

**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF
HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION POLICY
PROCESSES IN THE EMERGING
CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY
TERRITORIES**

EDUARDO RAOUL ALI

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

OCTOBER 2010

Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgments	iii
Abstract	v
Chapter 1: The Research Problem	1-30
Chapter 2: The New Regionalism: The Caribbean Community and Accreditation Policy	31-71
Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods	72-128
Chapter 4: Perceptions of Caribbean Accreditation Policy Processes: Focus on Policy Definition	129-156
Chapter 5: Issues in National and Regional Accreditation Policy Processes: Focus on Policy Research	157-184
Chapter 6: Negotiating Globalization in the Caribbean Accreditation Policy: Is there Harmonization or Not?	185-214
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations	215-230
References	231-249
Tables, Figures and Appendices	250-282

Acknowledgements

First of all, I give thanks to God for inspiring me and giving me the strength to continue even when I felt unmotivated, overwhelmed or leaning to my own finite understanding and not my inner faith. There are several persons who have contributed to my personal and professional development or provided immeasurable support over the years which culminated in the production of this thesis. While I wish to acknowledge them all I can only mention those few who made very significant contributions.

I wish to thank the University of Sheffield for creating higher education access opportunities for students in the Caribbean when others had closed doors to those of us who knew we could make a meaningful difference to the development of education in the region. In this regard, I wish to single out my supervisors Dr. Jennifer Lavia and Professor Bob Lingard of the Universities of Sheffield and Queensland, Australia respectively, who inspired me academically, kept me abreast of the literature and ensured that there was rigour in my study. They stayed the course with me and believed in my abilities even when I doubted myself. Notwithstanding my supervisors' involvement, I must not forget Professor Pat Sikes, EdD Director, who kept me informed and was always ensuring that I remained 'critical' in my research enquiry. Additionally, I have come to respect my EdD peers, particularly Cheryl Lewis, who was always supportive in and out of Study Schools.

Many friends and colleagues have kept me motivated. Professor Sir Hilary Beckles my present work supervisor and Principal of the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill Campus was of great help in that he enabled me to work towards completing the thesis

writing and it was largely from his publications and readings on quality assurance that I drew much advice in developing my thesis. One person to whom I owe a debt of gratitude is Dr. Ruby S. Alleyne, Vice-President of Quality Assurance and Institutional Advancement at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. As one of my mentors, she, from the inception kept me interested and focused on the idea of researching accreditation policy. I thank Dr. Tavis D. Jules for his advice and willingness to share his EdD thesis which established a firm foundation for my study. In terms of friends, I must remember Dr. Sheila Cooper-Enyi, another mentor and EdD graduate in higher education administration, who always envisioned me doing doctoral research in an area of higher education at some stage in my career. Anne Agge, Bibi Selman and Beverly Hamblet are thanked for their personal commitment to helping me during times when I needed logistics and non-academic support. Lastly, but certainly not least, I pay tribute to my family especially my father Karl and deceased mother Lucy Maria for their invaluable dedication to my life and allowing me to have a solid education foundation to become an advocate for social change.

Abstract

This thesis addresses the question: ‘How do Higher Education Accreditation Policy Processes Compare Among Emerging CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) Territories?’ I investigate the perspectives of accreditation policy experts, namely researchers, analysts, text writers and implementers, through written materials and interviews, to be able to answer the research question.

I begin by discussing the new regionalism as a theoretical backdrop to the study and explain how the philosophy and approaches to new regionalism relate to the development of Caribbean higher education accreditation policy framework, as articulated by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). In this discussion, I refer to Jules’ (2008) postulate of harmonization of regional education policies within CARICOM. His study was analyzed as a suitable frame of reference for my study.

In this study, I used a critical policy analysis to assess the policy production processes in five countries in the Caribbean region as they relate to regional accreditation. These policies are measured against the draft model legislation for accreditation proposed by the CARICOM. In addition to this, I focused attention on three policies -Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago- to understand the mechanism of harmonization. The study focuses on the new development on regional sustainability called the CSME, the central aim of the policy within the CSME and corresponding processes by which higher education accreditation policies were being formulated and enacted. I applied theoretical thematic analysis to analyze data from documentary sources and experts’ perceptions to interpret how accreditation policy production processes were applied in three stages in policy analysis; ‘defining policy’, ‘researching policy’ and ‘negotiating policy’. These stages were examined in relation to globalization contexts, nation state policy making within a federal context and the roles of politics, empirical policy research and stakeholder participation.

Data analysis revealed that accreditation policy production and implementation showed a tendency to exhibit what Jules referred to as ‘harmonization’ at the CARICOM level, whereas ‘policy borrowing and dissemination’ seemed to have occurred at the national level due to contextualization pressures. The political negotiation process was a favoured approach during policy production. Conversely, inadequate emphasis was placed on empirical policy research. Although stakeholders were consulted, their views were considered much less than the state’s role in policy production. Following from this analysis, the thesis argues for the need to emphasize an empirical approach to the study of accreditation policy and practice that utilizes culturally appropriate education policy frameworks as tools for education policy making in the Caribbean region.

Eduardo Raoul Ali

Chapter 1

The Research Problem

Introduction

Wilfred Carr (2004) writes:

To experience education is not the same as to understand education. Understanding may be prompted by experience but it can only be acquired through discussion, learning, reading and serious thought.

(Carr, 2004)

Carr's logic represents the essence of my motivation as a researcher. While I have experienced accreditation policy (which is the subject of this thesis), I believe it is only through critical enquiry that I can truly say that I have come to understand it and it is the process of how I have come to understand higher education accreditation policy that I will be sharing in this study. I have come to understand that through critical enquiry. My intellectual curiosity has allowed me to delve into the complexities of policy research as a field and more particularly into the relationships between the policy and its practice, exemplifying through the thesis the necessity to pay attention to the context in which policy occurs and is implemented.

I have experienced higher education accreditation policy in many ways. Most notably, my experiences working as a policy analyst in a national government bureaucracy in Trinidad and Tobago have enabled me to grasp the intent, motivations and approaches in policy production and implementation. I

was appointed to a government task force to oversee the establishment of the national accreditation policy in Trinidad and Tobago, including the corresponding legislation. I was subsequently appointed to the Board of the national accreditation agency in Trinidad and Tobago, where I was exposed to another level of policy production and implementation. Through these means, I engaged with many policy actors at the national level and was able to appreciate their levels of interest and concerns with the policy. Notwithstanding my experiences at the local level, my encounter with the policy was taken even further, to the regional stage when I represented Trinidad and Tobago at the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) through discussions on higher education accreditation policy. I also functioned in a professional role as participant and Board member on the Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education. Through these various encounters at local, national and regional levels, I had been exposed to discourses on policy matters for educational development, many of these being intended for CARICOM territories.

Carr's point that 'understanding may be prompted by experience', certainly resonates with me as it was these experiences which made me conscious of the need for further enquiry into higher education accreditation policies within the national-regional contexts in the Caribbean. At the time of initiating the study, some main issues stood out. First, I was aware that the complex nature of the Caribbean Region would provide ample opportunity to investigate the tension between the values and needs of CARICOM as a regional body and those of

individual member states whose focus may have been primarily national. These tensions as I will demonstrate in my study would become even more intricate given that CARICOM governments wanted the development of policy for enhancing national competitiveness within an international setting, and they thought that the policy would establish the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) by enabling freer movement of human capital transnationally within CARICOM and that the policy would sanitize the higher education sector in the region by regulating which institutions and programmes were offered. I will show in the thesis that while CARICOM discussed these concerns, nationally, the focus and emphasis seemed to have been different between what politicians wanted and what technocrats thought was essential. A second major issue was the process whereby the policies were being produced. I observed that regional-national political preferences seemed to be critical to the process and that agenda setting, policy development and implementation lacked an evidenced-based approach.

It is within this context, that this thesis provides a qualitative account of accreditation policy processes in the Caribbean. Its emphasis is on those territories that fall within CARICOM. At the macroscopic level, the study was aimed at determining the extent to which education policies within the postcolonial Caribbean region responded to globalization, but it specifically focused on how higher education accreditation policies within certain countries that comprise the

emerging CARICOM (Caribbean Community) Single Market and Economy (CSME) are established in a globalization context.

This chapter sets out to introduce the research context of the study, elaborating on the factors that led to the development of this research project such as the purpose, methodology, assumptions, significance and limitations of the study, as well as reporting how the thesis was structured.

The Research Context

Conceptualizing the Research

In her text, *Policy Research in Educational Settings: Contested Terrain*, Jenny Ozga (2000) articulates a perspective of policy process which I will call 'research endeavour'. The research endeavour provides for a contextualization of the relationships among the participants, the actors and the subject of the research. It attempts to show how research can be designed and organized to facilitate policy development. In fact in her same text, Ozga proposed that in policy production processes it is important to understand the role of human agency, research methodology and the social utility of the research. By understanding research contexts Ozga further proposes one is better able to relate the value and role of research to the policy process. The idea of research being an important aspect of the policy process is significant and it has informed the way I have conceptualized this study. Thus, I have included various elements of Ozga's ideas about research

contexts within my research design. These elements are further elaborated in chapter 3.

Similarly, Hogwood and Gunn (1984) have described a rational and systematic model for policy analysis. The model enables the policy analyst to undertake a critical analysis of each of ten stages in the policy production and implementation process. Each stage is discrete and distinct, yet each stage informs the next stage within the cycle. Collectively, all stages enable the analyst to understand how the policy is being defined, researched and negotiated.

These three components provide signposts to explore what is policy? Where and how does it occur? And how can policy research proceed? The first component, that is policy definition, allowed me to examine the origin of policy, identification of the policy problem and determination of the policy causes. Policy research as a second component, included the seven factors as proposed by Ozga. Ozga's articulation of this issue helps us reason the importance of policy data in defining policy, understanding how the data can be used to justify the policy, examining which research methods were used, how researchers engaged the policy, what were the voices and nature of involvement of participants in the policy and more importantly, how the policy was being defined using results from the policy research endeavour. The third component, policy negotiation, was represented through a discussion on policy alternatives, policy option feasibility, the impact of policy, policy planning, bargaining, monitoring and effectiveness.

There are different approaches one can take to analyze the three components I have developed from the Hogwood and Gunn/Ozga model, a Policy Cycle model. The Policy Cycle model derived from Hogwood and Gunn and Ozga is different from perhaps the better known education policy studies policy cycle approach of Stephen Ball (1994) in that the latter is a more analytical approach to policy rather than a methodology for policy analysis. Given the model I use and by applying theoretical thematic analysis I am able to interrogate these three components through successive stages of coding and theme development. I started by taking each of the three components, that is, defining, researching and negotiating policy, and using them as main themes. I then produced two levels of sub-themes. Statements from interview and document data were then matched to these sub themes and so categorically and successively coded for developing new themes. These new themes were matched to the nine research questions asked in the study. One further step was taken. In order to fully understand the influence of globalization on the policy process I made reference, through one of the research questions, to Dale's (1999) typology of globalization mechanisms. Themes were matched and new themes generated by comparing the original themes with each other to identify common trends in phrasing or content. Details of this are described under '*Methods of Data Analysis*' in chapter 3.

The Caribbean Context

Although education policy research is a widely taught and frequently discussed discipline in developed nations, in the Caribbean it is still an emerging school of thought. While education policy is noted as a subject in some undergraduate and graduate degree curricula within Caribbean higher education institutions, it is often viewed as an unfavoured professional endeavour in the Caribbean policy production settings. Despite these notions, I am of the belief that education policy production is a very hotly contested, contemporary issue for governments within the Caribbean region, who are keen on demonstrating to the Caribbean populace that they are working for their benefit. Discussing this general idea, Ball (2008, pp 2-3) coined the term 'policy overload', to suggest that governments' political agendas included managing several policy activities to reassure their national constituents that they are making a serious impact on the nation state.

In his doctoral dissertation, Jules (2008) analyzed discourses in education policies over a seventeen year period (1990-2007) in thirteen CARICOM countries. He found that the analysis of Caribbean education policy is a beneficial activity for the Anglophone Caribbean region. Jules described a period between 2002-2007 as policy 'trilingualism' characterized by a tripartite policy discourse among audiences and actors to interpret the global, regional and national settings. Thus, in short, Jules confirmed that over seventeen years of policy production in CARICOM, approaches were being changed from functional cooperation to trilingualism. He found that trilingualism was largely characterized by

globalization and internationalization themes. He pointed to an obvious connection between the regional and international dimensions of policy production and the emerging trends towards increased education policy harmonization within CARICOM territories.

Jules' dissertation represented a good reference for framing my argument. Building upon Jules' research, I felt I would be in a better position to claim that globalization is a critical contextual matter for Caribbean education policy production and implementation. More specifically, globalization theories from proponents such as Ball (1990; 2008), Bowe et al. (1992), Dale (1999), Robertson and Dale (2008) and Rizvi and Lingard (2010) would be ideally suited to reliably informing any study which purports to analyze national and cross-national higher education accreditation policy production and implementation in the Caribbean. It is in this regard, I made a case for the application of a typology of mechanisms for analysis of globalization effects on national education policy that was established by Dale (1999). In Jules' research (2008), which emphasized textual analysis of specific education policies ('World Education for All' and 'Future of Education in the Caribbean'), policy isomorphism or harmonization was a common theme throughout the policy periods. It would be useful to determine whether this is the case for higher education accreditation policies in the Anglophone Caribbean. Dale's (1999) typology provides for an analysis of eight mechanisms of globalization on policy production processes in the nation state (Figure 1, Appendix1). These include policy learning/teaching, borrowing, harmonization,

standardization, dissemination, installing interdependence and imposition. Each mechanism is uniquely defined by a range of conditions which make the distinction between nations which 'receive policies' and 'send policies', either in whole or part. The nature of the globalization process can be established to determine how the nation state produces its own policies within global conditions and contexts. This can be related to the three components (definition, research and negotiation) being studied in this research. In other words, by examining these three components, at the level of individual codes and themes generated, one is able to link them back to the globalization mechanisms being employed. It is my contention that Dale's typology, which also included policy harmonization as a mechanism, could be conveniently applied in the study to determine the actual mechanistic types that are being embraced in higher education accreditation policy production and implementation. This study researched the processes involving higher education accreditation policy production and implementation within the Caribbean, how these have responded to globalization influences and the similarities and differences among three different country cases selected.

