

ANNUAL SCHOOL TEXTBOOK PRICES SURVEY 2015

A report of observations made during the
2015 round of the Consumer Affairs Commission
Annual School Textbook Survey.

Consumer Affairs Commission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List Of Figures.....	3
List Of Tables.....	3
1.0 Executive Summary.....	4
2.0 Overview Of Textbook Survey	7
2.1 Performance of the Economy	7
Consumer Price Index and Inflation.....	7
Foreign exchange	7
2.2 The Survey.....	9
2.3 Methodology.....	10
Analysis	11
2.4 Limitations.....	11
Selection of Books.....	11
Price display	12
Book Availability.....	12
Publication Factors and Price variation	13
3.0 Survey Results	14
3.1 Current Year	14
3.1.1 Islandwide Prices.....	14
3.1.2 Islandwide Availability	16
3.1.3 GKMA Prices.....	18
3.1.4 Gkma Availability	20
3.1.3 Other Urban Centres Prices	21

3.1.4 Other Urban Centres Availability	23
3.1.5 Other Urban Centres by Regions	24
3.2 Comparison with the previous year (2014) – Price Movement	29
4.0 Conclusion	40
5.0 Recommendations	41

List Of Figures

FIGURE 1 MOVEMENT OF JA\$ AGAINST US\$ BETWEEN JULY 204 AND JULY 2015	8
FIGURE 2 MOVEMENT OF JA\$ AGAINST GBP BETWEEN JULY 2014 AND APRIL 2015.....	8
FIGURE 3 NUMBER OF BOOKSTORES SURVEYED BETWEEN 2003 AND 2015	9
FIGURE 4 ISLANDWIDE TEXTBOOK AVERAGE PRICE AND INFLATION MOVEMENTS: 2003- 2015	29
FIGURE 5 ISLANDWIDE TEXTBOOK PRICE MOVEMENTS BETWEEN 2014 AND 2015	30
FIGURE 6 PRICE MOVEMENT OF TEXTBOOKS WITHIN THE GREATER KMA BETWEEN 2014 AND 2015	31
FIGURE 7 AVERAGE PRICE MOVEMENTS OF TEXTBOOKS IN THE GREATER KMA BY SUBJECT AREAS SURVEYED	33
FIGURE 8 PRICE MOVEMENT OF TEXTBOOKS WITHIN THE 'OTHER URBAN CENTERS'	34
FIGURE 9 PRICE MOVEMENT BY SUBJECT AREAS IN 'OTHER TOWNS'	36

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1 MOE'S SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE TYPE OF BOOKS TO APPROVED FOR PURCHASE BY PARENTS	10
TABLE 2 VARIATION WITHIN THE PRICES OF INFANT LEVEL TEXTBOOKS	14
TABLE 3 MOST SIGNIFICANT PRICE DISPERSIONS AMONG PRIMARY LEVEL TEXTBOOKS.....	16
TABLE 4 AVERAGE AVAILABILITY RATES FOR TEXT BOOKS BY SUBJECT AREAS ISLANDWIDE	17
TABLE 5 PRIMARY BOOKS WITH OBSERVED COVs GREATER THAN 10% IN OTHER URBAN CENTRES	19
TABLE 6 SECONDARY LEVEL BOOKS WITH COVs GREATER THAN 30% IN OTHER URBAN CENTRES.....	20
TABLE 7 SHOWING THE AVERAGE AVAILABILITY RATES FOR TEXT BOOKS IN GKMA.....	20
TABLE 8 PRIMARY BOOKS WITH OBSERVED COVs GREATER THAN 10% IN OTHER URBAN CENTRES	22
TABLE 9 SECONDARY LEVEL BOOKS WITH COVs GREATER THAN 30% IN OTHER URBAN CENTRES.....	23
TABLE 10 SHOWING THE AVERAGE AVAILABILITY RATES FOR TEXT BOOKS IN OTHER URBAN CENTRES	23
TABLE 11 SHOWING THE AVERAGE AVAILABILITY RATES FOR TEXT BOOKS BY SUBJECT AREA IN WESTERN JAMAICA	27
TABLE 12 SHOWING THE AVERAGE AVAILABILITY RATES FOR TEXT BOOKS BY SUBJECT AREA IN CENTRAL JAMAICA	27
TABLE 13 COMPARISON OF AVAILABILITY, 2014 - 2015.....	37

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2015 Annual School Textbook survey was conducted during the period of July 29 - August 7, 2015.

The aim of the survey was twofold: **to provide consumers with information that would assist them to cost-effectively discharge their responsibilities as parents/guardians; and to present researched evidence concerning textbooks as critical back to school consumer items.**

Data from 47 outlets have been collected, 2 less than achieved at the end of the 2014 survey (49 outlets).

In accordance with the established methodology for this survey, the list of books surveyed during the 2014 exercise was used for this study. In 2014, a new list of books was created and retained to allow for comparability. The survey instrument used represented a compilation of books extracted from the Ministry of Education's approved primary and secondary level supplementary booklists and booklists procured from schools during the 2014 review exercise.

In total, 130 texts were surveyed: 13 Infant (10%), 36 primary (28%) and 81 secondary (62%) were surveyed, which covered the CSEC and CAPE curricula.

Twenty one (21) subject areas were covered at the secondary level and included: Business, Caribbean Studies, Communication Studies, Computer Science, English Language and Literature, Foreign Languages, Geography, History, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Sociology, Home Economics, Economics, Religious Education, Technical Drawing, Agriculture, Metalwork and Electrical Installation. The primary and infant level included texts covering Reading & Grammar, Mathematics, Science, Religious Education and Social Studies.

Islandwide, comparative data was available for **123¹** books: 13 infant level texts; 35 primary texts; and 75 secondary books.

Price changes

The CAC's sample of 123 comparable books indicated **an average price increase of 6% island-wide over the period 2014 – 2015, 6% less than the overall increase recorded in the last reporting period.** The latest data presented by STATIN reported an **inflation rate of 3.8% between July 2014 and July 2015².** The latest data from the Bank of Jamaica revealed that during the survey period, the Jamaican dollar declined by 4% against its US counterpart; moving from J\$112.79 in July 2014 to J\$117.38 in July 2015.

Island-wide, observed secondary textbook prices increased 6% on average, compared to 5% for primary texts and 5% for infant level texts.

The most significant average price increase was 67% (J\$1,555.33 to J\$2,590.00) observed for the secondary level text: *Advanced Spanish Vocabulary (Second Edition)* by Isabel Melero Orta.

The most significant average price reduction was 43% (J\$1,840.20 to J\$1,052.17), recorded by the secondary level text: *Basic Needlework (Fifth Edition) (Metric)* by Winefride M. Bull.

Availability (Current Year)

¹ Prices for 6 texts were not observed in 2014, and one text was incomparable as the 2014 price included used texts. This resulted in only 123 common texts between 2014/15 being selected for comparison.

² STATIN (2015) "New release: Consumer price index July 2015" retrieved from <http://statinja.gov.jm/PressReleases/newpressreleassecpi.aspx>, retrieved August 18, 2015

At this time, **87 of the 130 books (67%) were readily available³ in the bookstores surveyed. Infant level textbooks had an overall availability rate of 82%, compared to 73% for primary level texts and 49% for secondary texts.**

Price Dispersions (Current Year)

Islandwide, **Infant level** textbooks were found to be competitively priced. Twelve of 13 infant level textbooks surveyed had a coefficient of variation (COV)⁴ **of no more than 10%. Only One text had a COV of 11%.**

Primary level textbooks were also **competitively priced as 30 of 36 books showed COVs of no more than 10%.**

Close to half of the secondary level (49%) textbooks were competitively priced with COVs of no more than 10%.

In conclusion, it has been observed that the pace of price appreciation has slowed this year when compared with the last survey. Infant level texts were most readily available, followed by Primary and then Secondary level texts. In addition, Infant and Primary level textbooks were found to be more competitively priced than secondary level books.

³ 'Readily available' signifies that the book was found in at least 50% of the bookstores surveyed.

⁴ The **coefficient of variation** measures the percentage deviation of the prices from their mean. It shows the level of dispersion of prices for each textbook across bookshops. The unit-less nature of the coefficient of variation makes it possible to compare price dispersions among bookshops. The lower the figure is the closer (more competitively) the prices. This does not negate the significance of the actual dollar value to some cash strapped consumers.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF TEXTBOOK SURVEY

2.1 PERFORMANCE OF THE ECONOMY

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX AND INFLATION

The analysis of the Consumer Affairs Commission (CAC) Annual Textbook Survey must be interpreted in light of trends in the local and global economy which impact the pricing and availability of these textbooks. Among these are the trends in inflation and the movement in foreign exchange rate.

The latest data from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica on inflation indicate that the Point-to-Point inflation rate for the period July 2014 - July 2015 was 3.8%⁵.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Since the time of the last survey to date, the Jamaican dollar has undergone continual depreciation against its major counterparts⁶. The Jamaican Dollar has lost 4% of its value against the US Dollar moving from a rate of J\$112.66: US\$1.00 to J\$117.28: US\$1.00. In comparison to the British Pound, the Jamaican Dollar gained 10% of its value, moving from a rate of J\$192.40:GBP £1.00 up to J\$171.73: GBP £1.00.

