts with the New York Board of Education had to apply to the ministry for permission to leave. This created some challenges for some teachers, who eventually resigned their positions to migrate.

The early approaches to teacher recruitment, as well as the experience with the New York Board, led to the streamlining of the ministry's position on the national approach to managing teacher recruitment and migration. Therefore, in 2001 when the Board of Education, City of New York, approached the Ministry of Education in Barbados to recruit teachers to serve in its school districts, the ministry sought the support of the Cabinet of Barbados to institute a policy to manage the recruitment process, which would be satisfactory to the City of New York Board of Education and the Ministry of Education, Barbados. A former senior ministry official commented:

While the Government of Barbados agreed to facilitate the participation of teachers in the Caribbean Recruitment Initiative by the New York Board of Education, a limit was

placed on the number of teachers who could be recruited in a specified time period and special conditions were put in place to manage the process.

Administrative records revealed that a maximum of 20 teachers were to be granted leave in any two-year cycle to accept teaching contracts with the New York Board of Education. Such leave was made conditional and was granted on a no-pay, non-pensionable basis. This is a significant consideration for Barbadian teachers in the calculation of their retirement gratuity and pension payments. The policy also specified the categories of teachers who were ineligible for leave:

Teachers who, within the previous two years, had completed a course of study, training or no-pay leave to undertake contracts in other jurisdictions, would be required to complete at least two years of service before being eligible for consideration to be recruited. Certain categories of specialist teachers were made ineligible for recruitment, such as teachers who were members of schools' programme teams participating in the education reform programme called the Education Sector Enhancement Programme. Such teachers were required to complete two years of service following the completion of their training.

The Cabinet of Barbados agreed to the conditions articulated in the policy to manage the recruitment of teachers to New York. These conditions formed the basis of an organised policy framework on teacher recruitment and migration in Barbados. As a consequence, since 2001, the Government of Barbados has been guided by a policy framework on teacher recruitment, which was developed following the experience of the 1998 to 2001 period. It also specifically identified persons teaching in areas where skills are in short supply, persons who are bonded by the government, persons who have received specialist training in priority areas and persons who have returned from similar leave or secondments within a given period, among those who were ineligible for leave.

6.3.3 A regional collaborative effort to manage teacher migration

In 2002, the Minister of Education, Jamaica, wrote to his Barbadian counterpart seeking support to host a meeting of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Education Ministers to address the matter of teacher recruitment in the Caribbean.⁶ At the time, the Commonwealth Secretariat offered to support the development of a framework to undergird a recruitment policy and potentially a protocol for Commonwealth countries. The governments of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries recognised the benefit of pursuing a collaborative approach. This formed the basis of a proactive, unified stance to deal with a major challenge that faced small island developing states. The Government of Barbados supported the approach and hosted the meeting.

The minutes of that meeting reflected the experiences of the eight states that participated in the convocation (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Cayman Islands, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago).⁷ The extent of recruitment and migration of teachers varied among the participating countries, resulting in varied impacts. Trinidad and Tobago reported that between 1999 and 2002, there was a teacher turnover rate of 4.5 per cent at the secondary level and 2.4 per cent at the primary level. However, factors other than migration would have contributed to the level of turnover.

Two very interesting approaches were advanced by Trinidad and Tobago. First, teachers who desired to work in other jurisdictions were required to resign their posts to pursue such options. The second was that a package of incentives was introduced to retain their teachers. The package included revision of the teachers' compensation, introduction of professional development programmes, introduction of sabbatical leave, revision of the school management systems, modernisation of schools and teacher training institutions, and teacher assistance programmes.

In the case of Jamaica, a similar pattern of teacher recruitment and migration to the UK and USA was experienced between the late 1990s and 2002. In 2001, 350 teachers migrated to New York and 100 to the UK. A turnover rate of 9.8 per cent was recorded in

that year, with a particular impact on specialised subjects. The Jamaican Minister of Education supported the view that incentives to retain teachers in the region were absolutely vital. Jamaica began offering scholarships to teachers and training up to graduate level.

In Barbados the teacher turnover rate fluctuated between 2.6 per cent in 1999 and 3.5 per cent in 2001. Of note was the contribution made by the Barbadian Consul General to New York. He pointed to three important factors that underpinned the recruitment drive by the New York Board of Education. First there was the migration of inner city New York teachers to suburban schools, thereby creating a demand for teachers to fill the vacated positions. Second, the cultural and ethnic background of Caribbean teachers was closely aligned with the replacements the Board of Education desired to teach second and third generation Caribbean students in New York. Third, it was projected that there was going to be a significant deficit of teachers across the USA by 2009. The Consul General, who was in discussion with the New York Board of Education to assist Barbados in addressing the issues that confronted the island in the recruitment of teachers to that state, encouraged other countries to pursue a similar approach to the one taken by Barbados and Jamaica.