The research study covered an analysis of policy processes between the period January 1st 2002 and December 31st 2006. During this period CARICOM had sufficiently mobilized its member states to consider the establishment of the policy under investigation. The emerging CSME territories in this study are those twelve territories within the CARICOM that had signed on to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas which established the CARICOM Single Market and Economy

(CSME) on July 5th 2001. This included Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago (CARICOM, 2002). Although the Bahamas and Montserrat were to be included as members by that date they had not signed the treaty. The CSME, being the political and economic agreement between member states, represented the geo-political context under study in the thesis research. As reported by Caryl (2004), the CSME is understood to be that single political and economic space that would facilitate intra-regional trade in goods and services, negotiation of extra-regional policy decisions and the free movement of skills. The proposed free movement of skilled persons, which could come about by the establishment of a regional higher education accreditation mechanism to be coordinated by CARICOM, is being studied. There are clearly other benefits for member countries by having this accreditation mechanism that has been identified in the literature. These include safeguarding the public good by having accredited and recognized tertiary education institutions and qualifications within the region.

Documentation on the proposed mechanism for accreditation goes as far back as 1996. A report, produced on behalf of the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI), showed the benefits of having such a policy within CARICOM (Ashton, 1996). Subsequently, in 2000, the University of the West Indies (UWI), working collaboratively with ACTI and the Caribbean Examinations Council/European Union (CXC/EU) funded partnership between 1996 and 1999, published guidelines and procedures for making this mechanism

possible across the region (Revierre et al., 2000). As a policy paper in its own right, this manual was mandated by CARICOM Ministers of Education as a significant contribution to development of tertiary education in the region. By 2002, the CARICOM Secretariat finalized model legislation for CARICOM member states to consider in development of their national legislation (CARICOM, 2002). Between 2002 and 2004, the model legislation was used by most Ministries of Education in the region, being the responsible bodies in each state, for the establishment of national legislation.

Taylor et al. (1997) viewed policy as being more than the text itself. While I agree with this, what is even more important to me is their characterization of legislation being an important policy text for consideration in policy analysis. CARICOM's regional accreditation policy papers, the model accreditation bill and the corresponding national bills to be established within each territory within the CSME were the main text documents being analyzed. However, other documents such as country and policy papers, technical reports as well as my field notes and academic and professional papers were being reviewed. All of these data sources are reported within a data bank in chapter 4.

In the study I described the model accreditation bill and all corresponding national laws as legally-binding policy within the territories. By 2004, at which time the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas had already come into effect, and although a number of territories had prepared draft bills, only four territories (Barbados, Belize, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago) had completed the process for passage of their accreditation bills in their Parliamentary systems so that the

bills would be enacted as legislation. However, by the end of 2006, only Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago had established their accreditation agencies which would facilitate the development and implementation of their national higher education accreditation mechanisms and hence why they are being strongly considered in this study. In the case of Jamaica, the University Council of Jamaica was already functioning as a full-fledged accreditation agency in Jamaica since 1997 and so at the time of this study consideration for establishment of a new agency by means of the accreditation bill draft was not seen as necessary. It should also be noted that St. Kitts and Nevis also had an accreditation mechanism operating at the time of the study. This country was not within the scope of the study because it did not yet refer to the official CARICOM model for establishment of its accreditation law and body.

The study was conceptualized as a critical policy analysis study which would analyze why and how accreditation policy production processes were applied within the Anglophone Caribbean context. The study addressed the national-regional-global contexts surrounding these processes. It used a meta-theoretical framework which was designed by linking two models taken from Hogwood and Gunn (1994) and Ozga (2000). Theoretical thematic analysis was applied as the method of data analysis. These processes would have generated layers of themes that could be used to respond to the research questions asked.

Research Questions and Objectives of the Study

The key research question for the study is “How do Higher Education Accreditation Policy Processes Compare Among Emerging CSME Territories?” In order to interrogate this research question further, the study was expected to achieve five principal objectives. It was anticipated that the study would:

1. Provide insights into those factors that can influence or have influenced the processes that led up to the conceptualization, drafting, legitimizing and implementation of higher education accreditation policies at both the Caribbean regional and national levels;
2. Highlight the extent to which regional and national higher education accreditation policies have harmonized from the regional legislative model or from each other within the Caribbean’s postcolonial globalization context as measured against the typology of policy mechanisms referred to by Dale (1999);
3. Generate and compare viewpoints from higher education accreditation experts about the role and implications of empirical research, civil society participation and politics play in higher education accreditation policy processes within the region through elite sampling;
4. Offer some recommendations to education policy analysts, researchers and makers as to what factors could be carefully considered when researching and developing effective education policy; and
5. Determine whether any new theories, ideas or concepts emerge as a result of the study.

To substantially address these five objectives, the thesis raised three further key questions, each key question having subsidiary questions. It was expected that by answering these subsidiary questions that the key questions would be answered satisfactorily, and, therefore, the five objectives would be met. The three key questions were all analyzed and discussed in chapters 4, 5 and 6.

The first key question was: *What current understanding of policy processes are employed in the establishment of the accreditation policies within the Caribbean region and nations?* This question attempted to address my epistemological and ontological assumptions of the topic of accreditation policy analysis within the wider Caribbean and what literature existed that supported the researcher's assumptions and position. After answering this key question, I was able to establish a basis for further analysis of the policy processes through interviews and other documentary evidence I collected. I assumed that this component of the research would clarify which participants were to be involved as well as generate questions for the interview stage. These questions were: (i) What influenced my positionality, that is, my values, understanding and beliefs? (ii) What was my experience with accreditation policies? (iii) What do I know about these policy processes and what more do I need to know? (iv) What are the documented positions on accreditation policies and their processes within the Caribbean? and (v) How have these been accepted by countries within the emerging CSME?

The second key question focused on the global influences on higher education accreditation policy in the Caribbean. Treating with the second objective, it provided for an appreciation of the extent to which there was convergence or

divergence of policy within the region. The second key research question was: *To what extent has there been harmonization of accreditation policies between the emerging CSME states and from CARICOM produced policies?* This was explored in the policy cycle model through analyses of texts and interviews and by using Dale's typology of mechanisms to understand the effects of globalization discourses and agendas on the Caribbean accreditation policies. The data corpus, which consisted of data sets from documents and interviews, was analyzed as themes.

Four further questions which related to this key question emerged. These were: (i) To what extent does globalization theory relate to the accreditation policy mechanisms in the Caribbean as reflected by the relationship between the regional accreditation policy and the national accreditation policies (illustrated by five countries)? (ii) To what extent have Ball's and Bowe's policy analysis contextual factors such as political strategy, influence, practice, text production and outcomes been taken up within the accreditation policy processes? (iii) To what extent do accreditation policy processes compare with the mechanisms proposed by Dale's typology of external effects on national policies? (iv) Has policy harmonization influenced Caribbean or national accreditation policy formulation and implementation in any way?

The third research question emphasized the value of stakeholders' voices in the processes of higher education accreditation policy and educational policy in general. It was hoped that the mechanisms for improving educational policy processes will be enhanced as a result of the research and interview analyses will

facilitate this. The key question being examined here was: *What are the perceived roles and implications of empirical research, civil society participation and politics in accreditation policy processes and how can they be improved in future Caribbean education policy processes?* Six subsidiary questions were framed to answer this overall key question. By referring to these six subsidiary questions three objectives of the research were investigated at this level.

The research generated and compared the viewpoints of accreditation experts; provided recommendations on how to develop effective education policy; and determined whether any new ideas, theories or concepts were emerging.

The subsidiary questions which related to this key question are: (i) What are the views of accreditation policy experts on the stages in policy analysis, namely setting the agenda, doing the research and negotiating the options? (ii) How do these views help in elucidating the contexts within which these policies were developed and implemented? (iii) Has empirical research been applied and to what extent in policy formulation in particular? (iv) Has civil society been engaged in any way either in the formulation or implementation of the policies? (v) What role has politics (governmental, non-governmental, organizational and personalities) played in the stages leading up to the formulation of the policies within each country under study and the region? and (vi) Can this information be useful to future development of Caribbean education policy?

Significance of the Study

It is my hope that this study would significantly benefit those professionals and academics working on researching, writing, formulating, coordinating, analyzing, monitoring, implementing or reviewing the accreditation systems. The study highlighted a number of global policy analysis issues as well as specific issues relating to the Caribbean region and to the particular countries in the study. Nine key aspects of the study that serve to expand the body of knowledge are discussed within various chapters. These key aspects provided insights and knowledge about accreditation systems and the global influences on the policy processes.

The first of the key aspects is the value of positionality and the professional stance in education policy research. This is important because the study recognized my professional experiences, values, beliefs and understanding of the Caribbean region, the nation state, globalization impact on development of the Caribbean and the accreditation systems existing or being established. It sought to make practical use of my personal narrative as a critical source of information to facilitate the formulation of the research study itself and to present a case for exploration of the research questions under consideration. I was guided by Ozga's (2000, p. 6) point that reflection on what she referred to as 'the formal construction of practice' is the basis of education policy research. This started with me as a key actor. Through my voice, I provided some critical reflection on my practice as the preliminary basis for questioning Caribbean education policy research.

By acknowledging the personal and professional accounts of individuals, who are key practice-based professionals, I agree that their discourses are important in education policy research. However, I must point out that while I believe that such accounts are useful as empirical data in education policy, caution should be taken in using them as the only source for researching education policy. Holmes and Crossley (2004, p. 204) arguing in the St. Lucian context, made a case for using discourse as indigenous contexts for policy research. In their account, questions about whose knowledge was being researched and what constituted research could be understood from local expressions and discourses. They suggested that the art forms such as music, drama and folk tales, that are heavily discourse-based, document practical and real issues. They are genres which represent how education policy can be made in that context. One can make a similar case for education policy within other Caribbean societies. In recognizing the value of discourses within the Caribbean context, this study provided an opportunity to document my experience, as one of many, of how education policy (accreditation policy) is developed and implemented in the Caribbean region. I believe that it has promise in terms of encouraging others who look at similar experiences that are centred on the relationship between policy and practice.

Another important aspect of the study is the practical use of critical policy analysis studies in Caribbean education policy. Critical policy analysis is an extremely good method for establishing the causal relationships within an education policy or among several similar policies to elucidate mechanisms that may be problematic or that need some resolutions. A critical policy study, which

provides for some reflections on the three accreditation policy cases of Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, would be a good practical example that may benefit practitioners and researchers of policy who are interested in exploring critical policy methodologies for Caribbean education policy analyses.

A third important aspect of the study is that I used those relevant life experiences of elite participants as evidence for policy. The research was valuable to the elite participants (accreditation experts) who wished to record their experiences in an academic study. Elite sampling is the form of purposeful sampling that is being used in the selection of participants for the research. Those persons who formed part of this 'elite' or 'information rich' group (Creswell, 2002) have participated in several related policy activities together before and during the accreditation policy formulation and implementation processes. Some of these persons have lifetime stories dealing with education policy, and accreditation policy in particular, and whose voices have gone unrecorded and undocumented as powerful testimonials. In some instances, these interviews represented the first formal opportunity to share their histories, declare their concerns and register their views openly. This was not only liberating for them but also had the benefit of archiving the policy experiences of a group of very influential and highly regarded professionals in the higher education accreditation movement in the Caribbean region.

A fourth useful aspect was that the study has tremendous potential to inform a Caribbean multicultural policy analysis study. Although the emphasis was on Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, the study began by looking at five

territories from geo-political, linguistic and culturally diverse environments, namely; Barbados (Eastern Caribbean/Lesser Antillean), Belize (Northern Caribbean/Central American), Guyana (Southern Caribbean/South American), Jamaica (Northern Caribbean/Greater Antillean) and Trinidad and Tobago (Southern Caribbean). It examined the roles and implications of education policy within multi-cultural settings as contexts and was conducted within these different cultural settings. Starting with myself as the researcher, that is, being a national of one of the territories and resident of another within the case study, I explored the meaning of understanding education policy within these states whilst investigating that of others. More importantly, the research itself embraced participants from different contexts who were either interviewed within their native settings or other cultural settings. By having some understanding of these issues in this study, I was able to discuss to some degree, the applicability of multicultural settings to this policy research study and of course in the establishment of accreditation policy as well.

A fifth significant aspect of the study has to do with determining and applying models for policy analysis within the Caribbean. Except for Jules' (2008) work on education policy harmonization, reorientation and the rise of trans-national regime within the CARICOM, and that of my own academic research (Ali, 2004) which referred to a model that I called the Caribbean Education Policy Framework (CEPF), the literature is somewhat silent on either education policy analysis frameworks developed for the Caribbean context or application of policy analysis models to Caribbean education policies.

It was already mentioned that Holmes and Crossley (2004) reasoned that as small-island developing states with unique historical, heritage and cultural traditions, Caribbean education policy research has been largely influenced by indigenous information and discourses. Similarly, Louisy (2001) intimated that the voices of Caribbean societies have not been reasonably taken up within the international education policy community. Both are very useful views to question what can be considered contextually driven education policy in the Caribbean. The fact is that education policy research in most countries uses a mix of empirical qualitative and quantitative data to formulate policies.

The Caribbean region's heavy dependency on traditions and discourses primarily through focus groups may bring to question the relevancy of this kind of evidence for international acceptance. In this regard, a sixth significant component of this study was that it questioned the value and use of empirical educational research in the process of education policy formulation for development of Caribbean education and society. The study provided useful data for the policy research and educational community on how this kind of information is used, if at all, in higher education accreditation policy, whilst making generalizations about education policy.

A seventh significant part of the study examined the relationship between the nation state, post-colonialism, neo-colonialism, globalization and the regionalism movement in the Caribbean. CARICOM as the regional supranational agency (as are other international organizations) has been instrumental in the establishment of the accreditation policy in the Caribbean nation states. Since the regional

movement towards development of the regional and associated national accreditation mechanisms, other than a few peer reviewed articles and similar publications, there have been no major published papers including doctoral or masters theses on the subject of accreditation policy. Similarly, there been no study on the contextual circumstances existing between CARICOM and specific countries where accreditation agencies were since established. To my knowledge this research study represented the first comprehensive critical study which may reveal some interesting results for the CARICOM Secretariat in terms of the policy effectiveness between them and nation states within the wider geo-political region as well as suggesting alternative ways to coordinate education policy analysis and formulation.

While appreciating the works of other globalization theorists, it was previously intimated that Dale's model (1999) focused on the effects of globalization of education policies on nation states. Additionally, Tikly (2001) has reminded us of three globalization approaches which influence the formulation of such policies within postcolonial small-island developing states. The hyperglobal, transformational and skeptic approaches all examine the logic of global cultures and their impact on national and supranational systems. What this study offers is an opportunity for measuring how the CARICOM and associated nation state higher education accreditation policies respond to Dale's model it presented us with a useful study on the ideology of globalization on higher education accreditation policies in the Caribbean. This represented an eighth significant aspect of the study that was explored.

The ninth aspect of this study was about the processes engaged in the development and implementation of higher education accreditation policies. The process mechanisms were analyzed from my perspective with the view of establishing clear categories for interpreting those of the participants. The five contextual aspects as identified by Ball (1990) and Bowe et al. (1992) were applied in defining the categories, “Defining Policy”, “Researching Policy” and “Negotiating Policy Options”. These categories were further substantiated by Rizvi and Lingard (2010, pp. 54-56) in their framework for model questions to perform education policy analysis. Using a mix of rigorous qualitative research methods to investigate the matter, this study therefore critically clarified processes involved in analysis of or analysis for accreditation policy with the intention of determining what took place, how they occurred and why they happened.