⁵ STATIN (2015) “New release: Consumer price index July 2015” retrieved from <http://statinja.gov.jm/PressReleases/newpressreleasecpi.aspx>, retrieved August 18, 2015

⁶ BOJ (2015) “Foreign exchange monthly rates” retrieved on August 18, 2015 from http://www.boj.org.jm/foreign_exchange/fx_rates_monthly.php

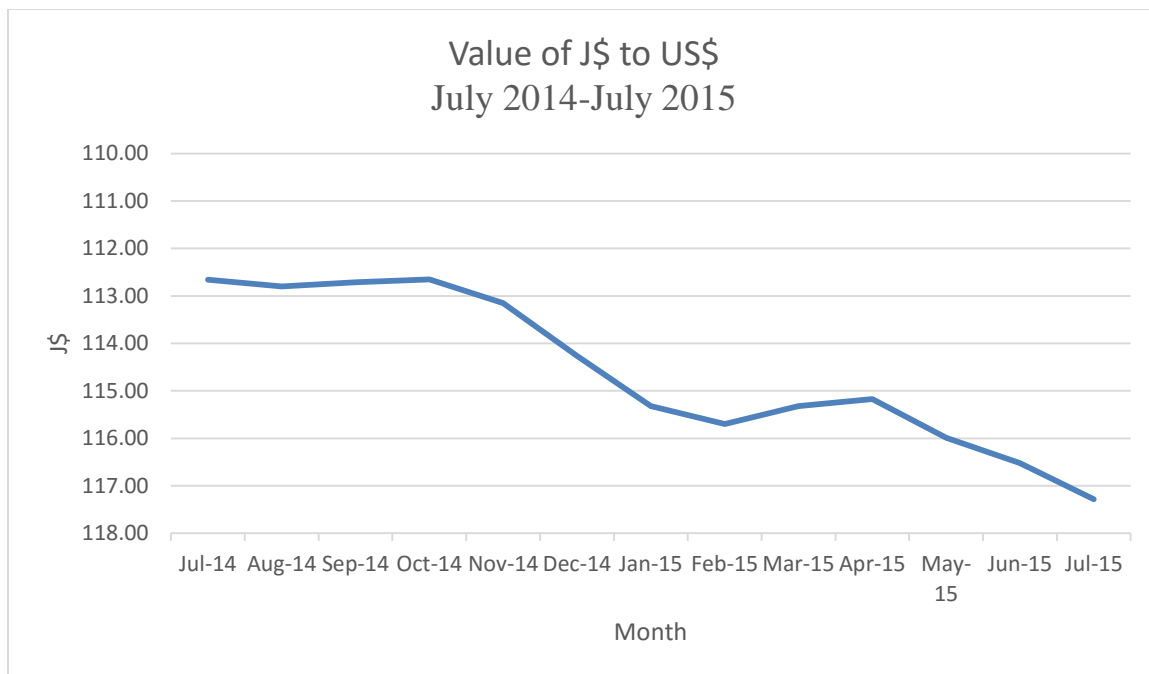


Figure 1 Movement of Ja\$ against US\$ between July 2014 and July 2015

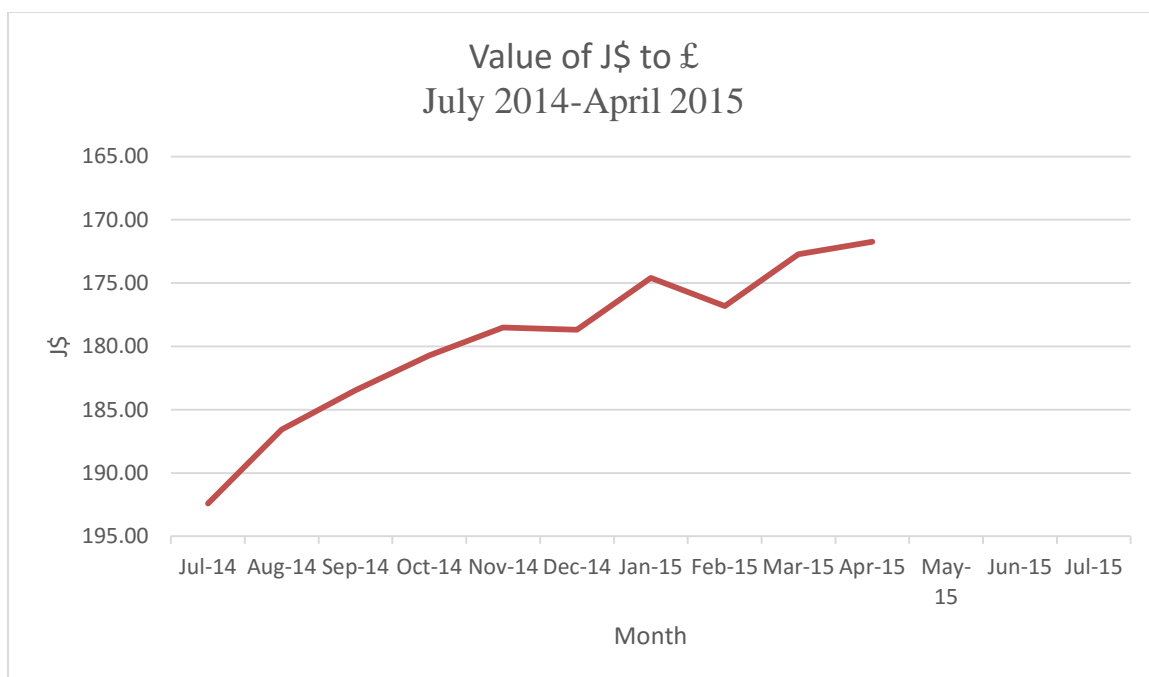


Figure 2 Movement of JA\$ against GBP between July 2014 and April 2015

2.2 THE SURVEY

This year's annual textbook survey was conducted by the Consumer Affairs Commission (CAC) between July 27 and August 7 2015. The aim of the survey was to:

1. Provide consumers with information that would assist them to cost effectively discharge their responsibilities as parents/guardians;
2. To present researched evidence concerning textbooks as critical consumer items; and to a lesser extent,
3. Gauge the level of compliance of public schools (primary and high schools) with the Ministry of Education's policy on booklists.

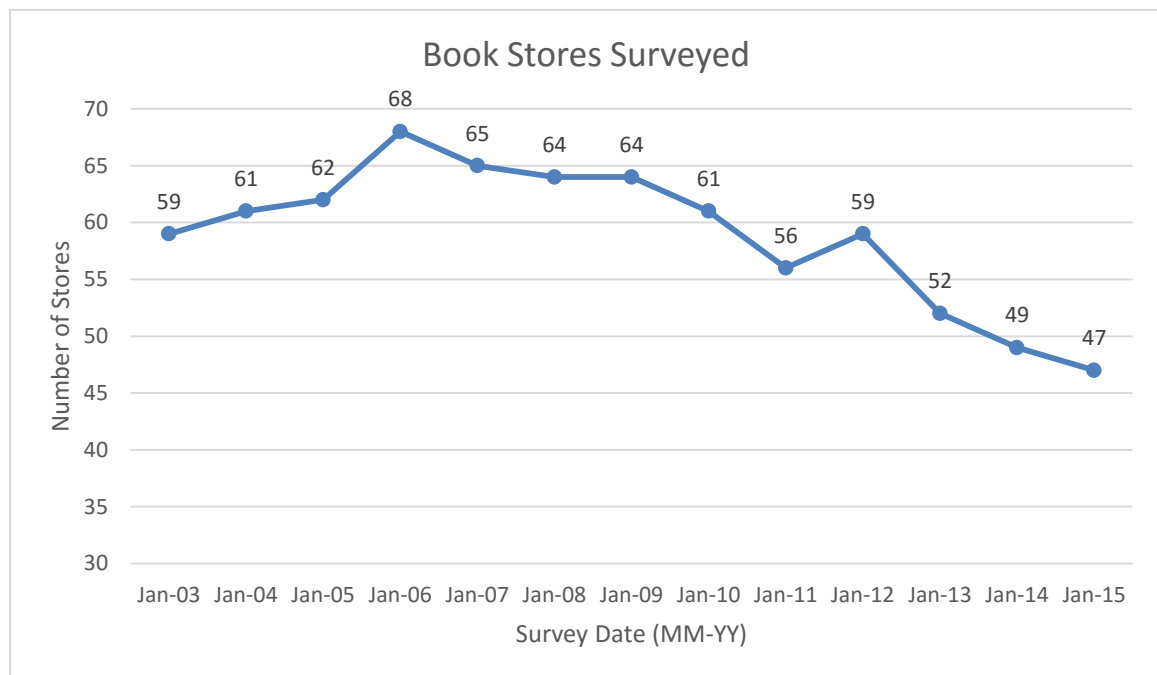


Figure 3 Number of Bookstores surveyed between 2003 and 2015

Data was obtained from 47 bookstores Islandwide: 18 bookstores in the Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area (GKMA)⁷ and 29 from Other Urban Centres⁸, across all other

⁷ Kingston, Andrew, Portmore & Spanish Town

⁸ Urban towns within all other parishes islandwide, other than the Greater KMA

parishes islandwide, excluding Portland, St Thomas and St. Mary, from which no information was available. This sample represents two bookstore less than achieved during the previous survey.

2.3 METHODOLOGY

In 2014, the Ministry of Education instituted a new textbook policy which was greatly expected to reduce the number of books parents would be required to purchase for their children. This policy remains in effect and the books which they may be asked to purchase should adhere to the rubric outlined in Table 2.

Table 1 MoE's suggestions regarding the type of books to approved for purchase by parents

Grade Level	Types of Books
1-3	One reader and one Phonics text for each grade
4	Workbooks for Literacy and Numeracy
4-6	One workbook each for Science, Social Studies, Language Arts and Mathematics
7-9	One workbook for each textbook provided by the Ministry of Education, and on average, three (3) Literature books, approximately one per term
10-11	Textbooks for subjects which the Ministry of Education does not provide. These include Literature and Cosmetology

This new approach required the CAC to contact schools in order to obtain their book list during last year's survey. However, the list of books surveyed during the 2014 exercise was used for this study to allow for comparability. As such, a total of 132 text books were surveyed: 13 Infant School texts, 36 Primary School Texts, and 83 Secondary School texts.

The CAC's research officers were provided with a list of the books along with their respective ISBN numbers and specific information to correctly identify the version of the book

being surveyed. Data was captured and submitted using SurveytoGo, a mobile data collection application. The CAC staff reviewed the prices and confirmed selected books with retailers.