It was generally agreed by the ministers of education that it would be unwise to try to prevent teachers from taking up teaching contracts overseas. Rather, it was their view that small countries in the Caribbean region should seek to negotiate packages with the developed countries to compensate for the loss of teachers through recruitment. At the local level, they also felt that incentives such as special awards and rewards should be introduced, while ensuring that adequate training facilities were provided to fill the positions left vacant by teachers who had been recruited.

The general consensus was that the education systems in the small developing states of the Commonwealth Caribbean were under significant pressure from the recruitment efforts of the USA and UK. There was agreement that a mechanism had to be established to limit the potential 'brain drain' in the region. The culmination of the meeting of Commonwealth countries was the signing of the 'Savannah Accord' in 2002. This accord was the catalyst for the development of the CTRP.

6.3.4 Enhancing the teacher recruitment and migration policy framework

While regional discussions were taking place to formulate a unified position on international teacher recruitment, Barbados was still grappling with its internal approach to managing the loss of teachers through migration. The policy initially developed in 2001 to manage teacher recruitment and migration was significantly enhanced in 2002.

The catalyst for this development was a request by the Jefferson County Public Schools' Board of Education (JCPS) in Louisville, Kentucky, which wrote to the Ministry of Education expressing a desire to recruit teachers from Barbados, and the subsequent extensive negotiations that followed.⁸ The JCPS was seeking to recruit between 15 and 25 fully certified teachers in various categories including:

- High school (ages 15–18) – maths, physics and chemistry
- Middle school (ages 11–14) – all content areas
- Elementary (ages 5–10) – general education
- K-12 (ages 5–21) – special education

During the months of discussion and negotiation with the JCPS, a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was prepared for signature between the Ministry of Education Barbados and the JCPS.⁹ While it was felt by one ministry official that the MoU was an ideal instrument to govern the management of relations between the JCPS and the ministry, the MoU was never officially signed or brought into force by the Barbadian authorities. Nevertheless, Barbadian teachers were awarded three-year contracts to work with the JCPS.

One major outcome of the negotiations with the JCPS was the enhancement of the teacher recruitment and migration policy originally developed in 2001. The ministry, in consultation with the teachers' unions, introduced tighter controls to protect the local education system by extending the categories of teachers who were made ineligible for leave to work overseas. Teachers ineligible for leave to work in other jurisdictions included:

- teachers who were members of the programme teams for the Education Sector Enhancement Programme;
- teachers who had returned to work for a period of less than five years after being granted leave to work in other jurisdictions;
- teachers who had returned to work for a period of less than three years after being granted study leave or training leave;
- teachers who had returned to work for a period of less than five years after being granted secondments to work in other institutions; and
- teachers who were assigned to subject areas where there was a scarcity of skills, such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography and special education, as well as other areas that might be determined by the ministry from time to time.

6.3.5 Involvement of the teachers' unions

The teachers' unions in Barbados had an important role to play in the management of the recruitment and migration process. This view was supported by a senior executive member of one union and two former senior education officials during interviews conducted.

One education official's comment reflected this position:

An important dimension of the ministry's policy on teacher recruitment and migration was the involvement of the two teachers' unions, the Barbados Union of Teachers (BUT) and the Barbados Secondary Teachers Union (BSTU), in this national effort.

This view was also supported by the comments of the executive member of one union who stated that 'the ministry invited the union to assist in the development of a protocol to ensure that the local education system did not suffer'. A review of the minutes of a meeting held with the unions in 2002 also confirmed this union support.¹⁰

The administrative records revealed that one union had no objection to the recruitment and release of teachers, but recommended that in the future efforts should be made to preserve the pension rights of teachers while they were on contract overseas. The union also articulated the view that the Barbados Consul General to New York should facilitate the monitoring of the experiences of Barbadian teachers in the USA.

The other union, while not fully supporting the release of teachers, held the view that incentives should be instituted to retain teachers in Barbados. Nevertheless, the general support of the teachers' unions made the management of the recruitment and migration process much easier, along with enhancing the opportunities for the dissemination of pertinent information on international teacher recruitment and migration.

6.3.6 Adoption of the CTRP

Barbados was represented on the Commonwealth Working Group on Teacher Recruitment, which developed the CTRP in 2004 (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004). The Government of Barbados formally adopted the CTRP in January 2005. The Ministry of Education is generally satisfied that the existence of a national policy and the adoption of the CTRP have contributed to improvements in the management of the teacher recruitment process in Barbados.