Overview of the Thesis Structure

The thesis has seven chapters. Chapter 1 has provided an overview of the study including a motivation for the study, the way in which the study was conceptualized, the nature of the research problem and the significance and context of the study. Chapter 2 will provide a literature review relevant to the study. It focuses principally on the concept of the new regionalism. While it explores the philosophy and ideology of CARICOM as a new regional, neoliberal policy entity, it somewhat emphasizes the relationship between the CSME and Caribbean education policy analysis. Above all, this chapter analyzes the

postcolonial thinking of accreditation policy and what it means to the Caribbean context. Chapter 3 explores the methodology; its philosophy, the methods used, the way data will be collected and analyzed and issues of rigour and ethics in the research study. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present an analysis of the policies under study. They will explore the data sets from document texts and the interviews that were conducted using theoretical thematic analysis and separately responded to each of the three main research questions. Accordingly, these chapters offer analyses of the higher education accreditation policy processes in terms of what was textually recorded, what was expected, what was experienced, how it was experienced and feelings about these experiences by both elite informants and myself. Finally, the overall conclusions being derived and the recommendations being made will be provided in chapter 7.

Major Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

As with any major study, there are assumptions that the researcher makes and needs to account for as the study is developed, conducted, analyzed and reported. Using a qualitative research design, I made several assumptions about the research. There was the view that qualitative research is concerned primarily with process; uncovering the meaning of how people see the world; is descriptive; is based on fieldwork; and is inductive building abstractions and theories from data or details (Creswell, 1994; Merriam, 1988).

In this study, these assumptions did not entirely hold true. While this study is concerned about process it also addressed the outcomes of the policies by reflecting on what was intended and what was actually being achieved. Similarly, while the study sought to gain a sense of what others' perceptions were of the policy processes employed, to some extent it looked at the construction of the policy/law texts. The study attempted to analyze the 'word content' by analysis which does not necessarily rely upon personal perception alone. Likewise, the research was not exclusively descriptive and inductive. It was analytical, drawing upon different references to compare the policies being studied and reasoning how the data related to different established theoretical positions. Finally, it was not only based on collecting evidence from the field, but relied upon the researcher's epistemological and ontological assumptions. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) articulated the value of a policy researcher's positionality as reflexive practice. This was an important perspective that was embraced in my assumptions.

As reported, I intended to frame this study by being reflective and reflexive. In chapter 4, I articulated that reflectivity expresses a researcher's personal account which influences his/her research while reflexivity acknowledges personal values, prejudices, beliefs and stance (Willig, 2001; Sikes and Goodson, 2003). This meant that I had certain assumptions about why I thought the study was as important for others as much as I saw it important to me. I developed the study along the lines of examining a topic I found applicable to my professional experiences, career interests and of course academic achievements. This was

declared in my personal narrative so as to clarify my personal connections with the study. I also found that the cases that were examined could not be treated as identical to each other. This was because the situational contexts in which they existed and the information available about them were not uniform and so any analysis and conclusions that were made would have to be established as trends and not exact comparisons. Another useful point to note was the findings that would be reported and generalizations that were made. They were based on what was known at the time of the study and not what surfaced outside of the study timeframes and context. Thus any generalizations that were arrived at from the study were within their own limits.

There are several other assumptions I have noted in my study that related to the actual methodological approach being used. Firstly, this study was self-funded and for a doctoral thesis. There were cost and time constraints in terms of getting the study completed. As the researcher, I had to access data from different geo-political and cultural settings which required contact with key informants (elites) who had the data or knew where to access it. Being on very low budget it was impossible for me to travel overseas to collect data, except when opportunities presented themselves in the line of employment. I had to be concerned with the time allocated for designing and conducting a professionally-relevant doctoral thesis and to get reasonably useful findings to arrive at conclusions and original recommendations.

Secondly, I was aware that I had limitations in my use and application of the research methods that were employed. By choosing thematic analyses as a

method, difficulties with pattern matching techniques arose and had to be dealt with by consulting the literature and experts. I therefore used every opportunity to speak to work colleagues who were familiar with thematic analyses so as to learn how to do them competently.

Another limitation I took into account was that the study embraced only a few samples and participants (only one main policy text with five country samples, and eight participants). The assumption was that these were small enough samples for making some generalizations given the additional use of documents as sources of data. However, it was acknowledged that more participants would increase the understanding of issues and so provide greater trustworthiness in the study by triangulation processes. The study also intended to use a large enough sample size of documents for analysis. However, I recognized that inadequate policy documentation such as country reports would have presented a problem. They were not all available, either because they could not be located from the place of origin or contacts did not have (or no one seems to have) the authority to release the documents.

I also recognized that participants who were interviewed from different country, organizational and cultural situations were not in controlled environments and so would not have ideal conditions to yield same or similar kinds of information/data. These different environments could have prejudiced participants' recall of information, willingness to share or have access to data such as reports that may remind them of issues being questioned. This was

compensated for by asking the participants about their views on the different conditions and settings in which they are located.

It also cannot be ignored that the different modalities used for interviews could have led to differences in interpretation of what was said and therefore recorded. For example, face-to-face interviews could lend themselves to clearer voice expressions and the ability of the interviewer to read and note pertinent body language. For teleconference interviews, the technology did not provide me with opportunities to observe body language and so some problems did arise in terms of recording same. Additionally, the categories of interview questions that were selected for analysis were somewhat narrow given restrictions in terms of the time allocated for interviews. It was generally felt that 1 ½ hour interviews would be lengthy enough.

Triangulation through document sources assisted the production of more useful material to confirm what actually happened. Some were shorter due to inadequate responses and information shared yet others were longer. This variation in time for interviews naturally altered the data and so contributed to different levels of interpretation of certain cases. Transcription of data is time bound. It does not reveal true emotions unless these are clarified. Thus, assumptions about participants' feelings were recorded but it must be noted that these have provided an unrealistic picture, except where these observations were substantiated.

While an elite group of peers would have provided useful information, given their positions and roles in society, the claims made by them e.g. level of

students' and employers' involvement in policy processes could be corroborated by interviewing students and employers for instance. Although this would be useful, given the nature of the study this activity would have extended the time for interviewing and data analysis and therefore affect the overall efficiency of the research process. Another interesting limitation has to do with the possibility that peers may have chances between interviews to corroborate responses to interview questions. If this occurred then the accuracy of information from triangulation would be higher. This was in fact noted. I adopted a position of confidence in the chosen participants to do what was morally appropriate during the interview process.

Taking into account these limitations and their corresponding assumptions, the research process and outcomes were enhanced because this approach gave me the chance to best understand the meaning and value of the research within an ethically sound, methodologically appropriate research design construct.

Summary and Conclusion

While the chapter identified the rationale for the study of Caribbean education policy analysis as a whole, it paid greater attention to the need for analyzing higher education accreditation policy processes within the CSME through empirical enquiry. The chapter presented the three main research questions that were being framed in relation to the study, citing why these questions were important. The chapter also identified several broad assumptions and limitations

of doing the research. It showed nine main applications of the study, including documenting cases for using mine and others' reflexivity in the research to recommending models for analyzing education policy in the Caribbean. The chapter articulates how theoretical models and ideas by Hogwood and Gunn (1994) and Ozga (2000) were applied in conceptual design of a meta-theory for the study to construct a policy cycle model. It also gave an overview of theoretical thematic analysis as the choice for doing the meta-theoretical analysis in the study and how Dale's typology of mechanisms was applied. The overall objective of the chapter was to establish the focus and main argument of the thesis. In so doing it produced a backdrop to understanding how higher education accreditation policies were analyzed, produced and implemented in the Caribbean. The literature review which follows in chapter 2 further documents the theoretical underpinnings of the study and justifies why there is the need for engaging in this study to benefit Caribbean education policy and practice within global agendas.

Chapter 2

The New Regionalism: The Caribbean Community and Accreditation Policy

Introduction

The Community exists as the only instrument available to the Caribbean to facilitate the optimal deployment of its human resources. It therefore behoves the region to act as one, to obey the injunction of history....As it faces the new millennium, the Caribbean has demonstrated that it has grown not only in its ability to face the global arena, but also in its ability to deal with internal arrangements and challenges.

(Hall, 2001, p. xvi)

Notwithstanding the neoliberal globalization pressures impacting the Caribbean, Hall's statement informs us that the Caribbean Community plays an essential role in the coordinated movement of Caribbean human resources. This chapter aims to analyze the concept of the new regionalism and the corresponding ideological positions concerning the establishment of CARICOM and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) within a neoliberal globalized Caribbean society. Having done this, the chapter then seeks to examine the origins, philosophy and purpose of the regional accreditation policy with regards to free movement of persons as another manifestation of the new regionalism thrust. This new regionalism is located in the context of globalization. The chapter thus finally looks at how and why understanding the relationship between globalization and accreditation policy processes in the study would be a beneficial policy analysis research project.

New Regionalism

In Arjun Appadurai's thinking (2000) about imaginative globalization, he regarded imagination as flows of ideas and ideologies surrounding geo-localities, which were shifting from fixed, permanent spaces to geo-political markets. Appadurai also theorized geographic shifts from 'trait' to 'process'. New regionalism can be defined in different ways. De Lombaerde and Garay (2006, p3) found different synonyms; such as 'new integration', 'second regionalism' and 'new wave of trade agreements' to mean new regionalism. They considered new regionalism as having evolved as a neoliberal strategy from United States foreign policy influence within the Americas. United States influence adopted a combination of political and economic postures, including multilateralism, regionalism and unilateralism.

Agreeing with De Lombaerde and Garay, Anderson et al. (2002b) identified new regionalism as a globalization process within a region brought about by intense competition. Competition exists among nation states within a region or between regions. These nations and regions appeared to be vying for goods and services available on the global market, which they have the legitimate right to access, through negotiated and established arrangements between them and multilateral agencies.

Telo (2007) suggested that domestic factors played a critical role in new regionalism. He considered the nation state and, regional organizations as

international bargaining entities within common frameworks, as absolutely important in the new regionalism discourse and arrangements.

Grenade (2007) argued that new regionalism had two concepts. She distinguished between regionalism itself and regionalization. The former was based on a 'body of ideas, values and concrete objectives' to facilitate peace, security, wealth and development. On the other hand, regionalization was a developmental process catering to increased cooperation, integration, harmonization and convergence within a cartographical space (Grenade, 2007). It stands to reason that the two can mutually exist, in that the processes associated with regionalization could not be achieved without having articulated values and ideas connected with regionalism.

New regionalism was thought to be characterized by autonomous, multidimensional and open processes for economic integration of a number of geo-political entities (De Lombaerde and Garay, 2006). New regionalism involved different public and private sector actors. Various nation states, and the actors within them, are called into negotiations to discuss the possible functional cooperation plans, outcomes and outputs to be derived from any agreement to be decided upon. However, the negotiation process works best within a collective bargaining framework existing across several territories having similar needs and interests in the regional system. Supporting this point, Girvan (2003) posited that new regionalism served to complement intra-regional market liberalization through structured negotiating mechanisms involving multilateral treaties and agreements. Girvan further argued that new regionalism looked beyond trade

liberalization. It emphasized specific institutions and policies, while adhering to rules and norms for integration. He also pointed to the existence of three 'regional integration groupings' which characterize developments in regionalism (Girvan, 2003, p.8). The first character, range, measures the extent to which a regional organization is multi-functional. The second, scope, measures the extent to which functional cooperation occurs both within and outside the region; while the third, intensity, measures the degree of market and institutional integration. These measures determine the internal and external dimensions for deeper functional cooperation and integration within the global economy.

Problematic of New Regionalism in the Caribbean

Soderbaum (2008) agreed with Grenade's theory that there is a distinction between regionalism, regionalization and regions. Regions are 'limited numbers of states linked together by a geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence' (Soderbaum, 2008, p.3) This region may have a common philosophy and be represented by a 'policy' or 'project' or be coordinated and mediated by common 'processes' (*Ibid*, p. 3). Thus, within the Caribbean region, CARICOM, as a geo-political agency of Caribbean states, is a hegemonic structural system by which new regionalism could be established. To understand the problematic of new regionalism in the Caribbean region, I turn to Hettne and Soderbaum (2006) when they attempted to theorize new regionalism. They enunciated:

A theory of 'new regionalism' cannot be about emerging regions only. It has to be a theory about the world order in transformation and the emergence of a multi-level pattern of governance. The NRT has to explain the world order that makes the processes of regionalization possible, or even necessary, and the world order that may result from new regionalisms. Note the plural. Analysts of the renewed trend on regionalization emphasise that there are many regionalisms and regionalization processes, i.e. different regional projects and different types of regional activities.

(Hettne and Soderbaum, 2006, p. 114)

Any debate on new regionalism in the Caribbean has to embrace three critical points. Hettne and Soderbaum have so eloquently regarded the new world order, whether being established or emerging, must be correctly understood for there to be a regionalism movement. The second issue is, with this new order there are changes between governance and governmental relationships as they are understood within the new regional environment. How these relationships are determined and the corresponding policies that support them are implemented, would determine the nature and viability of the new regionalism movement. A third related but essential point has to do with role and rise of regional hegemonic entities and how they are received or not by nation states. I wish to explore these points here so that a firmer appreciation of what constitutes this new regionalism in the Caribbean region could be gained.

The New World Order

By reflecting on the era of the post-Second World War, Hettne's (1996) account of new regionalism spoke to the development of a global social system which was characterized by world markets. He saw regions emerging as part of this system

while the survival of nation states was being threatened. Hettne therefore viewed both processes of globalization and regionalism as being articulated within global structural transformation with contending forces at play in both processes.

Agreeing with Hettne, Gamble (2007, p.21) identified both 'globalization and the creation of a more interconnected world economy and world society' as trends which characterize the shaping of the new world order in the period following the Second World War. Locating his theory within a hyperglobal context, Gamble similarly articulated that this has been due to the demise of the power of nation states and the rise of hegemonic agencies which have a global governance agenda. Gamble's position was one which reflected upon four different futures for the new world order. These included a borderless world, rise of regional blocs, world domination by the American empire and new medievalism where there are complex networks, powers and jurisdictions shaping governance.