ANALYSIS

Data analysis involved the calculation of the average, maximum and minimum price for each text book as well as coefficient of variation and availability. Availability refers to the number of stores that had the textbook in stock at the time of the survey. Thus the term 'Readily available' signifies that the book was found in at least 50% of the bookstores surveyed. The Coefficient of Variation (COV) measures the percentage deviation of the prices from their mean. It shows the level of dispersion of prices for each textbook across bookshops. The unit-less nature of the coefficient of variation makes it possible to compare price dispersions among bookshops. The report also utilized an overall average which was calculated as the average of averages within certain categories of books. The overall highest and lowest average prices were noted for reporting purposes.

2.4 LIMITATIONS

In addition to the CAC's inability to survey all known bookstores which supplied school textbooks, the study's main limitations were mainly related to selection of books, which was hampered by the slowness in number of schools to submit booklists within the specified time requested and in some instances, lack of displayed prices on books in the stores.

SELECTION OF BOOKS

During the 2014 survey, as was normal, the CAC attempted to compile a list of books that represented the books most chosen nationally at each level. This involved requesting the book lists from schools and identifying which text books were most requested for purchase by parents. This would provide a list of books most parents nationally were expected to purchase.

However, this approach proved difficult for this year's survey. The implications of the Ministry of Education's policy meant that schools had to first submit their proposed booklists to the MoE for approval. Contacts were made with several schools; however, many were unable

to share their booklist as they were not yet approved by the MoE. Attempts were made to obtain the approved booklists from the Ministry of Education itself; however this approach also proved challenging.

The CAC resigned itself to selecting a sample of approved books from the Ministry's Supplementary list of approved books for the Primary and Secondary levels that was available on the Ministry's website.

The majority of Infant and Sixth Form text books used in 2014 survey were from the 2013 Survey, in order to ensure comparability. This limitation impacted the CAC's ability to select the most popular books parents /guardians needed to purchase as well as the agency's ability to assess the schools' compliance with the MoE's new policy. This same limitation can be considered a part of this survey as the same survey list was used.

PRICE DISPLAY

The price display practices of many bookstores provided some limitation for the prices observed. In several bookstores, the prices were not displayed on the bookshelves or affixed to the book in anyway. Instead, some stores kept prices out of view of the consumers or placed on a list near bookshelves. Their justification of this practice was that it allowed them to easily change prices when rising costs necessitate such a change. One outlet indicated that affixing the prices to the book rendered it defaced and caused problems when the books were being returned to the publisher /distributor. This practice however made it difficult for some survey officers to visually confirm the prices of books, a difficulty experienced by average consumers as well.

BOOK AVAILABILITY

The CAC's mandate, and one of this survey, is to inform consumers of the prices in the market so that they may discharge their responsibilities in an informed manner. This necessitated conducting the survey before the majority of parents conduct their back to school purchasing. Although many observations were made in the field, it must be noted that the ideal

availability of books cannot be measured. Some stores were in the process of restocking during the survey which could explain the low availability levels observed for some texts.

PUBLICATION FACTORS AND PRICE VARIATION

There are several factors which could account for price dispersion among outlets. Some of these factors originate with the publisher and could include:

a) Book Design

- ✓ Illustrative component (e.g. colour vs. black & white)
- ✓ Method of binding (e.g. cased sewn vs. spiral bound)
- ✓ Quality of paper
- ✓ Type of cover (e.g. hard cover vs. paperback)

b) Print Quantity

- ✓ This determines unit production costs

c) Print Centre

- ✓ Some of the Print Centers are located in China, India and Singapore
- ✓ They utilize more modern technologies and tend to be more economical

d) Edition

- ✓ Reprint vs. new edition.

e) Fluctuations in Exchange Rates

- ✓ Over time
- ✓ This may be further complicated by dollar versus sterling sources.

f) The retailer may also introduce

- ✓ Variations in cost of delivery
 - -Bulk vs. special delivery
- ✓ Variations in mark up

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the CAC's School Textbook Survey are discussed in relation to prices and availability islandwide and within the regions of the GKMA and Other Urban Centres across Jamaica. The differences in prices among the bookshops in 2015 for each textbook were measured using the coefficient of variation for the set of prices. The **coefficient of variation** measured the percentage deviation of the prices from their mean, that is, it showed the level of dispersion of prices for each textbook across bookshops. The unit-less nature of the coefficient of variation made it possible to compare price dispersions among bookshops. Lower numbers imply that prices are less varied.

3.1 CURRENT YEAR

3.1.1 ISLANDWIDE PRICES

Islandwide, in the 47 bookshops surveyed across Jamaica for the 2015 School Textbook Survey, all textbooks surveyed displayed a coefficient of variation of 0-54%.

INFANT LEVEL TEXTS

Infant level textbooks were found to be competitively priced. The 13 infant level textbooks surveyed had a coefficient of variation of **1% -11%**. **Twelve of these 13 books had a coefficient of variation of 1-4%. The exception was** LEARNING TO WRITE THE SMART WAY by M. McLean (11%) (Table 2).

Table 2 Variation within the prices of Infant Level Textbooks

Name of Infant Level Textbook	Coefficient of Variation
RIGHT START INTEGRATED READER by Valrie Brown	3%
RIGHT START LANGUAGE ARTS INTEGRATED WORKBOOK by Valrie Brown	3%
RIGHT START MATHEMATICS INTEGRATED WORKBOOK by Valrie Brown	4%

ANNUAL SCHOOL TEXTBOOK PRICES SURVEY 2015

Name of Infant Level Textbook	Coefficient of Variation
INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - FUN WITH SOUNDS (Age 5 Years) by L. Fearon, R. Blair and M. McLean	3%
INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - FUN WITH NUMERALS (Age 5 Years) by L. Fearon, R. Blair and M. McLean	2%
INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - LEARNING THE SMART WAY WITH NUMERALS (Age 4 Years) by M. McLean, L. Fearon and R. Blair	3%
INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - LEARNING THE SMART WAY ABOUT MY COMMUNITY by M. McLean, R. Blair, L. Fearon and R. Elliot	2%
INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - ALL AROUND US LETTERS AND SOUNDS by L. Fearon, R. Blair and M. McLean	2%
INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - ALL AROUND US SHAPES AND NUMERALS (Age 3 years) by M. McLean, L. Fearon and R. Blair	2%
LIVING IN MY ENVIRONMENT (Age 3 years) by M. McLean, L. Fearon and R. Blair	3%
INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - LEARNING THE SMART WAY WITH LETTERS AND SOUNDS by L. Fearon, M. Mclean, R. Blair, R. Elliot	2%
LIVING IN JAMAICA by M. McLean, R. Blair and L. Fearon	4%
LEARNING TO WRITE THE SMART WAY by M. McLean	11%

PRIMARY LEVEL TEXTS

The prices for primary level textbooks were found to be **somewhat competitively priced** when compared with infant level texts. Of the 36 primary level books surveyed, the coefficient of variation for **30 of these books ranged between 0 and 9%**. Notable exceptions observed are shown in **Table 3** below

Table 3 Most significant price dispersions among Primary Level Textbooks

Name of Primary Level Textbook	Coefficient of Variation
PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 4 by Tony Russell	26%
CARIBBEAN PRIMARY MATHEMATICS - BRIGHT SPARKS STUDENT'S BOOK 5 (Second Edition with Interactive CD-ROM)	23%
PRIMARY SCIENCE: BRIGHT IDEAS JAMAICA: GRADE 5 WORKBOOK by David and Penny Glover	21%
PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell	21%

SECONDARY LEVEL TEXTBOOKS

With regards to secondary level textbooks, the coefficient of variation was **0-54%**. Of the 80 secondary level textbooks observed islandwide, 40 (50%) had a coefficient of variation no greater than 10%. The highest coefficients of variation were observed among STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects: STP MATHEMATICS FOR JAMAICA GRADE 9 WORKBOOK by S. Chandler and E. Smith (54%), followed by BIOLOGY FOR CXC (New Edition) by M.B.V. Roberts and J. Mitchelmore (43%) and ADVANCED PHYSICS (Fifth Edition) by Tom Duncan (40%). On the other hand, language and literature texts showed lower, though significant, coefficients of variances: English Literature had a variation of 0-36%, Foreign languages had variations of 0-30% and English Language texts had price variations of 4-29%.

These ranges may be attributed to the fact that some books, in particular literature texts, with the same title may not be comparable, given the differences in publishers, textual notes and/or other printing aesthetics.

3.1.2 ISLANDWIDE AVAILABILITY

The availability of textbooks was measured by the percentage of bookstores that had the textbooks at the time of the survey. At this time, **87 of the 130 books (67%) were readily**

available⁹ in the bookstores surveyed. Infant level textbooks had an overall availability rate of 82%, compared to 73% for primary level texts and 49% for secondary texts.

Among the **primary level texts** with the highest availability rates were THE NEW INTEGRATED APPROACH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WORKBOOK 4 by C. Campbell and M. Miles (96%), GRADE 1 INTEGRATED MATHEMATICS WORKBOOK (Age 6 years) by Maureen McLean, Lunett Fearon (94%) and THE NEW INTEGRATED APPROACH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WORKBOOK 6 by C. Campbell, M. Miles (91%).

Half of the Secondary texts (40 texts) surveyed were available in over 50% of stores. The most available books were all English Literature Books: A COW CALLED BOY by C. Everard Palmer (87%), A WORLD OF PROSE FOR CSEC (New Edition) Edited by David Williams and Hazel Simmonds-McDonald (87%) and MY FATHER, SUN-SUN JOHNSON by C. Everald Palmer (85%).

Among subjects at the secondary level, the highest availability rates were observed for English Literature and History textbooks (Table 4).

Table 4 Average Availability Rates for Text Books by Subject Areas Islandwide

<i>Average Availability</i>	<i>Subject Areas</i>
0 - 20%	Technical Drawing, Metal Work ,
21 – 40%	Business, Caribbean Studies, Communication Studies, English Language, Agriculture, Sociology, Home Economics, Religious Education, Electrical Installation
41 – 60%	Computer Science, English Language, Foreign Languages, Geography, Mathematics, Natural Sciences

⁹ 'Readily available' signifies that the book was found in at least 50% of the bookstores surveyed.