This was highlighted in 2007, when Barbados was approached by the Department of Education, South Africa, to recruit teachers to be contracted to work in that country.¹¹

The request, which indicated alignment with the CTRP, was premised on a shortage of teachers in mathematics, science and technology. While the Department of Education was seeking to institute a strategy of recruitment and retention through various incentive schemes, the aim was to satisfy a short-term need. However, due to the policy in Barbados which placed a limit on certain categories of teachers being granted leave to teach in other jurisdictions, Barbados was unable to acquiesce to the request for support in the areas specified.

6.3.7 Retention of Barbadian teachers

The local terms and conditions of service for teachers in Barbados are generally good. The Government of Barbados maintains a policy of tuition-fee-free education up to university level. Barbadian teachers have, through the various teacher training and professional development opportunities provided by the state, benefited tremendously from this level of support. Indeed, teachers are among some of the best paid public officers. The average salary for an experienced, trained graduate teacher is US\$58,282 per annum. Other benefits which Barbadian teachers have access to as part of the social provision of the government include:

- paid holiday;
- paid sick leave (21 days per annum for appointed teachers and 14 for temporary teachers);
- a term's leave with pay;
- maternity benefits;
- free healthcare;
- retirement benefits (gratuity and pension).

As a consequence, one union executive expressed the view that 'Barbadian teachers are less inclined to migrate to jurisdictions where the conditions are less favourable than at home'.

6.3.8 Interviews with teachers who migrated

The institution of a policy on teacher migration in 2001 in Barbados created an environment in which those who desired to experience a different teaching and learning culture could pursue that dream with the assurance of being able to return to the local system. The administrative data of the ministry revealed that many of the teachers who migrated a decade ago have since returned to the service. The data also showed that there has been some loss due to resignations, but this has not significantly affected the teaching service.

Interviews with some teachers who migrated and returned revealed interesting insights. It was found that most of the teachers attended a recruitment fair prior to migrating. This was the major approach used by recruiters who came to Barbados. One teacher recalled 'receiving an acceptance letter and a position in a school before migrating to New York'.

The majority of teachers who were interviewed were highly experienced practitioners with more than 25 years in the service. Most of them indicated that they needed a new or different teaching experience and a change from the situation they were in at the time. One teacher expressed a desire to 'experience the US education system and to find out how it compares with the Barbadian system'. Another teacher wanted the opportunity for further career and professional advancement.

There was consensus among those teachers interviewed that various professional development opportunities were provided for teachers in the school districts in which they worked. While continuing professional development was mandatory for all teachers, the form it took varied from after school and weekend staff development sessions on

curriculum content and pedagogy, to university courses in a wide array of subjects and content matter.

It was found that the terms and conditions of service for teachers who went overseas varied significantly from those that existed in Barbados, particularly in the case of classroom management. The following typical responses were provided:

- 'Teaching contracts and licences were required.'
- 'It was easier to fire teachers.'
- 'You are relieved of your duties at the slightest complaint from students.'
- 'The principals have lots of power; you can be fired for some of the simplest things.'
- 'Greater accountability was required of teachers.'
- 'A lot more documentation of classroom activities and incidents was required.'
- 'Teachers were considered wrong until proven right; teachers are not respected as professionals.'

There was a general appreciation among interviewees for the Barbadian education system. This was confirmed by comments such as: *'The Barbados system was better and should not be changed to copy the US system'*.

There were also mixed responses from teachers in relation to the receipt of what they were promised in the compensation packages. Some teachers had no problems, while others did not receive everything that was promised in the time identified during the recruitment phase.

There was a general view among those interviewed that the benefits of teaching overseas were varied, particularly at the personal level. Some of the comments included:

- 'A deeper appreciation of the Barbadian education system; opportunities for professional development; exposure to a new system and development of skills and strategies to help all kinds of students, especially in special education.'
- 'Teaching overseas allowed me to foster professional friendships, complete a master's degree and obtain a home overseas.'
- 'There were professional development and financial benefits.'
- 'The acquisition of new knowledge, teaching experience, new teaching methods and use of materials.'

One of the major challenges highlighted by most teachers was the 'culture shock'. Other concerns articulated included:

- 'A lack of respect for teachers by students.'
- 'Lower academic standards.'
- 'High levels of indiscipline.'

One teacher who migrated to a developing country expressed concern about the: 'limited scope for promotion; lack of openness to suggestions from West Indian teachers by administrators and a willingness to adopt wholesale changes from US or UK.'

It was also found that the majority of teachers who were interviewed were not aware of the CTRP and had not read it. One union executive reported that the union supported the dissemination of the CTRP and assisted in this regard when it was adopted by Barbados.

6.3.9 Teachers migrating to Barbados

While many Barbadians have migrated to other countries in search of new experiences and teaching opportunities, nationals from other countries have also found Barbados to be an attractive domicile in which to teach.