When examining borderless world issues, Gamble (2007, p. 22) contended that in a global environment, the distribution and functions of public power could be comprehended by looking at spatial dimensions factors. Such factors identify the boundaries between what is considered the public and private and the internal and external. Gamble described these factors as being controlled by what he termed 'new principles' and 'new doctrines' that are all part of the global social system of the new world order. It is important to understand how these principles

and doctrines relate to new regionalism and likewise the related forms of governance and nation state agenda issues. While acknowledging the hyperglobal forms in the debate, Gamble does make the point that forms of governance have been changing since the Cold War and that while regional blocs have become a predominant system for public governance, the role of the nation state is not to be entirely dismissed as being relevant in the governance process. For instance, while trading rules are usually multilateral and are strongly applied in regions, national agendas can strongly influence the regional agenda and process. Thinking of the Latin American context, De Lombaerde and Garay (2006) have argued that this represented the fundamental difference between old regionalism following the Cold War and the wave of new regionalism. By paying attention to the new world order as a system within which new regionalism sits, I am able to define my study and thus understand how new regionalism works within this context.

It is these world changes and shifts in policy paradigms which have profound effects on new regionalism agendas. In the Caribbean, the World Trade Organization (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) was one such world policy shift which impacted critically on education development. The WTO-GATS could be considered a rather prominent new regionalism thrust having its own principles and doctrines. As a multilateral agreement by a regional organization, GATS was perhaps, and still is, the most widely discussed neoliberal trade agreement topic concerning higher education in the Caribbean.

The GATS, which was introduced in 1995, as Beckles (2005, p.9) argued, 'ushered in a new era in global trading relations' during the Uruguay Round of WTO trade negotiations. In this paper, Beckles argued further that the GATS presented challenges for higher education in the region, in that, GATS recognized higher education 'among services targeted for global trade liberalization and is subject to the provisions of the Agreement which treat such services just as if they are commercial commodities' (2005, p.10). In this same discussion, Beckles' contention with GATS was that it imposed certain restrictions and conditions. For example, the transparency of services rendered and 'binding of national treatment' were conditions by which CARICOM countries were to establish higher education as a traded service on the global market with developed countries that were better prepared for the GATS. He also argued that in response to GATS, institutions of higher education like the University of the West Indies (UWI) were at risk in the global village and now had to fashion strategic responses for their survival. It is this issue, that is, the unpreparedness with which Caribbean small island developing states meet transnationally organized rules and conditions in a global order that can be of serious concern to Caribbean education policy.

On the other hand, while she agreed with Beckles' contention, Gift (2005) had a positive outlook of the GATS on higher education in the Caribbean. She saw GATS as facilitating diversity and enhancing innovativeness in the region's higher education market, which in turn supported

human capital and regional development. Gift had a strong view that the region should utilize quality assurance and accreditation to improve higher education whilst preparing for international trade of higher education as a service under the GATS.

The example of the GATS in higher education, to me, represented a convenient case for understanding the kinds of perils and prospects which transnational agreements pose to Caribbean society and development. In fact, these issues are to be considered in the discussions which follow about the emergence of CARICOM as a regional entity and its corresponding mechanisms for establishment of accreditation policy.

Governance and Governmental Relationships

I have already made the point that public governance could be seen as a set of new principles and doctrines operating within a borderless world system. It is not only important to understand these principles, doctrines and rules but also actors who are part of the governance and governmental relationships and how they are positioned within the world order system. Dale (2005, p. 124) suggested that by researching these global effects and phenomena we can come to greater understanding. He referred to the need to 'explore the relationships between different scales of governance'. In her doctoral dissertation, Engel (2008, p.2), identified scale as a means to 'define and interpret some of the characteristics, effects and impact of global processes'. She defined scale as a geographic

consideration where one examines changes occurring in governance across boundaries whether global, supranational, national, regional or local. Thus, when thinking of scales of governance, I think of the role and implications of the global, regional, national and local as multiple layers which need to be articulated in my study.

By elaborating on the scalar issues within the context of the global to the local, a clear distinction could be made between governance and governmental relationships. Government concerns itself with political interests that are within the control of the nation state, while changes to the practices which governments adopt within their nation states are considered governance forms (Rizvi and Lingard 2010, p. 118). The latter includes policy changes and may range from having global to local influences in the way they are developed and implemented. Any discussion on the issue of new regionalism should generate a discussion of scalar forms of governance and the implications for government. This is so because there are tendencies for both struggles and prospects in the regionalism and regionalization agendas and processes with the global, supranational and nation state policy making scenarios. Jayasuriya and Robertson (2010) highlighted the relevance of scalar forms of governance in higher education. They argued that within the Bologna process in Europe, higher education institutions were being subjected to regulatory governance through regional and national scales. Regulatory governance, as a new scalar within higher education, is therefore a critical issue when discussing new regionalism and regions. This is

especially so as higher education institutions and their programmes have shifted towards more borderless ways of operating within a global governance system. Accreditation systems can be examined within this multi-scalar governance setting as they too have different forms of governance at the institutional, country, region, supranational and global levels. Given the governance and governmental relationships which factor into higher education regulatory systems, I have chosen to raise these points as part of my discussion so that they could be understood in relation to the study of higher education accreditation policy processes in the CSME.

Regional Hegemony and Nation States

Gamble (2007, p.24) shared that a political response to globalization within the new world order involves the establishment of new institutional structures and new projects, many of them functioning within regional settings. These structures and projects are associated with the rise of new hegemonies that are either intrinsically motivated or external to the region. Hartmann (2010) described various theories of hegemonies. She referred to them as 'norms and ideas' (2010, p. 308) perpetuated by intellectuals or knowledge workers or as 'institutional dimensions of the hegemonic order' (*Ibid*, p. 309) within a capitalist framework. The capitalist role and functions of these hegemonies sometimes are in contention with that of regions and nation states where these regions are located. Thus, it must be emphasized that there are obvious tensions between what are regional hegemonies and nation states. Agreeing with this, Pryke (2009, p. 39) contended that despite what we may regard as the noble ideals and intentions of the nation

state, nationalism is transient and 'does not exit the stage but shifts to the side while other forces move towards the centre' in a globalization setting. Regional hegemonic influence therefore takes precedence over national agendas when these globalization forces are seriously at work.

Hartmann's discussion on hegemony was centred on the role and functions of UNESCO. In her discussion of the role of UNESCO's conventions on higher education qualifications within a global setting, Hartmann postulated that UNESCO's political bias, as a hegemonic supranational agency, is to engender mechanisms for strengthening skilled human mobility within the global labour community and that multilateral frameworks serve to promote this. This hegemonic influence has multi-scalar levels of governance which penetrates the regional policy-making culture and extends to the local settings within nation states. Knowing the multi-scalar governance influence, it is not surprising therefore that within the Caribbean regional hegemony of CARICOM, that the new regionalism agenda is being accentuated by an ideology of free movement of human capital. It stands to reason that, although not formally documented in the literature, quite perhaps the UNESCO hegemonic ideas have penetrated the CARICOM regional discourse on free movement and this has played out within nation state contexts. Notwithstanding UNESCO's potential hegemonic impact, several other supranational agencies operating within the region are influencing new regionalism.

The point was made by Hettne and Soderbaum (2006) that there could be many regionalisms within a region. Dale and Robertson (2002, p.13) made special reference to the rise of capitalism within regions. They further implied that capitalism impacts on the growth of new regional transnational organizations. Some of these serve to strengthen regionalism whilst weakening national entities, regulations and interests. Given these issues, it is anticipated that through this study several of these hegemonic influences would be documented, apart from the already known actors such as the CARICOM, the University of the West Indies and the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions. It is also hoped that the study would bring to some realization how these hegemonic agendas and agencies influence new regionalism as strategy and regionalization as processes.

Regional Movements: CARICOM, CSME and Caribbean Education

Above, I expounded on the ideology and benefits of new regionalism as one in which regionalization establishes institutions and policies which foster deeper integration and cooperation within regional hegemonic systems. In this regard, I wish to pursue a discussion on the establishment of CARICOM and the CSME within the context of Caribbean education, before I look more specifically at accreditation. I am of the view that by understanding the mission, purpose and construction of CARICOM, and more so CSME as the neoliberal, new regional entity, the analysis of regional accreditation policy can be better appreciated within the study.

CARICOM: The First Regionalism Movement

CARICOM has now been thirty six years in existence since its establishment by the Treaty of Chaguaramas in 1979. The Treaty proposed a number of ideals and mechanisms to insist on a regionalism mission and to develop regional competitiveness across the fifteen nation states that comprise CARICOM. Varying views about CARICOM during this period of existence have been summed up with some degree of precision by Kenneth Hall's (2001) review. In his edited compilation of publications on the CSME, 'The Caribbean Community: Beyond Survival', Hall believed that CARICOM has demonstrated relative maturity and stability as a regional organization, accounting for some success stories and with functionality and powers that enabled it to survive to the present time. Though he made this point, Hall also asserted an opposing perspective, saying that critics argued that there were enormous challenges working contrary to CARICOM's survival; such as the world economic crisis in 1970s, ideological divisions and internal member states' differences contending to divide and conquer and bring it to failure (Hall, 2001, p. xxi). McIntyre (Hall, 2001, p.3) shared a similar notion about CARICOM's integration and economic processes and policies in terms of how the organization confronts world economic changes. However, Demas (Hall, 2001, p. 85) proposed that 'the fundamental question is what we can do to avoid re-colonization', but at the same time he suggested that CARICOM can be seen as 'an essential element in promoting international competitiveness, greater self-reliance and West Indian identity' (Hall, 2001, p. 81), when confronting globalization.

Interestingly, in a similar vein, Dr. Kenny Anthony, former Prime Minister of St. Lucia, remembered the late Prime Minister of Jamaica Norman Manley's vision of CARICOM. He (Manley) regarded the vision of integration in the Caribbean as one which deepened and safeguarded Caribbean sovereignty, facilitated the full development of the Caribbean person and pursued a development strategy free from external domination (Anthony, 2003). In the same lecture, Anthony further reasoned that Manley's thinking was consistent with 'Caribbean liberation, creation of a more equitable and just society and a struggle against foreign exploitation of Caribbean resources that would insist on freedom from hemispheric political, economic and ideological hegemony' (*Ibid*, p.6). Intellectual thoughts of this kind, on the one hand contributed to analysis of CARICOM's position as a regional entity in the global arena, while on the other it projected possibilities and prospects about constructing a more relevant regional framework for Caribbean development.

CSME: The Second Regionalism Movement

Taking into account the possibilities, challenges and concerns of CARICOM that have been identified since 1973, the 10th Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Governments of the Caribbean Community revisited the mission, organization and scope of CARICOM. It then proposed the Grand Anse Declaration in 1989 in Grand Anse, Grenada (CARICOM, 1989) within the context of the CSME vision. Being a clear regionalization effort, a work programme was established to

advance the integration movement. There were three key features of the programme: 1) deepening the economic integration processes; 2) widening membership to include Suriname and Haiti; and 3) progressive insertion into the global trading and economic system. This was the beginning of another level of the progressive movement that was CARICOM. Further to this, on July 5th 2001, CARICOM proposed a Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas to revise the terms establishing CARICOM and the CSME in keeping with the Grand Anse Declaration. This treaty further proposed some ideals for the CSME as a new CARICOM entity. On January 1st 2008, six CARICOM territories, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, signed the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. By July 3rd 2008, member countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines) also signed on (CSME, 2007). It therefore goes without saying, that the proposed establishment of the CSME by virtue of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas was a move to liberalize markets within the Caribbean Community in the interest of globalization.

Former Prime Minister of Barbados, Owen Arthur, who has been hailed as a CSME visionary and the political leader who gave effect to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas within Barbados, had the following to say about the CSME:

Those of us who are in any way involved with charting the destiny of the people of the Caribbean must feel both chastened and challenged by the verdict of C.L.R. James in "Birth of a Nation": *'Nobody knows what the Caribbean population is capable of. Nobody has attempted to find out'*.....The creation of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy is an endeavour that will test to the full

the validity of James' judgment.....It is an initiative that will change, in very profound and fundamental ways, the structure of each of the economies involved, the trajectory of their development, their relationship with each other and with economies of the world..... The creation of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy will unquestionably be the most complex, the most ambitious and the most difficult enterprise ever contemplated in our region. And in a region which, as Philip Sherlock has observed, division is the heritage, contrast is the keynote, and competition is the dominant theme, economic integration requiring cooperation on the scale and depth as envisioned by the CSME will be substantially more difficult to attain than integration on the political plane.

(Government of Barbados, 2004)

Arthur's profound argument challenges some fundamental assumptions about the CSME. While he echoes the sentiments raised by Hall, McIntyre and Demas, he proposed that the CSME as an economic integration project, though arguably complex and difficult, may be worth endeavouring given the benefits to economies and the culture of regional politics and relationship building. The question as to the region's readiness for this integration is another matter for discussion. Harvey (2004) added another perspective to the debate on the region's readiness. He suggested that decision makers in CARICOM must recognize that for the CSME the paradigm has shifted from one of 'development' to 'sustainable development' and failure to own up to this philosophy will 'create crucial errors of omission in the deliberations, which can create future problems in our international relations' (Harvey, 2004, p. 3). Harvey reviewed varying international positions on sustainable development and broadly defined it as 'a dynamic that manifest qualitative and quantitative improvements in the quality of existence among inhabitants within the region, wherein the dynamics is such that it perpetuates itself positively both intra and inter-regionally' (*Ibid*, 2004, p.6). It

is this ideology of quality improvements in the context of the lives of CSME regional inhabitants that concerns this debate on the ideology of free movement of persons, which is proposed as a foundation for the CSME and for sustainable development.

The Grand Anse Declaration can be further analyzed within the context of the sustainable development debate. Two interesting features that are noted under the theme 'Development Issues' in the Grand Anse Declaration are worthy of discussion. In the first instance, human resource development and scientific and technological capacity are mentioned as primary regional concerns to support the advancement of the integration process. Annex I of the declaration singles out the University of the West Indies (UWI) as a leader and pioneer for scientific and technological knowledge and research and education, training and retraining in the regional integration processes. The Annex highlights the relationship between competitiveness of goods and services and tertiary education sectors in the region and that the management, personnel and systems capacity must be developed. Another interesting feature is the elimination of the requirements for work permits for CARICOM nationals who were in the visual and performing arts, media and sports disciplines, in addition to the already approved university graduates category. Following the establishment of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, member states agreed to establish mechanisms for certifying and ensuring the equivalency of degrees and for accrediting institutions. This was the beginning of the mechanism for free movement of persons within the region considering sustainable development imperatives.

Regarding free movement as the cornerstone of the CSME, Wickham et al. (2004) conducted a very labour-intensive study on 'Free Movement' in the Caribbean market. The study referred to free movement as the 'right' or 'ability' of citizens to engage in 'hassle free travel' for employment and living (p. 6). They regarded free movement as labour mobility and suggested that it is critical to the development of CARICOM in two ways (pp. 16-17). For one, it ensures that a regional pool of skills is fully exploited to benefit the region. This also allows movement of skilled labour to areas where the need is greatest within the region and for its economic development. Another advantage is that mobile labour ensures that the market is free from any existing bias in terms of high or low wages within regional pockets.