60-80%	English Literature, History, Primary Level, Infant Level Books.
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3.1.3 GKMA PRICES

In total, 18 bookshops were surveyed in the Greater KMA in the 2015 survey. The areas surveyed included parts of Portmore and Spanish Town in St. Catherine; Kingston and St. Andrew.

INFANT LEVEL TEXTS

Among Infant level texts observed in the GKMA, the average price was \$1,024.52, with the highest priced book costing \$1,182.35 (Living in Jamaica by M. McLean, R. Blair and L. Fearon) and the lowest priced book costing \$739.38 (RIGHT START INTEGRATED READER by Valrie Brown). With the exception of two books, the COV for the books were relatively close and in the range of 1% to 4%, suggesting small variation in prices across book stores regionally. The book with the highest observed variation in price (COV=8%) in the GKMA was LEARNING TO WRITE THE SMART WAY by M. McLean, ranging between J\$740.00 and J\$920.00

PRIMARY LEVEL TEXTS

The prices for primary school books were closely distributed across outlets in the Greater KMA. **The coefficient of variation (COV) for 31 of the 36 primary school books surveyed ranged between 0% and 10%.** Table 5 displays the statistics for four primary school books with observed variations greater than 10%.

Table 5 Primary Books with observed COVs greater than 10% in Other Urban Centres

Title and Author	Min	Max	Average	SD	COV
CARIBBEAN PRIMARY MATHEMATICS - BRIGHT SPARKS STUDENT\ 'S BOOK 5 (Second Edition with Interactive CD-ROM)	\$987.00	\$2,049.00	\$ 1,518.00	\$ 531.00	35%
PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 4 by Tony Russell	\$ 1,010.00	\$ 2,927.00	\$ 2,456.53	\$ 399.20	16%
PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell	\$ 1,219.00	\$ 2,069.00	\$ 1,918.00	\$ 287.15	15%
CARIBBEAN PRIMARY MATHEMATICS - BRIGHT SPARKS WORKBOOK 6 by Laurie Sealy and Sandra More (Second Edition)	\$ 1,012.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,179.00	\$ 175.67	15%

The average primary-level text book cost \$1,405.38 in the GKMA with the highest average cost being \$2,460.94 (PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 4 by Tony Russell) and the lowest priced book costing \$947.92 (Caribbean Primary Mathematics - Bright Sparks Workbook 3 by Laurie Sealy & Sandra Moore).

SECONDARY LEVEL TEXTS

The average price observed for 76 secondary-level text books surveyed was \$3,086.47. The highest average price of \$9,382.00 was observed for the book ADVANCED PHYSICS (Fifth Edition) by Tom Duncan and the lowest average price of \$1,069.80 was noted for INTEGRATED SCIENCE FOR JAMAICA GRADE 8 WORKBOOK (Third Edition) by Tania Chung-Harris. Three out of every four books displayed coefficients of variances of no more than 10%; 17% had COVs between and 10% and 20%; 8% showed COVs greater than 20%. Table 6 displays the statistics for books that showed COVs of greater than 30%.

Table 6 Secondary level books with COVs greater than 30% in Other Urban Centres

Title and Author	Min	Max	Average	SD	COV
TECHNICAL DRAWING FOR GCE AND CSE (METRIC EDITION) by J.N. Green	\$ 3,564.00	\$ 7,597.00	\$ 4,423.88	\$ 1,435.62	32%
STP MATHEMATICS FOR JAMAICA GRADE 9 WORKBOOK by S. Chandler and E. Smith	\$ 1,292.00	\$ 3,625.00	\$ 2,292.07	\$ 1,154.35	50%

3.1.4 GKMA AVAILABILITY

At the time of the survey in the GKMA, 107 of the 132 books (81%) were available in 50% or more of the 18 bookstores surveyed. These figures were further broken down based on secondary subject areas primary level and infant level books (See Table 7).

Table 7 Showing the Average Availability Rates for Text Books in GKMA

<i>Average Availability</i>	<i>Subject Areas</i>
21 – 40%	Metal Work (32%), Agriculture (35%), Caribbean Studies (35%)
41 – 60%	Religious Education (43%), Economics (44%), Technical Drawing (47%), Home Economics (50%), English Language (58%)
60 – 90%	Foreign Languages (61%), Natural Sciences (64%), Electrical Installation (71%), Geography (73%), Sociology (73%) Communication Studies (76%), Mathematics (76%), Business (76%), History (84%), English Literature (84%), Primary Level (80%), Infant Level (85%), Computer Science (88%)

3.1.3 OTHER URBAN CENTRES PRICES

In total, 29 bookshops were surveyed in the Other Urban Centres of Jamaica in the 2015 survey, 3 less than those covered in 2014. The areas surveyed included parts of St. Catherine (with the exception of Portmore and Spanish Town), Clarendon (May Pen), Manchester (Mandeville), St. Elizabeth (Santa Cruz), Westmoreland (Savanna-La-Mar), St. James (Montego Bay), Trelawny (Falmouth) and St. Ann (St. Ann's Bay, Brown's Town and Ocho Rios). *(See Appendix I for a complete list of the surveyed bookshops).*

INFANT LEVEL TEXTS

During the survey this year, 13 infant level textbooks were surveyed. The average price was \$1,025.52, with the highest priced book costing \$1,223.00 (Living in Jamaica by M. McLean, R. Blair and L. Fearon) and the lowest priced book costing \$730.08 (Right Start Language Arts Integrated Workbook by Valrie Brown). With the exception of one book, the COV for the books were relatively close and in the range of 1% to 4%, suggesting small variation in prices across book stores nationally. Similar to what was observed within the Greater KMA, the book with the highest observed variation in price (COV=11%) within the Other Urban Centres was Learning to Write the Smart Way by M. McLean. Its highest price (\$1,200.00) was however 30% higher than that which was observed within the GKMA while the lowest price was \$740.00.

PRIMARY LEVEL TEXTS

The prices for primary school books were closely distributed across parishes outside the Greater KMA. The coefficient of variation (COV) for 89% of the 36 primary school books surveyed ranged between 0% and 10%. Table 8 displays the statistics for four primary school books with observed variations greater than 10.

Table 8 Primary Books with observed COVs greater than 10% in Other Urban Centres

Title and Author	Max	Min	Mode	Average	SD	COV
PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 4 by Tony Russell	2,590.00	1,016.00	1,160.00	1993.91	690.53	35%
PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell	2,587.00	1,060.00	2,587	2,195.50	483.10	22%
PRIMARY SCIENCE: BRIGHT IDEAS JAMAICA: GRADE 5 WORKBOOK by David and Penny Glover	2,264.00	1,150.00	1,265.00	1,313.60	256.09	19%
CARIBBEAN PRIMARY MATHEMATICS - Bright Sparks Workbook 3 by Laurie Sealy & Sandra Moore	1,535.00	903.00	949.00	992.36	151.93	15%

The average primary-level text book cost \$1,408.78 with the highest average cost being \$2,195.50 (PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell) and the lowest priced book costing \$960.27 (CARLONG PRIMARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (Year 4) by Elizabeth Sherman et al.).

SECONDARY LEVEL TEXTS

The average price observed for the 83 secondary-level text books surveyed was \$2,676.86. The highest average price of \$7,848.20 was observed for the book GEOGRAPHY - AN INTEGRATED APPROACH (Fourth Edition) by David Waugh and the lowest average price of \$347.00 was noted for Metalwork Theory Book 1 (Metric Edition) by P. F. Lye (Pamphlet). Five secondary level text books showed no variation in price (COV= 0%) and five books were not seen in the field. Thirty-three books had COV of 10% and below, 27 had COVs between 10 and 20%, and 14 had COVs between 20% and 30%. Table 9 displays the statistics for books that showed COVs of greater than 30%.

Table 9 Secondary level books with COVs greater than 30% in Other Urban Centres

Title and Author	Max	Min	Average	SD	COV
ADVANCED SPANISH VOCABULARY (Second Edition) by Isabel Melero Orta	3,300.00	1,495.00	2,397.50	902.50	38%
ANIMAL FARM by George Orwell	2,305.00	1,090.00	1,563.00	519.07	33%
CHEMISTRY IN CONTEXT (Sixth Edition) by Graham Hill & John Holman	9,358.00	2,139.00	6,786.71	2238.22	33%
GRAMMAR & COMPOSITION BOOK 3 - A Merrill Shultext Series	3,700.00	1,350.00	2,952.50	943.01	32%
CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE BOOK 1 (Second Edition) by A. I. Henry	2,720.00	1,114.00	1,983.20	636.224614	32%

3.1.4 OTHER URBAN CENTRES AVAILABILITY

At the time of the survey in the Other Urban Centres, 75 of the 130 books (58%) were available in 50% or more of the bookstores surveyed. These figures were further broken down based on secondary subject areas primary level and infant level books (See Table 10).

Table 10 Showing the Average Availability Rates for Text Books in Other Urban Centres

<i>Average Availability</i>	<i>Subject Areas</i>
0 - 20%	Technical Drawing (7%), Metal Work (%), Business (11%), Economics (12%), Home Economics (12%), Electrical Installation (17%), Sociology (18%) Religious Education (19%)
21 – 40%	Natural Sciences (32%), English Language (34%), Mathematics (36%), Computer Science (34%), Foreign Languages (38%), Agriculture (24%), Religious Education (21%), Communication Studies (21%), Caribbean

<i>Average Availability</i>	<i>Subject Areas</i>
	Studies (24%)
41 – 60%	History (51%), Geography (43%), English Literature (58%)
60 – 80%	Primary Level (68%), Infant Level (78%)

3.1.5 OTHER URBAN CENTRES BY REGIONS

For further analysis, the 'Other Urban Centres' category was further divided into parishes in the **Western and Central** regions of the country. The western region consisted of the parishes of Trelawny, St. James, Hanover, Westmoreland and St. Elizabeth while the central parishes consisted of St. Ann, Clarendon, Manchester and St. Catherine. No information was garnered from the Eastern Region (Portland, St Thomas and St. Mary).