The Ministry of Education maintains a policy in the public schools in which Barbadians are given priority when qualifications and skills are considered for recruitment of teachers. This view was supported by a former senior education official. The official further commented: 'Where a non-Barbadian teacher applies for a teaching position, especially in areas where there are shortages of qualified persons, such non-Barbadians are hired'.

Analysis of administrative data from the Barbadian Immigration Department revealed that between 2006 and 2010, 127 work permits were approved for non-nationals from developed and developing countries to teach in Barbados. The persons granted these permits have all been employed in private educational institutions. The highest number of permits was granted in 2008, with the 'Long-Term' category topping the list. The two most popular work permits granted to non-Barbadians between 2006 and 2010 were the CARICOM Skilled National and the Long-Term work permits. A higher number of Long-Term permits was issued during the period. Two nationalities, Guyanese and Jamaican, dominated the requests for work permits.

6.4 Conclusions

As a small island developing state, Barbados has faced many challenges in the attempt to safeguard state investment in teachers and to maintain a sufficient number of trained and experienced teachers. One major challenge was the direct contact recruiters established with individual teachers and the advertisements placed in the local newspapers. This had the potential to undermine the integrity of the education system through recruiters and teachers not consulting with the ministry prior to the recruitment drive. In addition, the lengthy negotiation meetings placed a strain on the limited resources of the ministry.

Another challenge was one in which some teachers who accepted overseas contracts did not return to duty at the end of their contract period. This resulted in substitutes having to wait several years before getting appointed to the service. In addition, it is difficult to track Barbadian teachers who are not employed in the public service. A further challenge that indirectly affected the ministry was the failure by some recruiters to keep their promises to teachers.

One major solution to the challenges faced by Barbados was to embark on a process of managed migration. To achieve this, a number of elements have been combined to effectively manage the recruitment and migration of teachers to other jurisdictions. First, it was recognised that the granting of 'no-pay leave' to teachers was one way to ensure that the system did not suffer the effects of 'brain drain', but rather allowed experienced teachers who migrated to have the opportunity to return to their positions after their contract periods expired.

Second, direct engagement, negotiation and discussion between the Ministry of Education and recruiting governments or recruiting agents facilitated a better-managed system of recruitment and migration in the context of a small country. The ministry therefore discouraged direct contact and negotiation with public service teachers.

Third, the establishment and maintenance of good working relationships with the teachers' unions was a key component in the development of a policy framework to manage teacher recruitment and migration, one that proved to be highly beneficial. This made the process less disruptive and easier to reach agreement on the terms and conditions governing the policy. The unions also played a role in educating their members about the recruitment policy.

Fourth, the establishment and maintenance of high standards for teachers and the provision of various benefits act as incentives to retain teachers. In addition, by establishing a managed migration approach, it is easier to determine how many teachers are going to migrate and how many replacements are required. This also helps in determining the provision of teacher training to ensure that adequate numbers of trained teachers are available.

One of the most vital components has been the establishment of a policy framework. The Cabinet's approval of a policy to govern the management of teacher recruitment and migration provided legitimacy to the entire process. The policy that was developed clearly identified the categories of persons who are ineligible for leave, limited the numbers per cycle and placed a limit on the length of time that teachers are allowed to be contracted overseas.

Another important element was regional collaboration and sharing of information and best practice among Commonwealth Caribbean countries on teacher recruitment and migration. This resulted in the development of the Savannah Accord, which in turn paved the way for the CTRP.

Finally, the adoption of the CTRP by the Government of Barbados as a tool to underpin the management of the teacher recruitment and migration process has proved to be the most important factor for Barbados. Future research should be focused on conducting a gap analysis on the implementation of the CTRP in Barbados to determine what still needs to be done regarding the dissemination of information on it to all teachers.

Notes

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- 2 Brown and Schulze (2007) and Manik, Maharaj and Sookrajh (2006) have identified several push and pull factors.
- 3 Letter from the Government of the Netherlands Antilles, 1993.
- 4 Letter from Government of Anguilla, 1998.
- 5 Letter from the Chief Education Officer, Barbados, 1998.
- 6 Letter from the Minister of Education, Jamaica, 2002.
- 7 Meeting of Ministers of Education of the Commonwealth Caribbean, Savannah Hotel, Barbados, July 2002.
- 8 Letter from the Human Resources Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools, 2002.
- 9 Proposed MOU between JCPS and Ministry of Education, Barbados, 2003.
- 10 Minutes of meeting held by Ministry of Education with the teachers' unions BUT and BSTU, 2002.
- 11 Letter from the Department of Education, Republic of South Africa, 2007.

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