Leo-Rhynie (2007) was supportive of free movement for women in the CSME. She argued that free movement of women was necessary, particularly for those who lacked opportunities in their countries and wanted to move to 'greener pastures'. However, her concern was the resentment from locals that the CSME would bring to foreign nationals when they moved to other territories.

Wickham et al. also referred to the establishment of regional and national standards setting bodies, national accreditation agencies and the Caribbean Court of Justice as being three critical support institutions in the free movement enterprise (Wickham et al., 2004, p. 8). Likewise in their study, they highlighted some fundamental concerns about the ideals and mechanisms for free movement. They indicated that there is general 'slowness, unwillingness or inability of

member states to implement agreements concerning the CSME' (p. 9). Another related fact is the popular support for free movement by the Caribbean citizenry.

In her study comparing regional support for integration in the Caribbean among four CARICOM countries, Barrow-Giles (2002) reported 50% of the study's sample supporting 'intensified integration', while 14% were opposed. In a similar study in Barbados in 2004, a country which already complied with CARICOM free movement policies and which had a massive public education campaign through the Arthur administration, Wickham et al. (2004, p. 45) said that more than 70% agreed with free movement of persons, but only 50% agreed with having unskilled labour move freely. What was interesting about this study was that Barbados had been historically indifferent to association with Caribbean neighbours, but these results showed different views. Generally respondents in the survey showed some fears but were equally excited about the CSME. They were worried about the influx of migrants from other territories into socially and economically advantaged ones, and concerned about undue burdens being placed in their societies, a concern raised by Leo-Rhynie (2007). Similarly, they felt that the CSME free movement would allow them to move into territories to sell their goods and services (p. 50-51).

The question that one may wish to ask is 'how does the CSME enterprise, and certainly the proposals for free movement, fit within the backdrop of the region's postcolonial, neocolonial and globalization context?' To begin with, I wish to repeat Demas' contribution when he hypothesized that it was imperative to avoid re-colonization. The region's colonial legacy, which has since independence been

characterized by imperialist intentions from foreign hegemonic powers, needs to be carefully considered. Appadurai (1996) pointed to 'relations of disjuncture' where there can be lack of uniformity and convergence in decisions and actions taken by nations. There is obvious need for systematic coordination of efforts to embrace consensus in a democratic system of governance in the region. Appadurai also made reference to 'process geographies' where the language of 'regions' was a new vernacular in globalization discourse. The regionalism discourse presented new challenges in the wake of the CSME, regional versus national governance and globalization. With the wave of new regionalism, agreements are being proposed, negotiated and implemented to satisfy international market demands and the emerging world order. By looking at market liberalization imperatives, systems for accountability, corporatization, privatization and commercialization, as articulated by Rizvi and Lingard (2010), would have to occupy a central place in the regionalization movement. In short, given these issues, the CSME now has to consider effective policies, strategies and structures as responses to global politics.

Owen Arthur (Jamaica Information Service, 2009) called for mechanisms to be put in place to avoid the region becoming a permanent coalition of unequals, so as to ensure that benefits are shared by all, particularly where nationalism has been the order of the day and regionalist thinking can indeed be a problematic ideology for some to work through. He stressed that the CSME would not succeed in the global arena if it were to be viewed as weak and ineffectual. For the CSME to become a success story it must challenge neocolonial oppressive policies,

priorities and actions; neoliberal agendas and political domination interests coming from its international partners that may militate against the CSME vision. I propose that there must be mutuality and common bargaining respect for the CSME to be seen as being on equal keel with larger regional political entities and multinational development partners. It is my view that the region cannot be regarded as intellectually insufficient to discuss and negotiate policies in its own interest.

As the Grand Anse Declaration puts forward a proposal for a regional university facilitating regional intellectual capacity, I am of the opinion that partners and others from outside the region must accept the CSME as a knowledge economy. It is this kind of respect that will enable skilled labour movement of nationals from CSME member states to be effective, with a Caribbean accreditation and equivalency framework as its operational mechanism. Otherwise, the region will be seen as not having quality education and training nor possessing the talent - intellectual or skills- to advance it in the 21st century. By continuously relying on foreign labour the region would be steps behind, a feature of Caribbean education and labour prominently supported by neocolonial aspirations of the imperialistic metropolis. McGuire (2007, p.110) mentioned that metropolitan societies view developing countries, such as the Caribbean, as 'lacking a virile bourgeoisie capable of spearheading the tasks of political and economic development' and so the developing societies remain reliant on the metropole for intellectual capacity. Thus, quality education and training of CARICOM citizens becomes absolutely important if the CSME is to receive international respect. This was what former

Chairman of CARICOM, the Honourable Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago suggested (Jamaica Information Service, 2009). He called on member countries to build on achievements within a single economic space, to provide greater skills training and to modernize education policies. It is essentially this kind of perspective which informs my study which examines accreditation policies within the CSME. It is also hoped that this study will facilitate improved knowledge about policy production processes within a globalized networked regional community of state and non-state actors.

In the wake of Manning's call for modernization of education policies in the region, for the CSME to become effective, a review of past regional education reforms could prove helpful to the discussion. I believe these accounts would clearly establish the struggles and strides made by Caribbean education policy planners and implementers within an emerging new regionalism movement. This in turn would present a suitable background for the discussions on the processes of accreditation policy in the CSME.

The Caribbean Community and the Caribbean Education Reform Agenda

Reflecting on the purposes and ideals of CARICOM since 1973, Pollard (1997) recalls the multiplicity of legal instruments that were submitted to CARICOM for institutional developments. He says that since the institutional establishments there has been a mix of successes and depressing failures. Interestingly, noteworthy successes have been in the arena of education with institutions like the

Council of Legal Education and the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)¹. CXC is probably the most beneficial as a regional educational establishment. It offered its first Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) to students throughout the region in 1979. From then to now, CXC has introduced the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) to replace the Cambridge Advanced Level Examination, associate degrees in its partner community colleges in the region, the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence jointly with Ministries of Education and the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) as a technical and vocational qualification in upper secondary school. Given these advancements, the CXC is probably the one of the best regarded of CARICOM's regional mechanisms for education reforms. Despite its shortcomings, it is a testament to regionalism and reliance on regional intellectual capacity. CXC has supported regional movement of policies, people (teachers, examiners and graduates), ideas, curriculum information and materials over the years since establishment and according to Stromquist's (2002) perspective on globalization it probably demonstrates an excellent example of widespread flows of people and ideas to truly advantage the region.

Yet another prime example of developments in education can be seen with the UWI. Drayton (Hall, 2001) reminded us that the historical development of the UWI from the former University College of the West Indies (UCWI) was a move away from the ideals and aspirations of colonialism to build a cadre of West Indian leadership within the new Commonwealth. Although not a CARICOM

¹ www.cxc.org

entity, the UWI has since been on a path of education reform in alignment with the vision of the CSME. This issue was referred to earlier in relation to the goals of the Grand Anse Declaration. UWI aligns its teaching and research, through its campuses and educational centres across fifteen territories, to the goals of building vibrant relevant national democracies and an integrated Caribbean region. Moreover, the UWI is essentially regarded as the first port of call for offering advice and consultancy to CARICOM governments in furtherance of the CSME vision.

Although the past aims and endeavours of the institution have served the region well, its present strategies are more inclined to support regionality (UWI, 2007). Governments of the region have voiced their support for the renewed vision and mission of the UWI to cater to the human resource development and science and technology foci of the Grand Anse Declaration. UWI has been, therefore, charged with the responsibility to maintain regional integration efforts by teaching, research and public policy advice to CARICOM. But apart from the contribution the UWI has made, tertiary education sectors in the region have increased access, by means of a plethora of public and private institutions offering a mix of delivery modalities to regional citizens. Beckles (2005) argues convincingly that the region's response to tertiary education provision has been due to globalization, more specifically trade liberalization policies, within the Caribbean. He observed:

The most visible expression of global trade liberalization within the regional HE sector is the expansion of 'for profit' foreign universities, mostly registered as 'offshore' institutions that are transacting corporate style business within most communities. This development has attracted an international reputation for the Caribbean market which is seen as a lucrative frontier for HE exploration. At

the same time there is a sense of genuine concern for the future of UWI within this environment.

(Beckles, 2005, p. 1)

Beckles has raised an important concern, which implies that the UWI and other tertiary education institutions operating in the region now need to be all the more relevant. In fact, I earlier alluded to the fact that the UWI was considering spearheading strategic efforts to become more relevant, in its quest for survival in the GATS regime. Interpreting Beckles' views, I am of the opinion that these institutions need to understand the CSME; its mission, goals, developmental processes, needs and people to become those relevant institutions. Accordingly, regional and national education reform policies must insist that such institutions impress on regional sustainable development.

Within the past decade, the education reform policies within the region have been required to serve the CSME's interests. Taking cues from UNESCO, such as the 1990 World Declaration of Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien, and then again the 2000 Dakar EFA, Caribbean education reform strategies have since been refashioned to suit these goals- a manifestation of global effects on Caribbean education. Miller (1998, pp. 8-10) reported educational sector successes within the region pre-Jomtien, but highlighted the increase in neoliberalism within the education sectors post-Jomtien, such as the 'drive for wealth creation', rapid scientific and technological changes', changing demographics' and 'contemporary pedagogy in schools'. He indicated that since Jomtien, globalization and the global agendas of UNESCO have had two kinds of

educational system reforms, namely comprehensive education reform strategies and education project-driven interventions.

Many of these reforms are noted within CARICOM policy and programme agendas (CARICOM, 2004) and are financed by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB, 2009), the region's development financing agency. Some of these are related to ensuring universal access in secondary education, promoting gender equity in schools, supporting application of ICTs in primary and secondary schools, enhancing and managing teacher education, establishing distance learning systems, introducing national and regional accreditation systems, increasing participation in tertiary education and enhancing competency-based technical and vocational education and training. All of these systems, organizational or curricular reforms are focused on their relevance to Caribbean education systems and to the broader goals of making the federation integration processes most effective.

The preceding section made a general case for education policy analysis located within a neoliberal regional framework. This could also be argued in relation to higher education accreditation policies. Regarding these policies within the region, one can conduct research to determine similarities in the policy production and implementation processes across nation states, and certainly on those changes in the contexts which enable the policy processes. This is what this section of the thesis undertakes to do.

Regionalism and Accreditation in Higher Education

Higher Education Accreditation Principles and Practices

Before one can ideally appreciate the concept and context of higher education accreditation, defining quality assurance and accreditation is important. Reviewing world higher education quality assurance, Sanyal and Martin (2007, p. 5) have identified ten definitions of quality, but have regarded the most common to include 'fitness for purpose' (fulfilling mission and objectives) and 'fitness of purpose' (relevance) within the context of higher education institutions. They report that the International Standardization Organization has agreed that quality assurance is specifying worthwhile learning goals and enabling students to achieve them by interpreting the demands and expectations of students, governments, business, industry, professional institutions and society. Two kinds of quality assurance have been accepted: internal and external. The former is institutionally-driven and the latter is coordinated by a state, quasi-state or professional association body. Internal quality assurance can focus on the academic programmes or courses, a disciplinary area, a service or the entire institution as a system. External quality assurance normally evaluates the effectiveness of a programme or the institution. Woodhouse (1999) referred to programme evaluation as determining whether graduates are employable, whereas institutions may conduct an audit or self-assessment to determine the appropriateness of its processes or systems. According to Sanyal and Martin (2007, p. 6), 'accreditation is the most widely used method of external quality assurance'. In their paper, they have argued that accreditation systems which are

systems of higher education evaluation can be done at the national, regional or international levels. It is at the system stage where accreditation policies are analyzed and established by nation states or regions to govern higher education accreditation (evaluation or external quality assurance).

It is interesting that from a historical standpoint within the American context, Young et al. (1983, p. 2) refer to higher education accreditation being dated as far back as one century ago. The proposal to examine and establish common standards for admission of students in response to the growing demand for international students within the American university system seemed to have been the trigger for national academic standards in higher education. Furthermore, it was as a result of industrialism, capitalism and progressivism that the move from an agrarian to modern urban society within the American situation during this time, that seemingly spurred on the development of an 'Age of Reform' or 'Age of Standards'. For over forty years, these scenarios contributed to stages in the change of higher education standards towards incrementally better accreditation models. The United States, as was later the case in Australia (Australian University Quality Agency)² and the United Kingdom (British Accreditation Council³ and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education⁴), were among the first group of industrialized nations to establish institutional quality assurance and/or external accreditation models to govern their higher education systems. The literature cited these countries as having the highest tertiary enrolments,

² <http://www.auqa.edu.au/>

³ <http://www.the-bac.org/>

⁴ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/>

being the biggest higher education exporters and utilizing higher education as a major contributor to Gross Domestic Products (Van Vught et al., 2002). However, long before these, professional organizations and universities established programme accreditation models to set programme standards for professional disciplines such as teaching, law, engineering, medicine and accounting.

The Higher Education Regional Accreditation Model

If one agrees with Hartmann's (2010) logic of UNESCO's global higher education qualifications influence on global skilled labour mobility, then one can assume quite convincingly that UNESCO may have played a key role in influencing higher education accreditation in the Caribbean. My reference to my understanding of the origin of agenda in chapter 1 pinpoints to a hegemonic power play between CARICOM and other supranational agencies, possibly the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and European Union policy agendas. The urgent call was for the policy to facilitate free movement of capital, support development of the higher education sector and protect students' interests. However, this is yet to be substantiated by the study which undoubtedly would disclose whether or not this was the case.

In much the same way, one can argue that forces influencing the development of systems of higher education accreditation in the Caribbean region were similar to what transpired in the United States and the United Kingdom. Ashton (1996) made reference to this issue when he proposed a regional higher education

accreditation model for the Caribbean. From Ashton's reflections, the postcolonial regional response to globalization would have encouraged industrialism and progressivism as the means to modernity. This would have instilled an appreciation for standards and improvements within the territories, including in higher education. Higher education institutions developed academic standards. It can be argued that the notion of having common academic standards for higher education across the territories came about during the transition from the University College of the West Indies to a regional UWI, some sixty years ago. Reflecting on former UWI Vice-Chancellor Allister McIntyre's model of the UWI system, Roberts (1999, p. 148) referred to the UWI being the 'hub' with the other tertiary institutions operating in the region being 'spokes' and that external quality assurance by the University through its Tertiary Level Institutions Unit would set academic standards and enhance and audit the programmes so administered with external colleges. Interestingly, this same 'hub' and 'spokes' model defined by McIntyre represented the architecture of new regionalism in Latin America. In new regionalism, the 'hub' and 'spokes' were the central and peripheral territories within a region.