PRICES

In the western region, data was collected from fourteen (14) outlets: four (4) in St. Elizabeth, two (2) in Trelawny, six (6) in St. James and two (2) in Westmoreland. It should be noted that one of the two (2) outlets surveyed in Trelawny was no longer selling text books at the time of the survey.

Almost all the infant level books were closely priced across the book stores and as such the coefficients of variation were mostly low (1-3%). The overall average was \$1021.85, the highest priced book was sold for an average of \$1,220.00 (LIVING IN JAMAICA by M. McLean, R. Blair and L. Fearon), while the least expensive was sold for an average of \$731.58 (RIGHT START MATHEMATICS INTEGRATED WORKBOOK by Valrie Brown). One book, LEARNING TO WRITE THE SMART WAY by M. McLean which had a COV of 8%: its average price was \$740.00, the lowest price was \$740.00 and the highest price was \$900.00.

Most prices for primary level books were competitively priced with thirty-two (32) of the thirty-six (36) books surveyed in this category having COVs of 10% or less. The text with the

most observed variation in prices (COV = 31%) was PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 4 by Tony Russell: it was sold for an average of \$2,142.43, at most \$2,590.00 and at least \$1,016.00. Only three books had COVs between 17% and 30%.

Overall, the average price for primary books in the Western Region was \$1,416.25, with the highest priced book being sold for an average of \$2,165.86 (PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell) and the lowest being sold for an average of \$962.73 (CARLONG PRIMARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (Year 4) by Elizabeth Sherman et al.).

As for secondary level text books, the average observed price was \$2,764.68, with the highest price being \$8,221.50 (GEOGRAPHY - AN INTEGRATED APPROACH (Fourth Edition) by David Waugh) and the lowest being \$347.00 (METALWORK THEORY BOOK 1 (Metric Edition) by P. F. Lye (Pamphlet)). The price variation was greater than those for the primary and infant level texts. Forty-one of the 83 books surveyed displayed coefficient of variations of less than 10%. Eleven texts had a COV greater than 20% suggesting wide variation in prices. The highest variation (COV= 35%) was for CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE BOOK 1 (Second Edition) by A. I. Henry which was sold for \$2,720.00 at its highest and \$1,114.00 at its lowest.

In the Central region, data was collected from sixteen (15) outlets: five (5) in St. Ann, four (4) in Manchester, three (3) in Clarendon, and three (3) in St. Catherine.

Most of the infant level books were closely priced across the book stores and as such the coefficients of variation for all books were between 0% and 5%. The overall average was \$1,039.09, the highest priced book was sold for an average of \$1,227.88 (LIVING IN JAMAICA by M. McLean, R. Blair and L. Fearon), while the least expensive was sold for \$728.17 (RIGHT START LANGUAGE ARTS INTEGRATED WORKBOOK by Valrie Brown). The book with the highest price variation (13%), LEARNING TO WRITE THE SMART WAY by M. McLean, was sold for an average of \$901.82; \$1,200.00 at most and \$740.00 at least.

Primary-level book prices in the Central Region displayed low variation in prices, with COVs for most (32 of 36 texts) being less than 10%; 3 books experienced COVs of greater than 10%. Overall, the average price for primary books was \$1,401.51. The highest average price of

\$2,403.00 was observed for the book (PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell) and the lowest average price of \$933.67 for (CARIBBEAN PRIMARY MATHEMATICS - Bright Sparks Workbook 3 by Laurie Sealy & Sandra Moore).

The average observed price for secondary level text books in this region was \$2,278.24. The highest average price of \$6,970.25 was observed for BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE 1 & 2 (Third Edition) by D. J. Taylor, N.P.O. Green, G.W. Stout, Edited by R. Sope. The lowest average price observed of \$347.00 was for the text METALWORK THEORY BOOK 1 (Metric Edition) by P. F. Lye (Pamphlet)). Seventeen secondary level text books showed no variation in price (COV= 0%), and another eighteen showed COVs of no greater than 10%; thirty showed COVs greater than 10%. Ten books were not seen in the field. The highest variation (COV= 38%) was for GRAMMAR & COMPOSITION BOOK 3 - A Merrill Shultext Series, which was sold for \$2,886.67 on average \$3,700.00 at its highest and \$1,350.00 at its lowest.

AVAILABILITY

In the western region, 85% of the books surveyed were readily available¹⁰ in at least 50% of bookstores surveyed compared to 47% in the central region. These figures were further broken down based on secondary subject areas, primary level books and infant level books in the western and central regions.

Tables 11 & 12 show that among the regions Primary level books and Infant level books were the most readily available books across the regions. In the Central Region, the majority of books were available in 0% to 20% of outlets while in the Western Region, most books were available in over 50% of outlets.

¹⁰ 'Readily available' signifies that the book was found in at least 50% of the bookstores surveyed.

Table 11 Showing the Average Availability Rates for Text Books by Subject Area in Western Jamaica

Average Availability	Subject Areas
0 - 20%	Technical Drawing (11%), Metal Work (18%), Economics (18%) and Business (19%)
21 – 40%	Home Economics (21%), Agriculture (25%), Electrical Installation (29%), Sociology (31%), Religious Education (36%) and Communication Studies (36%)
41 – 60%	Natural Sciences (42%), Computer Science (43%), Mathematics (43%), Caribbean Studies (43%), Foreign Languages (45%), English Language (49%), Geography (56%) and History (60%)
61 – 80%	English Literature (75%)
81 – 100%	Primary Level Books (85%) and Infant Level Books (92%)

Table 12 Showing the Average Availability Rates for Text Books by Subject Area in Central Jamaica

<i>Average Availability</i>	<i>Subject Areas</i>
0 - 20%	Metal Work (0%), Technical Drawing (3%), Home Economics (3%), Business (4%), Sociology (7%), Religious Education (7%), Economics (7%), Electrical Installation (7%), Caribbean Studies (7%), Communication Studies (7%), Geography (31%)
21 – 40%	Mathematics (30%), Computer Science (27%), Foreign Languages (31%), Agriculture (23%) and Natural Sciences (23%), English Language (21%)

<i>Average Availability</i>	<i>Subject Areas</i>
41 – 60%	Primary Level Books (52%), History (42%), English Literature (43%)
61-80%	Infant Level Books (65%)

3.2 COMPARISON WITH THE PREVIOUS YEAR (2014) – PRICE MOVEMENT

3.2.1 ISLANDWIDE

Comparative data was available for **123¹¹** books islandwide: 74 secondary books (60%); 35 primary texts (29%); and 13 infant level texts (11%). **The CAC's sample of 122 books indicated an average price increase of 6% islandwide over the period 2014 – 2015, falling 6% below the overall increase reported following the last survey. This signaled a slowing in the pace of price increases for textbooks nationally. The CAC notes that the Statistical Institute of Jamaica recorded an inflation rate of 3.8% for the survey period, that is, July 2014 – July 2015.¹²**

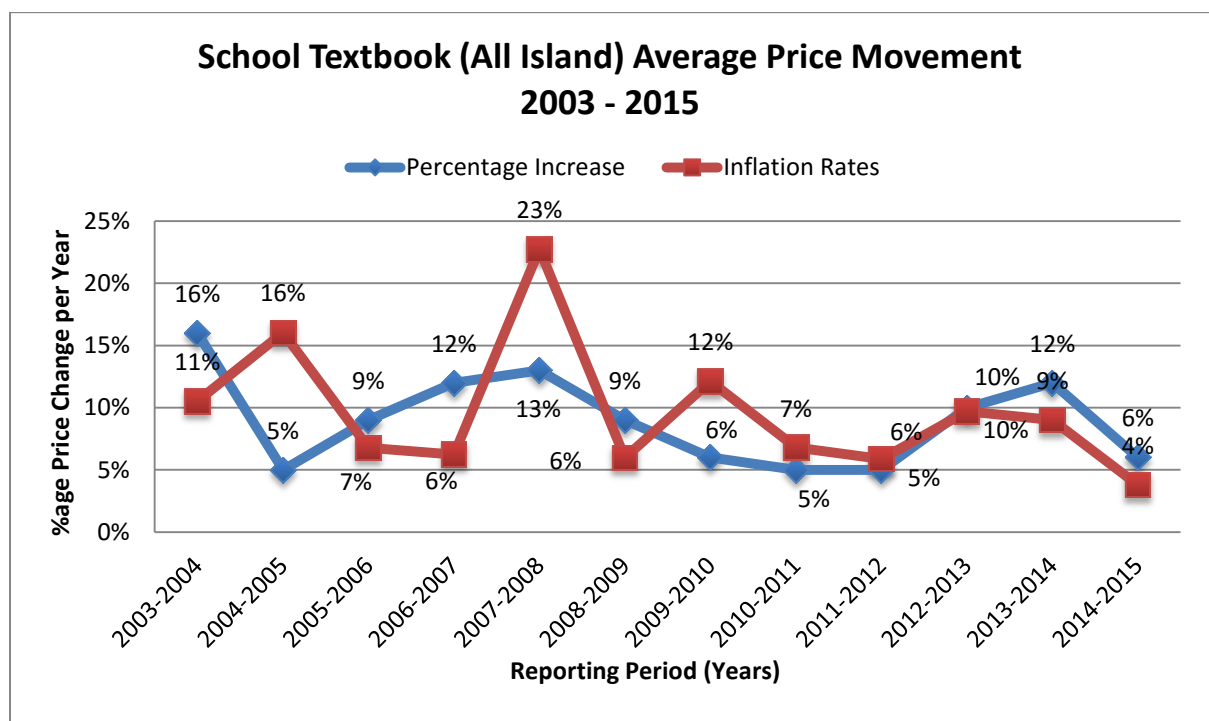


Figure 4 Islandwide textbook average price and inflation movements: 2003- 2015

¹¹ Prices for 6 texts were not observed in 2014, and one text was incomparable as the 2014 price included used texts. This resulted in only 123 common texts between 2014/15 being selected for comparison.