To establish a regional university, academic standards had to be replicated (though some may refer to it as harmonized) across all three campuses located in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago and, gradually other places where teaching centres were being established. By so doing, benchmarking, as a measure for standardization, was being slowly introduced across the region. Carrington (2001, p. 11) spoke to this when he mentioned UWI, being a 'transplant of British

universities', had always attempted to 'maintain parity of rating with universities of similar tradition in the Commonwealth'. It is this benchmarking or rating issue that has been a useful basis for comparing the performance of universities and similar institutions of higher education across the region. In a similar fashion, the establishment of the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) was meant to provide a comparative mechanism for measuring the award of degrees from institutions in the higher education system in Jamaica. Section (5) (a) of the University Council of Jamaica Act of 1987⁵ makes mention of the context for standardization when it gives power to the Council to 'grant and confer degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards and distinctions to and on persons who have pursued courses of study approved by the Council at associated institutions'. Some have hitherto described the UCJ as the first accreditation body in the Anglophone Caribbean region. In her evaluation report on accreditation systems in the Caribbean, Roberts (2003) hinted at Trinidad and Tobago as well having an early accreditation body with more or less limited national quality assurance models existing at the Universities of Guyana and Belize. In the same report, Roberts also made a valid point that evaluation and quality assurance have pre-dated formal accreditation in the region.

Another contributing factor to the establishment of a culture of quality in higher education was the process for 'foreign' qualifications recognition and the equivalency of such qualifications. Alleyne (2003) reported that the first national attempt to establish a qualification recognition system dated back to 1970 in

⁵ Act No. 23 of 1987 for Establishment of the University Council of Jamaica

Trinidad and Tobago, when the then Cabinet appointed a Committee to report on the recognition of foreign qualifications offered to its citizens while they were studying abroad. Interestingly, it was one year later that the Committee report recommended the establishment of a National Commission on Accrediting. What was enlightening from Alleyne's account was that the Cabinet instructed the Attorney General to prepare legal instruments for establishing the body but this never materialized. While this was not accomplished, in 1979 a team referred to as the Committee to Assess University Degrees (then renamed as the Committee on the Recognition of Degrees or CORD) was established to make recommendations for the evaluation of foreign qualifications held by returning civil servants. This too was seen as an evaluation model for accreditation in the region. Roberts (2003) identified yet another organization similar to CORD in the region in the establishment of the Guyana National Equivalency Board (GNEB) in 1984. Beyond Trinidad's and Guyana's experience, the development of guidelines and procedures for equivalency of qualifications and programme articulation in the region was proposed by Revierre et al. (2000). This document was produced in response to a consultancy for a European Union funded project on behalf of CARICOM. These guidelines were to be tabled at CARICOM Ministers of Education Council meetings and to inform the establishment of a regional accreditation system.

It is these two scenarios that comprise the academic evaluation culture (also called academic quality culture) among tertiary/higher education institutions in the region. One scenario looks at institutional and programme quality from the

point of view of establishing standards and reviewing academic practices in relation to those standards. The other examines the worth and currency of qualifications from overseas higher education institutions, whether they are delivered within the country of origin or trans-nationally from these countries to the Caribbean. The model of institutional accreditation, largely developed and applied in the United States context, is of main concern to the region. This is what Ashton (1996) reported in his proposal for the regional higher education accreditation system. The system would be comprised of two components. On the one hand, it would establish institutional legitimacy by a process of registration. On the other instance, it would support the assurance of quality to stakeholders of the institution through institutional accreditation. However, whereas this was the preferred case, the practice in Jamaica and St. Kitts and Nevis at the time was for institutional registration and accreditation respectively, and Jamaica and to a lesser extent Trinidad and Tobago supported programme accreditation only. Other than in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, where there was recognition of foreign qualifications by CORD and GNEB, no other territory engaged in such activities. Perhaps, it was these varied practices at the national level that may have contributed to the need for a regional mechanism to coordinate these disparate national systems.

The point has been made that differing situations may have influenced the establishment of accreditation systems in the region. The current trends suggest that while institutions may have called for external regulation by accreditation agencies other political, social and economic factors have come to bear on such

decisions. About the time CARICOM was giving serious consideration to the establishment of a regional accreditation system, the World Bank produced a report on *Constructing Knowledge Societies* painting a grim picture of tertiary education in developing countries. The report stated:

Although there are few exceptions, the quality and relevance of research, teaching and learning have tended to decline in public tertiary education institutions in developing countries. Many universities operate with overcrowded and deteriorating physical facilities, limited and obsolete library resources, insufficient equipment and instructional materials, outdated curricula, unqualified teaching staff, poorly prepared secondary school students, and an absence of academic rigor and systematic evaluation of performance. Similar conditions can be found in the many of the new private universities and other tertiary education institutions that have emerged in many countries, especially those that lack a formal system for licensing or accrediting new institutions.

(World Bank, 2002, p. 58)

Emergence of Regional and National Higher Education Accreditation Policy

The report seemed to have been unfair in its analysis of the Caribbean tertiary education contexts. In the report, the World Bank categorized tertiary education sectors in the Caribbean as having poor quality. Thus, there have been other extra-regional factors that would have impacted the political decision to establish a Caribbean regional accreditation system. Since the World Bank report in 2002, accreditation policy has been a rapidly growing policy trend (Ali, 2006). In 2002, CARICOM proposed a draft Bill for establishment of national accreditation bodies (CARICOM, 2002). This draft bill was to be used as a reference for Caribbean governments to develop and establish their own national legislations for accreditation in accordance with the model outlined by Ashton. Meanwhile,

another draft bill was being developed and proposed for establishment of a regional authority for overseeing the regional accreditation system (CARICOM, 2008). The fundamental distinction between the national and regional agencies had to do with powers and scope of authority. The regional agency was required to develop guidelines and good practices to assist national bodies and to engage them in regional accreditation initiatives through collaboration. According to the national accreditation agency model, these bodies were to have jurisdiction over their territories to register and accredit institutions and their programmes, to recognize qualifications for the purposes of CSME free movement and to determine equivalency of awards and qualifications. By 2004, only Barbados, Belize, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago have engaged in government-led national discourses on the draft national bills to establish legislation through the Parliaments, while all except Belize actually established their agencies in that same year.

The accreditation policies that are established by virtue of legislations appear to have four scalar levels of policy influence involving stakeholders. These are 1) institutional; 2) national; 3) regional and 4) international. The institutional influence comes from the social commitment of tertiary education institutions to maintain quality to satisfy their stakeholders. The case of the UWI is a good example of this (UWI, 2007). The national influence comes from previously established accreditation-type organizations in some territories. By 2002, already Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago had some level of registration and/or accreditation being done within their countries and these were

viewed as relative successes and models for accreditation reform. Also, some national governments (Government of Trinidad and Tobago, 2005) had insisted on quality assurance and accreditation to respond to the challenges for human development in the wake of becoming first world countries; the influx of offshore universities; the increase in the establishment of private institutions; the imposition of the GATS on higher education; or the rising tertiary education access through student financing measures by the state. The regional influence seemed to be the facilitation of free movement of persons throughout the emergent CSME. This was already discussed in relation to the Grand Anse Declaration. Another matter of regional influence came from the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI) who supported the move towards the system. Between 1990 and 2002, ACTI hosted public education drives, workshops, conferences, consultations and consultancies to report on the need and issues for the regional system (Roberts, 2003). Furthermore, CARICOM had insisted on developing a policy framework for enhancement of the quality of tertiary education sectors in member states. Additionally, the establishment in 2004 of the Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE⁶), as the regional professional body of quality assurance and accreditation personnel, has supported the advancement of this policy framework. International policy influence sought to provide the region with development plans and ideas. These policies supported the territories in their aspirations to become industrialized nations. The 2002 World Bank report on *Constructing*

⁶ www.canqate.org

Knowledge Societies, the 2003 First UNESCO Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications⁷ and the lobbying of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAHEE⁸) through members' forums have all provided the policy stimulus for accreditation policy development in the region.

Apart from a pre-policy establishment study done by Roberts (2003) on behalf of UNESCO, the literature showed that no attempt has been made to perform any formal post-implementation analysis of accreditation policies in the region. However, both Roberts (2003) and Alleyne (2003) identified Ethley London as the consultant who undertook an analysis of accreditation systems in the region on behalf of CARICOM. In 1999, London consulted with Guyana, Barbados and Suriname and later in 2003 with Trinidad and Tobago. Except for the case of Trinidad and Tobago, London reported critical gaps in the capacity to design and implement the accreditation system within the countries. Her report showed that CARICOM countries needed to fashion a national quality assurance system in which accreditation was the means for governing and evaluating the effectiveness of the national system. By referring to London's report, Roberts' analysis suggested that a regional and national legislative framework was needed to support the establishment, governance and implementation of the national quality assurance system. Roberts said that in the same year, Marie Levens conducted a similar study, but within the OECS territories, highlighting similar issues as

⁷ <http://www.unesco.org/en/higher-education/themes/quality-assurance-and-recognition/>

⁸ www.inqahe.org

documented in London's report. These concerns underscore the important role that policy analysis plays. It also demonstrates that, if done properly, policy analysis will facilitate the contextualization of the policy to suit the local and regional educational settings. In this regard, I intended to analyze the regional accreditation policies to appreciate the extent to which policy contextualization was performed at the national level in response to globalization factors.

Given the criticality of the higher education accreditation policies in terms of facilitating the integration and harmonization of the CSME, its importance to free labour movement, the role it plays in development of the nations, its absolute relevance to strengthening the capacity of the tertiary sectors and the urgency for accountability and stakeholder assurance, there is need for the 'analysis of the policy' as much as there is need for 'analysis for policy' (Taylor et al., 1997, p. 36). Concerning the 'analysis of policy' this may be useful to determine the sufficiency and efficiency of the accreditation policy within the territories where they have been established. It may also represent not just a look at the laws themselves, but to the institutional capacities of the accreditation agencies that are to implement them. In terms of the 'analysis for policy', lessons learnt from the established laws and agencies, whether they have worked favourably or not, may prove useful to policy analysts, policy researchers and policy makers in territories where such laws have not been created for drafting future legislation to govern their accreditation systems. These fundamental issues take me back to the main research question posed: 'How do Higher Education Accreditation Policy Processes Compare Among the Emerging CSME Territories?' Rather than

perform an analysis for policy formulation at this stage, the research focused on the analysis of the policy looking at all stages in the policy cycle. It raised questions about how policy production and analysis for policy were done in the first case; their theoretical frame; their validity and viability as a process; and more importantly the impact they have on the region. This established the basis for the debate about the regional versus national processes of education policy-making and implementation and what role globalization plays in these processes. Thus, the study attempted to establish the broad parameters for investigating globalization phenomena and the education policy-making processes of CARICOM within the emerging CSME and the role and capacity of the national policy-making and implementation machinery with respect to the higher education accreditation policy.

Summary and Conclusion

The chapter has identified new regionalism and regionalization as being propelled by neoliberal market forces to develop the CSME and to establish multilateral agreements to strategically steer Caribbean education policies. New regionalism has been established in different movements. The final movement, the CSME, was meant to be the agency for functional cooperation that promoted deeper integration and harmonization. The Grand Anse declaration of 1989 was designed to facilitate free movement of persons as a goal of the CSME. This was being implemented by means of a regional higher education accreditation framework

that would be established by functional cooperation agreements. However, it was not until 2008 that the CSME became operational and by which time the regional higher education accreditation mechanism was in effect.

As early as 1996, higher education accreditation policy was being negotiated within the Caribbean region by means of research and advocacy involving key policy actors such as the University of the West Indies and the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions. The accreditation policy framework was then developed by CARICOM to support national higher education accreditation policy agendas through a draft legislative model. This model, which was the functional cooperation multilateral agreement for CARICOM territories, formed the main background policy instrument for study in the research.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Methods

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methodological approach and methods of data collection and analysis. In my methodology, justification was made for application of an interpretive, critical policy methodology which responded to the research question: *How do Higher Education Accreditation Policy Processes Compare Among Emerging CSME Territories?* The research started by considering my own personal narrative as foundation evidence for the research, and later used theoretical thematic analysis of the data to explore how policy has been defined, researched and negotiated.

Data collection and analysis methods are also outlined in the chapter. Considerations are given to the limitations and strengths of the approaches outlined, as well as rigour and ethical issues arising out of the research. Finally, in the chapter I suggested the need for applying a critical approach in researching education policy in the Caribbean and for analysis of education policy as a whole.

The Reflexive Researcher and Accreditation Policy Analysis

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) contended that while both quantitative and qualitative methods may be applicable in researching the relations between power and processes of policy, reflexivity should be stressed. They argued that there is 'need

to achieve an appropriate fit between research problem and methods adapted, together with an historically informed reflexivity' (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). Therefore, a discussion of the value of reflexivity is important, starting with what it means and then looking at its implications in the research I have conducted.

Reflexivity and Doing Education Policy Research

As a reflexive researcher, I am aware that my values, beliefs, prejudices and stance influence my research process. This awareness should be accounted for as I plan and design the research I seek to undertake (Nightingale and Cromby, 1999; Willig, 2001; Sikes and Goodson, 2003). It also means being critical of the relationship between experience and understanding which I referred to in chapter 1. I have suggested that this study is an account of how I have come to understand accreditation policy. Treating the familiar as strange is therefore central to this process of reflexivity, and it is within this context that the researcher takes into account his/her positionality, that is, the valued judgments of the world within which the researcher lives from his/her and others' lived experiences.

According to Willig (2001), when thinking of the connection between one's positionality and the research, there is need to acknowledge both personal and epistemological reflexivity. In personal reflexivity, the researcher tries to understand and confront his/her beliefs and values, while in epistemological reflexivity he/she then acknowledges his/her take-for-granted assumptions about the research and researched, and so challenges them. Lewis (2003) pointed to the

value of self-examination as an exploratory tool, which contributes to personal and social change. By being personally and epistemologically reflexive in research, one can develop oneself as a researcher and help inform change.

Acknowledging one's epistemology in thinking about and doing research is critical. Kelly (2006) regarded epistemology as the origins, scope, nature and limitations of knowledge, and that it is central to any discussion about research methodology. When designing an education policy research methodology, it is useful to take into account the researcher's epistemological position as one begins and pursues the research. This requires the researcher to come to terms with the purposes of policy research and, to recognize that as the researcher he/she brings his/her context to the research and, therefore, the research cannot be value free or a pure view of the social circumstances by any means. In this regard, it was Rawolle and Lingard (2008, p.729) who referred to Pierre Bourdieu's call for a rejection of the positivist's dream of an epistemological 'state of perfect innocence', as relevant in researching education policy.

When constructing an ethical and trustworthy methodology, the researcher has to be honest about his/her values in his/her own reflexivity. One cannot also ignore the strong relationship between reflexivity and one's values. Greenbank (2003) reported that Rokeach identified 'instrumental' and 'terminal' values which relate to the researcher. Instrumental values are the preferred modes of conduct. Here the researcher may opt to become selective about which methodology he/she adopts because of his/her degree of comfort with the process. Instrumental research may be what the researcher feels is the appropriate thing to

do (the moral values) or the most effective way of going about the research (competency values). In terms of the terminal values, the researcher may again select the research methodology that is suitable for his/her accomplishments or achievements (personal values) or how he/she wants society to operate (social values). It is impossible for a researcher not to influence the research participants if he/she comes into meaningful contact with them. Thus, the values of the researcher can be transmitted to the research participants and others who come into contact with the research. Sikes and Goodson (2003, p. 33) suggested that important values can be passed on to others by means of 'reminiscences or collective memory'. In fact, some values may be so impressionable that they can significantly change the lives of the participants, let alone the researcher. According to Sikes and Goodson (2003, pp. 34-35):

Research cannot be disembodied. It is impossible to take the researcher out of any type of research or of any stage of the research process. The person of the researcher is always there, whether they can be cast as 'villain', contaminating research design, data collection, analysis and reporting or 'hero', whose intimate and influential involvement is an essential and fundamental constituent of the research; or as something in between. It is seen to us that the physical existence and presence of the living, perceiving, experiencing person who is the researcher is a constant reminder of the falseness of the positivist/quantitative, objective/subjective research dichotomy.

Thus, regardless of the kind of values employed in the research methodology, these values do influence the research. It is this reflexivity which I use to account for my experiences with accreditation policy.

Personal Reflections of Policy

There were several experiences during my primary and secondary education which I can remember were life changing and shaped my beliefs and values. For one, I developed a relatively firm appreciation for democracy and egalitarianism in policy particularly with respect to the need for effective management in religious, gender and race relations. This came largely from my multicultural disposition influenced by my heritage and schooling experiences. I was born a multi-racial male who experienced Indo-, Afro- and Hispanic cultural beliefs and traditions within the communities in which I resided and schools I attended. I also found myself living in a politically polarized, gendered, multi-cultural postcolonial Caribbean society which had a major impact on my ontological position. Additionally, at an early stage of my education, I found myself asking questions about fairness in the national education system. In fact, having completed primary schooling and, being disadvantaged by the system, I found myself asking more questions at secondary school that related to making comparisons with other education systems in the region. It was not until I began preparing for higher education that I became preoccupied with education systems in developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States. These value systems were central pillars in my personal development.

Secondly, my educational and employment experiences permitted me to fully embrace formal, informal and non-formal education. My personal encounter with schooling left some critical gaps in my knowledge, skills and attitudes and so my view of education was always one which formally recognized those non-school

experiences. I then began to read and adopt philosophical, sociological and educational ideas on self-directed learning, vocational education and training, prior learning and recognition and experiential education as part of my educational practice. These experiences of education inculcated a deep vision and passion for unconventional education and working towards parity of esteem for their formal recognition with conventional academics. It is understandable, therefore, that I would see my ideology of education as focusing on fairness, equity, participation and nationalism within a federal context and systems for recognition of educational performance. It was in the latter case where I began to research higher education systems. My professional involvements as university tutor, college placement adviser, study abroad coordinator, curriculum developer and management training facilitator provided an adequate orientation to quality assurance and accreditation in academic and vocational education settings. Notwithstanding my research on quality higher and vocational education systems, I did not get a firm grasp of accreditation policy until I got involved in relatively recent debates about national accreditation.

Personal Reflections of Accreditation Policy Experience

I was involved in discussions about accreditation policy at six levels. In the first instance, I worked in two private educational enterprises and with two public educational agencies operating throughout several territories of the Caribbean region. These posts brought with them the responsibility for establishing

operational and educational systems and processes, implementing them and monitoring and evaluating organizational and educational performance. Accordingly, these experiences sharpened my critical thinking, analytical and reporting abilities, whilst deepening my understanding of the role and importance of quality assurance in educational establishments. Although my knowledge of accreditation systems was not well developed at this stage in my career, the experiences provided me with an awareness of accreditation and how quality related to it. My second experience with accreditation policy was really the turning point for my career and academic interests in accreditation. Having worked with distinction in a public agency, I was asked by the Minister with responsibility for tertiary education in Trinidad and Tobago to be one of government's representatives on a national task force for establishing the country's national accreditation system. This activity prepared me adequately with the knowledge on accreditation systems I was lacking at the time as I had to interface with the policy from the legal, governmental, corporate and project management levels. It was here that my involvement led me to question the approaches being used to arrive at the policy and mechanisms to be employed in establishment of the accreditation agency. I became very concerned with questions of: How did we arrive at the philosophy of accreditation? Whose ideology were we applying? How were we applying these ideologies? Is the approach we are using to formulate the policy appropriate? At the time, I did not realize that my professional engagement at the national level was going to require my participation at the level of the Caribbean region.

My third experience was, being the only public employee with an accreditation policy portfolio in Trinidad and Tobago, when I had the distinctive pleasure of sitting in CARICOM Council of Human and Social Development- Education meetings over a three-year period to discuss accreditation policy proposals and issues with Ministerial and technocratic counterparts across the CARICOM region. The fourth experience came from involvement on the board of directors of the national accreditation agency in Trinidad and Tobago. Having an instrumental role in establishing the national agency in Trinidad and Tobago, I was asked to represent the Ministry with responsibility for tertiary education on the board. It was here I observed the workings of an accreditation agency and its relationship to accreditation policy implementation. My fifth experience occurred through involvement at the Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education, a regional professional non-profit organization, as first an ordinary member of the organization and then a member of the Board of Management for one term. My sixth encounter was serving as a temporary higher education consultant with focus on accreditation for the UNESCO Institute for Higher Education for Latin America and the Caribbean. In the latter two experiences I evaluated accreditation policy and systems within the Latin America and Caribbean region. They brought me to a deeper level of understanding of accreditation policy within the immediate Caribbean region and in other neighbouring regions. It is the range of experience which may have influenced the banking of my knowledge throughout time and which would have enabled me to consider constructing meaningful research into accreditation policy.

My Knowledge of Accreditation Policy Process

Without any prior training in public policy, my knowledge of policy processes was one which embraced the popular view that governments were to manage public assets by paying close attention to values of equity, participation and nation building. Thus, I anticipated that accreditation policy processes would see governments establishing these values and that they would encourage development of a higher education sector espousing these same values and philosophical principles. My intimate involvement with accreditation policy processes made me frequently question whether or not the mechanisms applied in formulating the national accreditation policies were fostering values for quality higher education systems. Before I embarked on the thesis research I had a strong impression that accreditation policy processes were essentially negotiated consultation at technical, bureaucratic and governmental (including Parliamentary) levels without justified empirical research. Thus, my understanding was that the accreditation policy process was along the lines of political definition of the policy and then negotiation with different stakeholders through technical meetings and workshops. I did not regard the third phase in the proposed policy analysis cycle model that is, researching policy, as being critically employed in the process.

Methodology and Research Design

This study is a critical policy analysis of processes involved in higher education accreditation policy in the Anglophone Caribbean. Gale (2001, p. 379) articulates that the critical features in policy analysis have been associated with applying methods of reflexivity and self-appraisal. In much the same way, Ball (1990) and Ozga (2000) have maintained the position that what is needed to inform critical policy analysis is research rather than mere commentaries. They have both shared the idea that by understanding the political, historical and sociological nature of policy one is able to make sense of the policy production processes. Likewise, Ball (2008) and Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have contended that critical policy analysis in education is efficacious within policy studies, particularly when examining the issue within a globalized setting. Thus, by adopting a critical policy methodology in my study I should be able to have a better appreciation of the policy processes employed within the Anglophone Caribbean as they relate to issues of accreditation.

By drawing upon Gale's and others' works, Liasidou (2009) showed how historiographical and sociological research can be useful in critical policy analysis of special education policy making. Documentary evidence was conveniently located within this kind of research in that it provided a historical record of the sociological processes which defined the research issue. By analyzing the text as historical record and its related discourses Liasidou was able to make meaningful claims about the policy issue. Liasidou discussed the value of prevalent discourses in policy analysis by saying:

The analysis of the text and its dominant discourses, primarily presupposes the identification of recurrent patterns that constitute the prevalent discourses. The identification of patterns enables the researcher to justify her claims regarding the discursive constitution of the text, that is the presumed dominant discourses that emanate from the text.

(Liasidou, 2009, p. 110)

By using the documentary text and interviews as an information resource in critical policy analysis, I was able to identify recurrent patterns from within the text and interviews that would lead to justified positions and opinions. Having taken account of perspectives by Ball (1990), Ozga (2000), Gale (2001), Liasidou (2009) and Rizvi and Lingard (2010), for instance, I developed my research design for a critical policy analysis study which examined national higher education accreditation policy processes operating within a regional and globalization policy environment.

In this context, I have chosen a critical policy research design which comprises three key stages in the policy research process. In all stages, my focus was on addressing the key and subsidiary questions I asked. Any interviews performed were framed to collect information related to these research questions. To begin with, I obtained evidence from the interview questions I posed and also from documents examined. I then analyzed the data obtained and organized it in a way to respond to the subsidiary questions I have asked. Finally, I reported the main trends and findings which would be pertinent to understanding and responding to the key research questions I have asked in the study.

My research aspires to capture evidence from documentation and the voices of elites on how and why higher education accreditation policies within the Anglophone Caribbean region have been produced and implemented. I collected various policy reports, technical documents and other relevant materials that were useful for this exercise and it was from these sources that the study's data was obtained. Likewise, I selected participants who were interviewed and their 'conversations with a purpose' were transcribed and also used as data. The interview questions asked came from the policy cycle model I developed which linked the Hogwood and Gunn (1984) policy cycle with Ozga's (2000) contextual considerations about doing research for education policy. I have already shown this in chapter 1 and in Figure 3.1. The Hogwood/Gunn/Ozga policy cycle model analysis I used was selected as a structured process approach for education policy analysis as opposed to the more classical contextual approach by Ball (1994), for instance.

Hogwood and Gunn (1984) have articulated a ten stage rational policy analysis model which helps understand and determine policy production and implementation processes. Each stage is distinct and discrete from the next and when separately analyzed yields an understanding of a critical aspect or component of how the policy is defined and negotiated in the policy process. Ozga's (2000) considerations about research justify how and why research is a critical and integral activity for policy development. Ozga speaks to the role and activities of policy actors, research processes and research outcomes. When linked, Hogwood/Gunn's and Ozga's

theoretical frames show the relationship in the processes of defining, researching and negotiating policy. Research is however the common strand to the ten policy production stages which were described by Hogwood and Gunn (1994). In other words, research is the means to provide empirical data on how policies are defined and negotiated, while it was also a main component of the overall policy process. Thus, for this study the key interview questions were centred on how the policies were defined, researched and negotiated during policy production. Defining, researching and negotiating accreditation policy represented the central foundational themes from which data would be collected and analyzed. Thus, the data collection process involved document and interview data and represented the first stage in my research design.

For the second stage in the research design, the data had to be analyzed. Data analysis was done by referring to the central foundational themes of defining, researching and negotiating policy in the production processes, using data sets as 'evidence' and continuously matching them by a process of data and theme classification. To do this, theoretical thematic analysis was employed because it enabled me to apply initial themes (i.e. defining, researching and negotiating policy) from the policy cycle model to the data and so create iterations of themes to respond to subsidiary research questions.

In the third stage the themes created from the analysis were discussed in relation to the subsidiary and key researched questions. The objective was to arrive at some

generalizations about the policy processes and to look more specifically at issues such as globalization mechanisms which have been proposed by Dale (1999). The emergent themes were compared and matched to Dale's typology of external effects on national policy production. This was done by linking the theme phrases and words to the specific characteristics which defined each of seven policy mechanisms (borrowing, learning, harmonization, standardization, dissemination, imposition, installing interdependence) proposed by Dale.

I believe, that by having conceptualized the study design this way, I was able to systematically collect evidence, analyze data elements and themes and report my overall findings to support any assertions or claims I have made whether by my experience, interviews or from the literature I have cited.

Sources of Data

The sources of data for the study included forty four documents and eight transcribed interviews. The documents included seven accreditation legislation texts, eight policy reports from regional and national sources, six unpublished and eleven published position papers and technical reports, six websites of accreditation agencies and networks and seven personal files including doctoral assignments and notes. The interviews of the eight participants were transcribed, vetted and approved by the participants and accordingly used in the study.

Selection of Policy Samples

It is important to define what was meant by higher education. Taking up from Alleyne's account (2003), higher education and tertiary education were frequently used inter-changeably in the policies to mean any formal programme of study within an institution which follows the successful completion of secondary schooling and which prepared citizens for active engagement in the workforce or advanced study. The main policy document examined was the draft CARICOM legislation for national higher education accreditation bodies which was formulated by the CARICOM Secretariat in 2002. There was no other key reference document to be used for all territories, as this was the official legislative draft that was to be used as a policy document by all member states. In chapter 1, I made the point that of the territories which had passed the legislation through their Parliamentary systems between 2002 and 2004, only Barbados, Belize, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago had completed this. Jamaica had not, but was the only country with a full-fledged functional accreditation agency that was recognized as a model for others. Of these countries, only Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago had established accreditation agencies to implement the legislation and, therefore, their policies were considered. Thus, the processes between the draft CARICOM model legislation and the five countries referred to, that is, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago were analyzed and more specifically Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago policies were considered for more detailed analysis using Dale's typology of

mechanisms. There were several other considerations made when deciding on the latter three country policy samples chosen. I will make reference to them.

In the case of Barbados, it was one of the first countries in the Eastern Caribbean to have identified the need for a national accreditation system which would be established by the legislation. The country did not have an accreditation agency, except for an equivalent entity to monitor quality in technical and vocational training. The country's higher/tertiary education sector was dominated by a few public institutions offering an array of undergraduate to graduate programmes and qualifications with some smaller private technical and vocational institutions thriving. Barbados was also a key proposer of the CSME in that between 2000 and 2004, its Prime Minister at the time insisted on Barbados becoming the first country to implement the CSME. Barbados also was one of the few highly expatriated territories with a large immigrant labourforce from other neighbouring CARICOM territories. Its relatively small but growing population was seen as being under some threat to the movement of persons as a result of the CSME.

Unlike Barbados, Guyana did not openly espouse an urgent need for a national accreditation system. At the time, the Guyana National Equivalency Board was somewhat in operation but only assessed some qualifications of foreign nationals coming to Guyana. The country's higher education sector was marked by one main public institution, the University of Guyana, with a plethora

of vocational and degree providers operating without scrutiny. The country's national concern was to engage mechanisms for nationals of Guyana to acquire recognized certifications since a large population of Guyanese were emigrating to other CARICOM territories and beyond.