¹² Inflation rate for the period June 2014 – June 2015 (STATIN (2015 “News release: Consumer Price Index June 2015”, retrieved from <http://statinja.gov.jm/PressReleases/newpressreleasecpi.aspx>, accessed August 11, 2015)

The **highest average price movement** islandwide over 2014 prices was an **67%** increase (from J\$1,555.33 to J\$2,590.00) in the price of the secondary level text: *Advanced Spanish Vocabulary (Second Edition) by Isabel Melero Orta*. The **most significant price reduction** was **43%** (from J\$1,840.20 to J\$1,052.17), recorded by the secondary level text: *Basic Needlework (Fifth Edition; Metric) by Winefride M. Bull*.

Figure 4 shows that the average price of the majority (82%) of all texts island-wide increased between 1 – 20%, with the largest number of texts (66%) recording price increases between 1 and 10%, and 14% registering price decreases. Price reductions observed were the results of discounts and old-stock prices at the time of the survey.

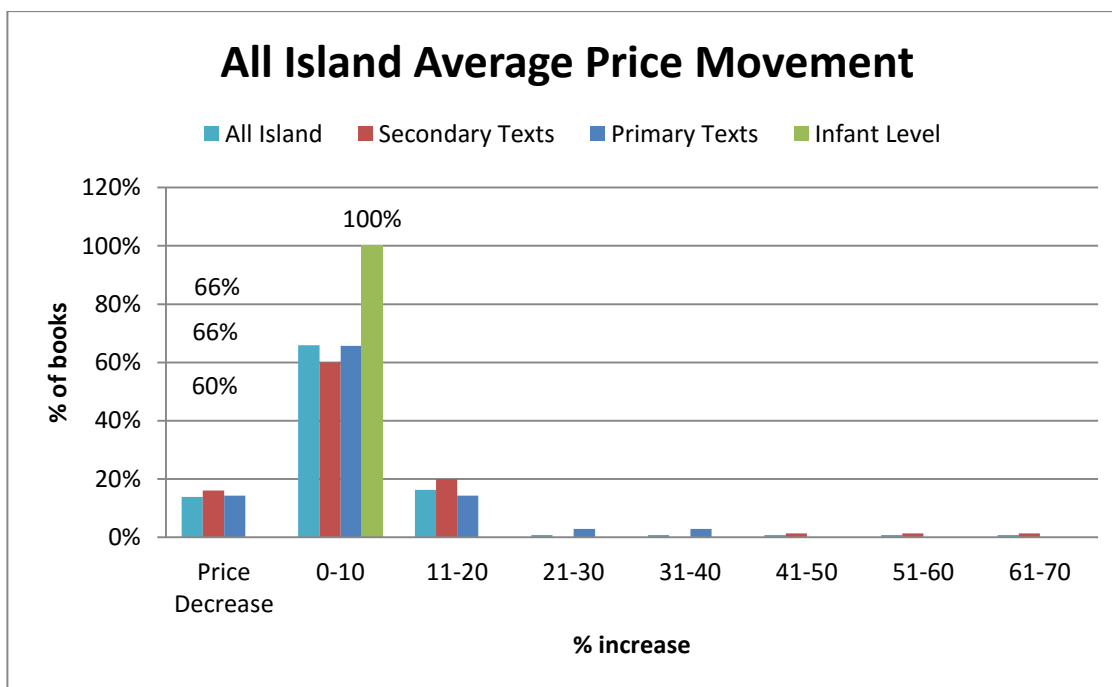


Figure 5 Islandwide textbook price movements between 2014 and 2015

Amongst the secondary texts islandwide, an average price change observed was an increase of 6%; the average price increase recorded amongst primary and infant level texts islandwide was an increase of 5%.

3.2.2 GREATER KMA

Figure 5 shows the 2014/2015 price movement percentiles in the Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area (GKMA) of Jamaica.

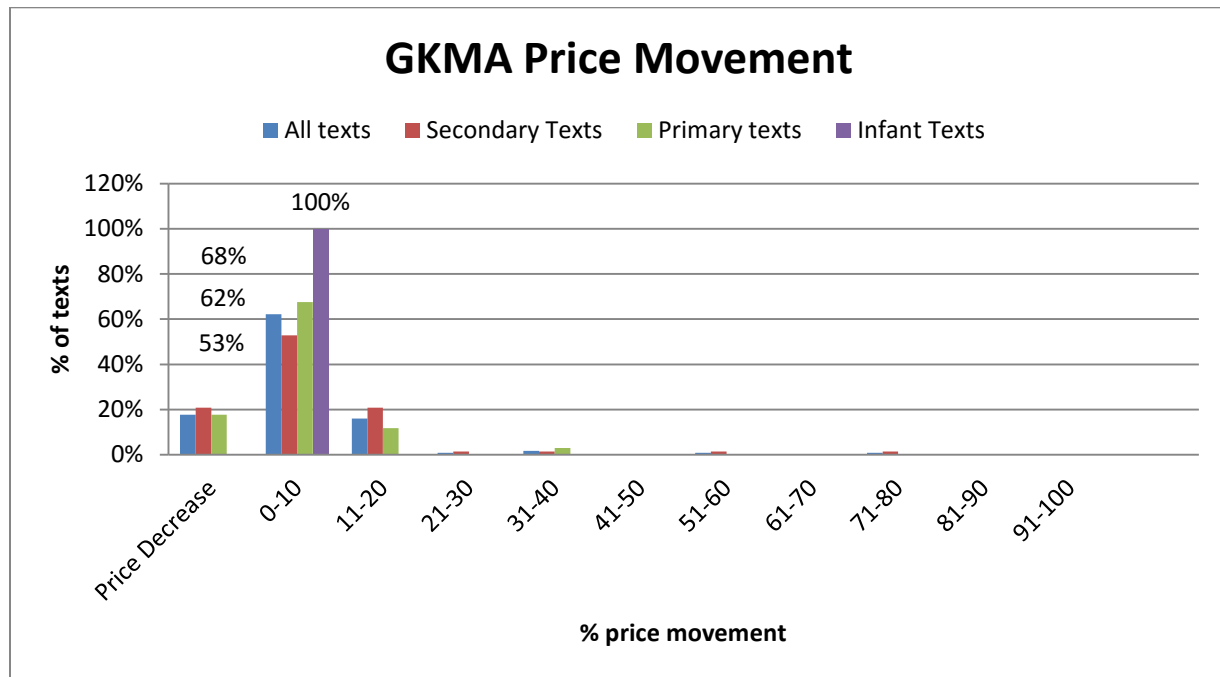


Figure 6 Price movement of textbooks within the Greater KMA between 2014 and 2015

Comparative data was available for 118 books in the GKMA: 71 (60%) secondary level texts; 34 (29%) primary level texts and 13 (11%) for 2015 against 2014.

Notable observations indicate that:

- While the overall average price increase over last year within the Greater KMA was 5%, the average price increase recorded amongst secondary primary, and infant level books was 7%, 3% and 5% respectively.
- A cumulative total of 19% of all texts within the Greater KMA region recorded average price reductions between 0.01% and 25%.
- A cumulative total of 75% of secondary texts, 74% of primary texts and 100% of infant level books within the Greater KMA showed increases between 1 and

20%. The majority of all texts in all levels increased between 1 and 10%: 54% of secondary texts, 62% of primary texts and 100% of infant texts.

- The 4% of texts observed displaying price increases greater than 20% are listed below.

BOOKS	LEVEL OF INCREASE
STP Mathematics for Jamaica Grade 9 Workbook by S. Chandler and E. Smith	J\$1,017.40 or 80%
Caribbean Sociology: Introductory Readings edited by Christine Barow and Rhoda Reddock	J\$1,430.00 or 56%
The Bible (Revised Standard Version) published by The Bible Society	J\$390.00 or 33%
Carlong Integrated Practice Tests – Mathematics (GSAT Upper Primary) by D. O'Connor, J. McKenzie and A. Dryden	J\$395.27 or 31%
New Edition Agriculture for CSEC (Revision Course) by Sabaddeo Ragoonanan	J\$803.17 or 29%

With respect to subject areas, notable highlights for secondary texts in the Greater KMA (See Figure 5), the following was observed:

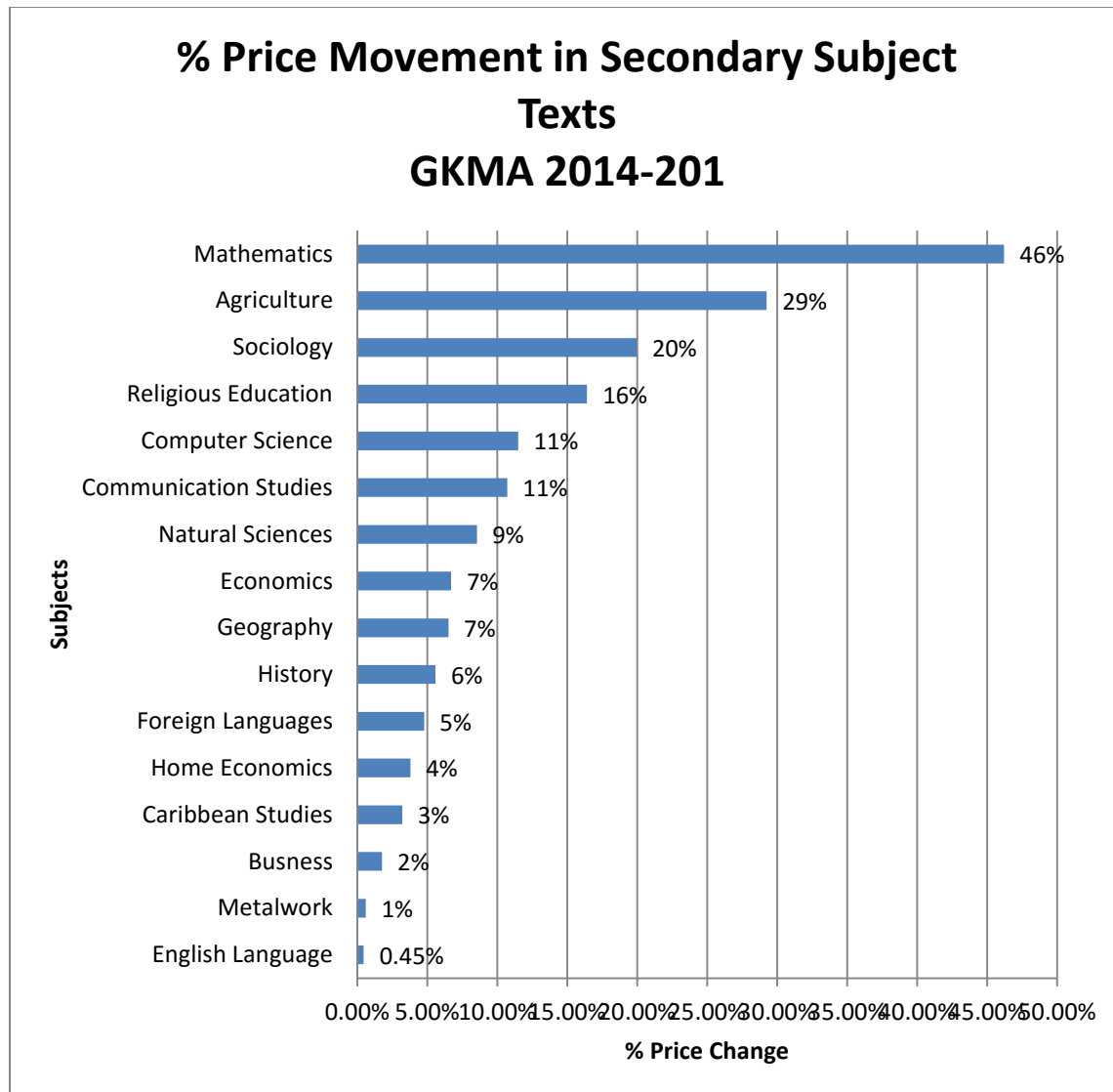


Figure 7 Average price movements of textbooks in the Greater KMA by subject areas surveyed

- Three subject areas presented decreases below the observed 2014 prices: Technical Drawing (14%), Electrical Installation (1%) and English Literature (2%).
- Mathematics (46%), Agriculture (29%) and Sociology (20%) recorded price increases of 20% and over.
- Communication Studies (11%) and Computer Science (11%) recorded net increases of more than 10%.
- All other subject areas recorded net average price increases ranging between 0.3 and 10%.

3.2.3 OTHER URBAN CENTERS:

Comparative data was available for 119 texts: 73 (61%) secondary texts, 33 (28%) primary texts and 13 (11%) infant texts for 2015 against 2014. **The overall average price increase for textbooks in the 'Other Urban Centers' of Jamaica was 5%. The average price increase recorded amongst secondary, primary and infant level books in Other Urban Centers was 5%, 7% and 5% respectively.**

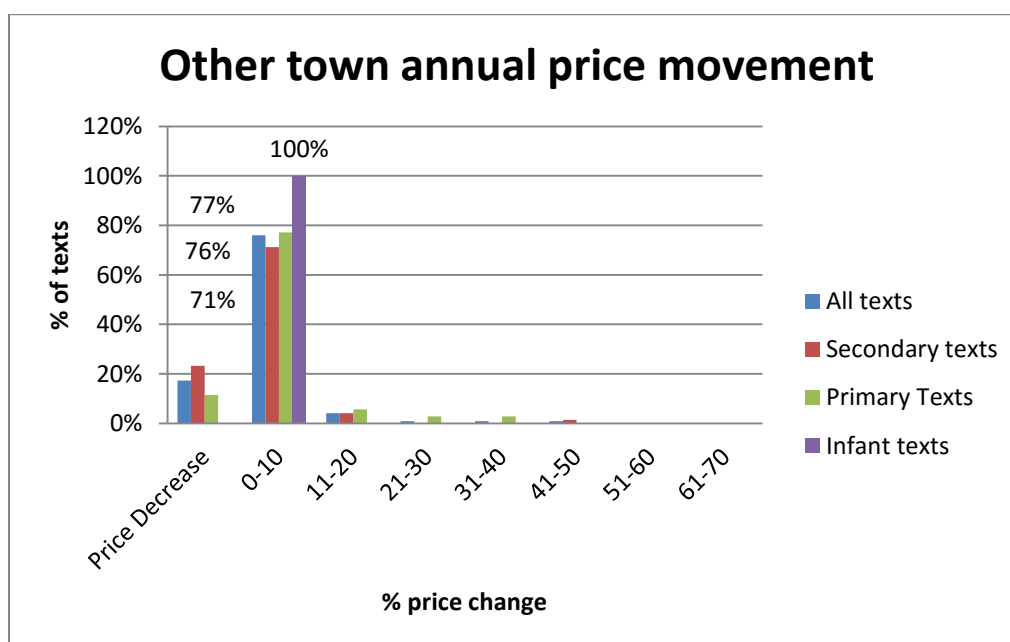


Figure 8 price movement of textbooks within the 'Other Urban Centers'

The following were observed:

- Close to one fifth of the books observed (17%) had price reductions between 1% and 30%. The most significant decrease (27%) was observed for CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE BOOK 1 (Second Edition) by A. I. Henry.
- A cumulative total of 75% of secondary texts, 83% of primary texts and 100% of infant level books within the Other Urban Areas showed increases between 1 and 20%. The majority of all texts in primary (77%) and secondary (71%) texts

increased between 1 and 10%; all infant texts (100%) showed similar price movements (See Fig 7).

- The 8% of texts observed displaying price increases greater than 20% are listed below.

BOOKS	LEVEL OF INCREASE
CARIBBEAN SOCIOLOGY: INTRODUCTORY READINGS edited by Christine Barrow and Rhoda Reddock	— J\$1,433.33 or 56%
ADVANCED SPANISH VOCABULARY (Second Edition) by Isabel Melero Orta	— J\$842.17 or 54%
CARIBBEAN PRIMARY MATHEMATICS - BRIGHT SPARKS STUDENT\ 'S BOOK 5 (Second Edition with Interactive CD-ROM)	— J\$605.83 or 42%
CARLONG INTEGRATED PRACTICE TESTS - Mathematics (GSAT upper primary) by D. O'Connor, J. Mckenzie & A. Dryden	— J\$401.34 or 32%
Macmillan Primary Integrated Studies Language Arts Revision Guide (Grade 1-3) by June Mitchelmore	— J\$253.00 or 25%
SUNSONG 1 by Pamela Mordecai, Edited by Grace Walker Gordon	— J\$347.15 or 24%
PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell	— J\$408.28 or 23%
MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESS FOR CAPE, UNIT 1 by Peter Stimpson and Kathleen Singh	J\$928.73 or 21%

In terms of subject areas, notable highlights for secondary texts in the Other Urban Centers were (see Figure 8):

- Six subject areas displayed price decreases between 2014 and 2015: Agriculture (10%), Home Economics (8%), Caribbean Studies (6%), English Language (4%), Metalwork (3%) and Economics (0.5%)
- Five subject areas displayed price increases between 10% and 15%: Foreign Languages (13%), Geography (12%), History (12%), Communication Studies (11%) and Business (11%)
- All other subject areas recorded net average price increases ranging between 1% and 10%: Electrical Installation (7%), Religious Education (7%), English Literature (6%), Sociology (3%) and Mathematics (1%).

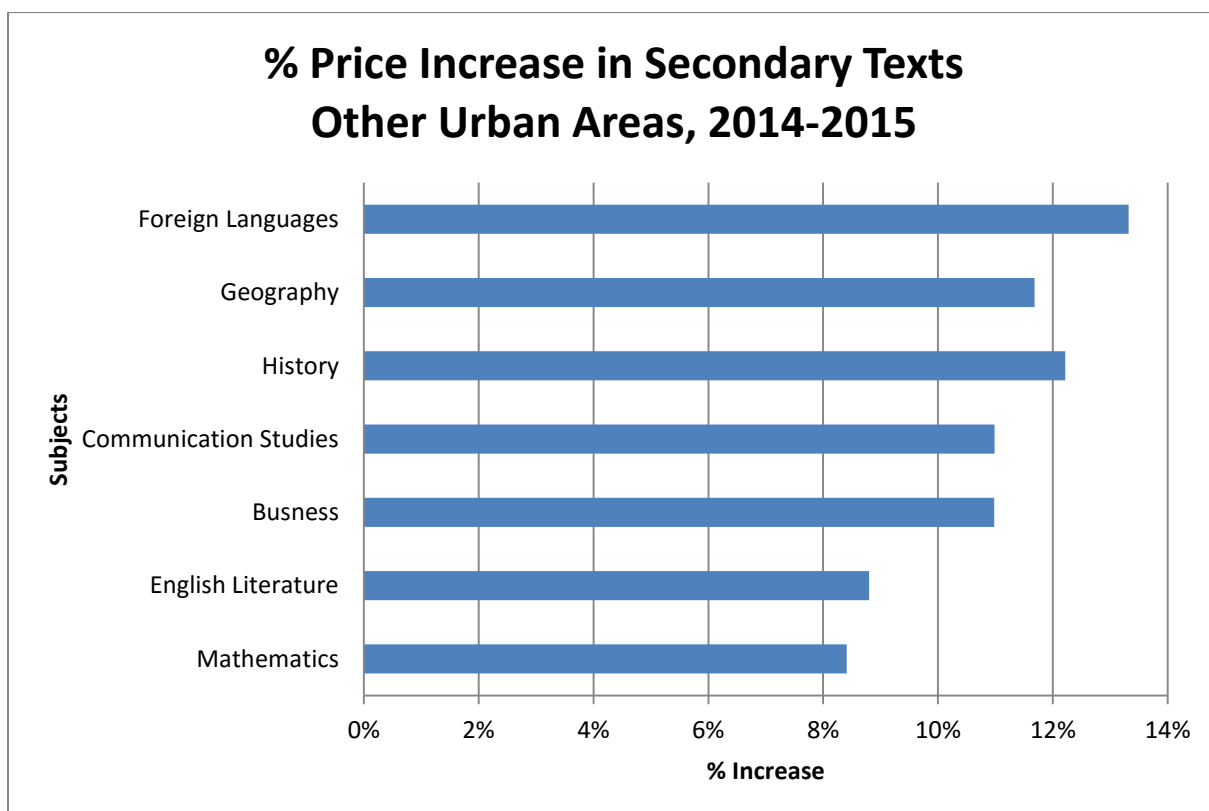


Figure 9 Price movement by subject areas in 'Other Towns'

3.3 COMPARISON WITH THE PREVIOUS YEAR (2014) – AVAILABILITY

The availability of books across 2014 and 2015 was compared. Results show that, island wide, the availability of comparable texts increased 10%; in the Greater KMR the availability increased by 15%, but in other Urban Towns it increased 7%. Island wide and in the Greater

KMR, more than 100 books (103 and 102 respectively) experienced increases in availability, compared to 93 in the Other Urban Towns. Table 13 displays the books which experienced the greatest increases and decreases, as well as those books which were not observed during the 2015 survey.

Table 13 Comparison of Availability, 2014 - 2015

	Island wide	Greater KMR	Other urban towns
Average change	+10%	+15%	+7%
Number of books that decreased	27	27	35
Books that decreased most (%)	<p>GREEN DAYS BY THE RIVER by Michael Anthony (-21%)</p> <p>DIME TANTO MAS WORKBOOK 4: SPANISH FOR CSEC EXAMINATIONS (Audio CD) by Sally Seetahal-Mohammed (Series Editor: Jeannette Allsopp) (New Revised 2007) (-18%)</p> <p>INFANT INTEGRATED WORKBOOK - ALL AROUND US SHAPES AND NUMERALS (Age 3 years) by M. McLean, L. Fearon and R. Blair (-18%)</p>	<p>CARIBBEAN STUDIES FOR CAPE EXAMINATIONS (An Interdisciplinary Approach) by Jeniffer Mohammed (-32%)</p> <p>CARIBBEAN FREEDOM: Economy and Society from Emancipation to the Present: A Student Reader Edited by Hillary Beckles and Verene Shepherd (-26%)</p> <p>PRIMARY SCIENCE FOR THE CARIBBEAN BOOK 5 by Tony Russell (-26%)</p>	<p>LONGMAN CARIBBEAN SCHOOL ATLAS (Fourth Edition) For Social Studies, Geography & History by Mike Morrissey (-29%)</p> <p>ANIMAL FARM by George Orwell (-27%)</p> <p>GREEN DAYS BY THE RIVER by Michael Anthony (-23%)</p>
How many books increased	103	102	93
Books that increased the	MACMILLAN PRIMARY INTEGRATED READING	CARLONG INTEGRATED PRACTICE TESTS -	MACMILLAN PRIMARY

	Island wide	Greater KMR	Other urban towns
most (% increase)	<p>SCHEME FOR JAMAICA - REGGAE READERS 1 (Audio CD) by Louis Fidge and Sue Graves (75%)</p> <p>CARLONG INTEGRATED PRACTICE TESTS - SCIENCE PART 1 (GSAT upper primary) by Sonia Williams (75%)</p> <p>MACMILLAN JAMAICA PRIMARY SOCIAL STUDIES: OUR ISLAND NATION - GRADE 4 STUDENT'S BOOK 4 by E. Mantock, T. Fendall, C. Eastland (66%)</p> <p>MACMILLAN JAMAICA PRIMARY SOCIAL STUDIES: LIFE ON PLANET EARTH - GRADE 6 STUDENT'S BOOK 6 by E. Mantock, T. Fendall & C. Eastland (63%)</p>	<p>SCIENCE PART 1 (GSAT upper primary) by Sonia Williams (89%)</p> <p>MACMILLAN JAMAICA PRIMARY SOCIAL STUDIES: LIFE ON PLANET EARTH - GRADE 6 STUDENT'S BOOK 6 by E. Mantock, T. Fendall & C. Eastland (89%)</p> <p>MACMILLAN JAMAICA PRIMARY SOCIAL STUDIES: OUR ISLAND NATION - GRADE 4 STUDENT'S BOOK 4 by E. Mantock, T. Fendall, C. Eastland (83%)</p> <p>MACMILLAN PRIMARY INTEGRATED READING SCHEME FOR JAMAICA - REGGAE READERS 1 (Audio CD) by Louis Fidge and Sue Graves (83%)</p>	<p>INTEGRATED READING SCHEME FOR JAMAICA - REGGAE READERS 1 (Audio CD) by Louis Fidge and Sue Graves (70%)</p> <p>CARLONG INTEGRATED PRACTICE TESTS - SCIENCE PART 1 (GSAT upper primary) by Sonia Williams (67%)</p> <p>MACMILLAN JAMAICA PRIMARY SOCIAL STUDIES: OUR ISLAND NATION - GRADE 4 STUDENT'S BOOK 4 by E. Mantock, T. Fendall, C. Eastland (56%)</p>
Unavailable in 2015		<p>ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES (Eleventh Edition) by Jerry J. Weygandt, Paul D. Kimmel and Donald E. Kieso</p>	<p>ADVANCED LEVEL FRENCH VOCABULARY (Second Edition) by Philip Horsfall</p> <p>ECONOMICS: PRINCIPLES AND</p>

	Island wide	Greater KMR	Other urban towns
			<p>POLICY (Twelfth Edition) by W.J. Baumol and A.S. Blinder</p> <p>GEOMETRIC AND ENGINEERING DRAWING (Third Edition) by Ken Morling</p>

4.0 CONCLUSION

It has been observed that the pace of price appreciation has slowed. While in 2014 the increase was 12%, that figure has fallen to 6%, on average, islandwide. The average price movement within the Greater KMA over 2014 prices was an overall increase of 5%, 8% lower than the 2014 rate (13%). The average price movement within Other Urban Centers (5%) was 7% lower than observed in 2014 (12%). This has happened within the context of a relatively low interest and slower depreciation of the Jamaican dollar. This notwithstanding, in practical terms, consumers can still expect to pay higher prices for texts.

With respect to availability of books, similar to the last survey period infant level texts displayed the highest availability rates (86%) islandwide when compared with primary (51%) and secondary (42%) level texts.

Infant and Primary level textbooks were found to be more competitively priced than secondary level books. Secondary level texts also tended to attract higher rates of increase when compared with their primary and infant counterparts. Arguably, this may be in consumers' favour, with respect to parents being able to access educational materials for the development of their children in their foundation years.

The CAC considers textbooks and other back to school articles as critical consumer items, and where increases have occurred, the CAC can only attribute these to economic changes and in some instances, revisions in texts. The CAC is cognizant that developments in technology and policy changes are affecting the relevance of its surveys and the ways in which information is captured and disseminated to consumers and is taking all the relevant actions which are in the best interest of consumers. In this regard, the Commission has provided some recommendations based on the survey findings so that the information will be more beneficial to consumers.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the CAC is making the following recommendations to parents, teachers, schools, book stores, publishers and policy makers:

PARENTS AND TEACHERS

- Parents should follow the approved list endorsed by the Ministry of Education (MoE).
- Parents & guardians should access the National Textbook Rental Scheme operated by the MoE at the secondary level and encourage their children to care the books and return them to the system to be used by future students.
- Parents should take advantage of the price decreases/ sales or discounts whenever these are available. Care must however be taken to ask if books are under revision to ensure that the most current edition of the book is purchased.
- Parents should save and care textbooks for future sale or use by siblings
- Parents should also ensure that they purchase the correct text book outlined on their child's book list.
- At the same time, the Commission is encouraging schools to list only textbooks that are essential and will be utilized by teachers and, where possible, facilitate students who have older editions of prescribed texts.
- Consumers are advised to explore the limited alternatives available to them, some of which include
 - Purchasing books from certain outlets which offer used texts which are in fairly good condition and which are sold at a lower price than the new ones.
 - Purchasing e-copies of textbooks online, where available.
 - Purchasing new or used books online where this option works out lower

BOOKSTORES

- Schools and bookstores should provide greater assistance to parents regarding updated editions and authors to ensure that parent purchase the correct books.
- Bookstores should be discouraged from selling old stock at the current stock price¹³.
- Entrepreneurs are encouraged to look at the feasibility of investing in the sale and distribution of used books as a viable alternative to local consumers.

SCHOOLS

- Schools should adopt more strategies geared towards addressing affordability. This could include raising awareness of, and pursue cost saving strategies on a wider scale such as:
 - Used textbooks
 - Digital textbooks
 - Individual chapters
 - Library checkout
- Purchasing from stores in bulk on behalf of students or providing students with electronic access to books by purchasing distribution rights from the publishers
- Schools should also ensure that the books that parents purchased are used by the teachers
- Schools can also organize book drives or otherwise encourage matriculating students to redistribute their used texts

¹³ Though some bookstores have noted that it is a common business practice to re-price old stock at current prices to cover the replacement cost; some bookstores have been able to absorb that cost and keep the books at the old stock prices. The CAC acknowledges these bookstores and encourages others to do likewise.

- Schools should take the necessary steps to get approval from the relevant authorities to ensure their ability to make copies of texts for educational purposes

POLICY MAKERS

- Greater effort could be made to provide closer supervision of the booklists developed by schools.
- Greater effort could be made where possible to assist students which have older edition of texts to still be able to use such texts to cover the basic course material

PUBLISHERS

- Conduct surveys to ascertain students preference regarding book format e.g. whether digital versus print based books, and cater to the needs of students accordingly.
- Conduct more surveys to ascertain which books are most frequently used by teachers and publish accordingly.