In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, the political directorate had established a national development plan or Vision 2020. One of the key pillars of this plan was the creation of 'Innovative People' which would require a competitive economy buttressed by a strong national tertiary education system. Accreditation was instrumental to the development philosophy, in that, it was identified as the means for strengthening the quality of the higher education institutions, their programmes and the recognition of the awards which graduates would receive. Trinidad and Tobago had an under-performing quasi-accreditation agency and so the legislation was a means to develop the country's capacity to improve the tertiary education sector. While the country supported the CSME, the need for having an accreditation policy and system was not necessarily seen as a benefit for the CSME but rather nation-building.

Selection of Participants, Involvement in Interviews and Their

Interview Locations

Having been involved in accreditation policy analysis within the Caribbean, I was somewhat familiar with all the participants but to varying degrees. In fact, there was no difficulty for me to make contact as I had ready access to each

participant's electronic mail, telephone and address information long before the commencement of the study. I was very familiar with each of the participant's career history and experiences with the policy, though more so for some than others. This came from my frequent contact and communication with them in policy discussions through work-related meetings, seminars and conferences. The community of accreditation policy professionals in the Caribbean was a fairly small one, so it was not impossible for these persons to be familiar with one another. I was able to select the participants for the study by negotiating directly with them. It must be stated that there was no other reason for selection other than the participant's experience with the policy under investigation, either within their countries or the region. Though they may have influenced their positions and experiences, factors such as age, gender, national origin and ethnicity were not issues that were considered. These participants are shown in Figure 3.10. I will now justify why I opted to select these participants.

Participant No. 3 was very essential to the study. This participant was selected because of being named in CARICOM reports as the main consultant who was commissioned by the CARICOM Secretariat to undertake research/consultations into drafting a national accreditation system report for each territory. A letter of invitation was sent to this participant directly and confirmation received to be involved. There was no doubt that this participant was best placed to speak generally to all the policy research issues involved the policy production process.

The participant from the CARICOM Secretariat (participant No. 4) became involved in the study through a request letter issued to the Head of the Directorate of Human and Social Development. The response from the Secretariat confirmed and nominated Participant No. 4.

The participants from the Barbados (participant No. 2), Guyana (participant No. 5) and Trinidad and Tobago (participant No. 1) were invited based on two conditions. Firstly, they were all known to the regional accreditation community as the senior bureaucrats from accreditation agencies and were therefore charged with the responsibility of implementing the accreditation policy in their respective countries. Secondly, each of them would have had a fairly rich career history of being involved as advocates, researchers, writers and/or participants in the accreditation policy process in their countries. Each participant was invited to participate or nominate someone from the agency, but each opted by response to be directly involved. When interviewed, participant No. 3, who was the main researcher commissioned by CARICOM, and participant No. 4 from the CARICOM Secretariat also agreed that participants 1, 2, and 5 were key individuals who would be ideal participants in the study.

The participant from the Tertiary Level Institutions Unit (participant No. 7) which is now External Relations and Inter-Institutional Cooperation Division) of the University of the West Indies, Open Campus was identified based on the previous work of the Unit in doing workshops, research and preparing

publications to inform the regional accreditation system. Having received a letter of invitation to be involved in the study, this participant who was a senior member of the Unit agreed to, and was directly involved in researching and writing reports on the accreditation system since its conception. This was also substantiated by participant No. 3.

Finally, participants No. 6 and 8 represented two higher education institutions which operate trans-nationally across CARICOM states. Participant No. 6 was selected by communicating via invitation letter with the head of the institution who nominated the participant to be involved in the study. Participant No. 6 had total responsibility for quality assurance and accreditation at the institution. This participant was involved in the activities associated with registration and accreditation in the institution. Participant No. 8 was invited in a similar way as No. 6 and had responsibility for same issues but within one campus of the multi-campus institution. This participant was also exposed to the institution's policies and practices for dealing with registration and accreditation and was subsequently responsible for both on one campus. Having been nominated, each participant then consented to be involved via electronic mail.

Having established how the participants were approved for the study, I shall now describe how and where the participants came to be interviewed for the study. In general, while all participants agreed to participate in either face-to-face or teleconference interviews, the research sites varied depending on who was

being interviewed. With the exception of two interviews held in Colombia, all interviews took place within a three week period between April and May, 2006. Where teleconference interviews took place, care was taken to ensure that I replicated the conditions within my home in Port of Spain, Trinidad as the site for the interview conduct. The type and location of the teleconferencing system used was essentially the same, as was the approach to interviewing and the note taking process during interviews.

Participant 1:

Participant 1 consented to participate in a face-to-face interview which was held during a two-day retreat meeting. This interview, which lasted about 2 ½ hours, took place following the first day of the retreat meeting. Being both sitting members of the organization which was hosting the meeting, and having worked closely on the production of the national accreditation policy on a Cabinet-appointed taskforce, I had to ensure that when negotiating participation that the familiarity factor was not an obstacle to the interview and data collection process in any form. The participant acknowledged willingness to participate and that our prior connections would not prevent a smooth interview and that recall would have been candid and as open as possible. The interview experience generally confirmed much of my thinking but raised a few issues worthy of noting in terms of policy process. At the time of the interview, participant 1 was a senior executive in the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago, had prior experiences in education policy production within Trinidad and Tobago, was

responsible for the Cabinet-appointed committee for establishment of the national accreditation system in Trinidad and Tobago and prepared position papers and reports on tertiary education policy and higher education accreditation policy. The participant also played a key regional role in the Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE), a sub-regional network of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

Participant 2:

Participant 2 also consented to be interviewed but preferred a scheduled teleconference interview given the distance and commitments at the time. At the time of the interview, participant 2 was stationed at an office at the Barbados Accreditation Council in Bridgetown, Barbados. Although we had met once, I was not as familiar with this participant but still insisted as with participant 1 that it would be useful to know whether our prior contact or distance would have in any way prejudiced the interview outcomes and data. The participant insisted that this was not the case. The interview lasted for 3 hours because there were intermittent breaks in communication but this was compensated for by repeating a few questions for which responses were not clear. What was interesting about this interview was that it challenged my take-for-granted assumptions about the importance and role of accreditation to Barbados and what was uniquely different there from what was seen as priorities in the other territories. Participant 2 has been a senior official in the Barbados Accreditation Council. This participant was

previously involved in quality assurance of technical and vocational education in Barbados and was intimately involved in the policy discussions for establishment of the national accreditation agency in Barbados.

Participant 3:

For participant 3, it was rather difficult to arrange a scheduled time and meeting place. This participant preferred a face-to-face meeting but given pressing commitments and distance this proved to be a problem. It was not until June 2008, when I was invited by UNESCO to make a presentation on Caribbean accreditation to a technical group working on higher education accreditation at the Latin America and the Caribbean Conference on Higher Education in Cartagena des Indias, Colombia, that I was able to schedule my interview with this participant. We both arranged to meet late in the evening at a hotel lobby outside of the conference arena. The interview lasted approximately 3 hours because there was much interest by the participant in the interview discussions and the study. Unlike the previous participants, I never had formal contact with this participant, except when I attended conferences which this person had responsibility for. I nevertheless posed the same questions about whether our contact or location would prejudice the outcomes of the interview. The participant denied that there would be any limitation to the discussions and vouched for free and open dialogue. This interview was enriching and enlightening to me because it established many facts about how research into the policy was conducted which I could not source in any documentation. Participant 3 holds a leadership position

in the University Council of Jamaica. At the time of this interview, this participant also was in a leadership role in CANQATE and sat on the Board of Management of INQAAHE, representing the Caribbean region. This participant was commissioned by the CARICOM Secretariat to spearhead the consultations for review of national policies for establishment of accreditation systems, worked with two other consultants to engage in the consultations across the region, reported to the CARICOM Secretariat on the regional accreditation policy and was a key person involved in the preparation of the draft legislation for national accreditation bodies by CARICOM.

Participant 4:

Participant 4 was recommended to be involved in the study by the Directorate of Human and Social Development which oversees the CARICOM education agenda. When contact was made, the participant agreed to have a face-to-face interview. At the time of the interview, the participant was recently retired from the CARICOM Secretariat and was a consultant stationed in Port of Spain, Trinidad. Thus, arranging for the interview was not problematic. The interview took place in the participant's office for approximately 2 ¼ hours. My prior contact with this participant was limited to a few CARICOM meetings in Guyana, where we had the opportunity to greet one another but never exchanged any ideas and personal experiences. As with the other participants, I consulted the participant about the location of the interview and contacts we have had. The participant agreed that what would be shared was what would be recalled from

lifetime experiences and thus there would have been no hindrances at the time of the interview. Participant 4 established several key issues and showed the connection between politics, consultations, negotiations and decision-making which would not have been uncovered anywhere else from the study. This naturally illuminated my perspectives and challenged my assumptions. Participant 4 was intimately involved in accreditation at the CARICOM Secretariat in Georgetown, Guyana for over 10 years and was responsible for the CARICOM curriculum issues for secondary schools in the region.

Participant 5:

Participant 5 consented to have a teleconference interview given the distance. At the time of the scheduled interview the participant was located at home in Georgetown, Guyana and I was at mine in Port of Spain, Trinidad. The interview lasted for just under 1 ¼ hours. Unlike all other participants, I had never met or heard of this participant before but was advised by the CARICOM Secretariat and confirmed by participant 4, that this participant was ideal given the position held and prior experience. I nevertheless, requested that the participant advise whether or not our distance and lack of contact, as with other participants, would be a problem, to which the participant agreed it would not be. Through this interview, I was struck by how little was being done in Guyana and that policy-makers and actors were not as aware of the key intentions and activities associated with the policy process. Participant 5 was held a senior position in the Guyana

Accreditation Council and had been involved in advising the Ministry on quality assurance policy issues.

Participant 6:

Participant 6 was recommended by the President of a private university to represent the institution in the study. Participant 6 agreed to do a face-to-face interview in the Office of Academic Administration at the University. This interview lasted over 1 ¼ hours. The participant and I had known each other for over 10 years prior through varied professional encounters. Thus, during the interview briefing I made it this fact known and asked whether or not the location and prior contact would prejudice the interview and data and to this the participant acknowledged it would not. Coming out of the interview, I learnt that the University had been actively involved in North American accreditation for a decade and that this informed its processes and practices. The interview also substantiated that while there was some influence from the higher education accreditation policy on the institution much of what would be expected was already being done or not impacting. Participant 6 was a senior person at a private university in Trinidad and was responsible for quality assurance and accreditation in the institution.

Participant 7:

Participant 7 was asked to nominate someone to be involved in the interview but opted to participate by teleconference. Again this had to do with schedules and

distance. The participant was interviewed in the Tertiary Level Institutions Unit (TLIU) Office at the University of the West Indies, located in Barbados while I was stationed at my home in Port of Spain, Trinidad. The participant and I had one prior official meeting in Trinidad where we were able to discuss a research project of mutual interest. This interview lasted over 1 ½ hours and involved the same response from the participant as others when asked about location and contact, that is that there would be open and frank discussions and that prior experiences or distance should not deter the process or outcome. For me, this interview confirmed much of what participants 3 and 4 related in their accounts so it served more for the corroboration of findings. Participant 7 was a senior officer in the TLIU which is a research and consulting arm of the University which coordinates planning, policy development, programme validation and quality monitoring of colleges and community colleges across the Northern and Eastern Caribbean. Having expertise in education planning, with focus on tertiary education policy research and planning in the Caribbean, this participant was key to understanding how research was involved in policy development.

Participant 8:

Like participant 6, participant 8 was invited and agreed to participate through nomination by the Principal of the campus. Like participant 3, a face-to-face interview was preferred and the most convenient way was to meet at the UNESCO Conference in Cartagena des Indias, Colombia. This interview similarly took place at the Conference hotel lobby area on the third morning after

breakfast but before the afternoon session of the conference. The interview lasted 1 ½ hours. I had known this participant in official capacities for over 4 years. We had worked together on the Board of the National Commission for UNESCO in Trinidad and were involved in numerous consultations and seminars together. As with the other participants, making this known to the participant before the interview I sought for clearance to conduct the interview by asking whether or not our prior knowledge of each other, previous experiences or the location of the interview setting would pose a problem. As with the rest, there was acknowledgement that while the experience made the participant more comfortable knowing me, it would in no way reflect the quality of the information being shared. I felt that this interview was frank and highlighted what I perceived were the expectations of the University but was surprised to learn that some of the policy goals in the accreditation policy were not filtering down to the institution. Participant 8 has coordinating responsibility for quality assurance at the regional university based at the St. Augustine campus, Trinidad and Tobago.

Ethics

Nixon et al. (2003) argued the case that thoughtful ethical research can be grounded in moral purposefulness insisting that methodological discourse and approaches are best practised when one thinks about what is moral in the context of the research process. Consequently, ethics approval may be very necessary to satisfy stakeholders that the research has been carefully considered, value-free in its design and conduct and valuable to its intended audience. When deciding the

implications of research on persons involved, ethics review by peers would provide for checks and balances. This is even more important when one considers insider research. In Louisy's (1997) paper, a perspective was provided on how to conduct ethical insider research within the nation of St. Lucia, a postcolonial Caribbean setting. While due consideration was given to the country's historical, political, ideological, cultural, linguistic and sociological position, there is a common understanding that there are dilemmas in the research. For instance, undoubtedly the researcher who lives and works within such small island settings can have influence over the research process and outcomes.

Ethical Issues

One of the dilemmas I had to confront in my research was how do I confidently plan and execute the study knowing full well that as the researcher I was located in one geographic space within a specific cultural setting whilst the research participants came from different localities and cultural settings. I took comfort in the perspective of Stephenson and Greer (cited in Louisy, 1997) when they commented on the advantages and disadvantages of ethnographic researchers working within their own settings. They echoed the view that ethnographers working within familiar cultural settings did not have any greater advantages or disadvantages than those working in non-familiar settings. They further argued that the qualitative researcher has to perform a balancing act, reporting an external

'objective' or 'value-neutral' project with an insight into the researcher's epistemological and ontological understanding.

Making a case for insider research within a small country setting, Louisy (1997, p. 201) agreed with Stenhouse's argument that this all depends on the researcher's critical perspective. The researcher should ideally offer a critical perspective providing a truer picture of reality. Substantial claims have already been made to my positionality. I do not feel that conducting this research within different settings present any significant disadvantages to me as I regard my research as following an ethical, morally just and methodologically-focused process.

The participants themselves came from different geographical, political, cultural and epistemological persuasions. Many of them were actually located within a single geographical space but their organizations and sometimes work was regional. Participants had difficulty in justifying their perspectives because of their varied experiences and roles with respect to higher education accreditation. Given the diversity of policies that had to be covered, this researcher's own limitations such as finance for travel, commitment to full-time work while doing the research and participants' own hectic schedules to perform face-to-face meetings within their settings, innovative methods had to be employed. There were three approaches as summarized in Table 3.10. I arranged:

1. convenient meetings with participants for face-to-face (F2F) interviews within their own geo-cultural environment (2 participants);

2. convenient meetings with participants for face-to-face (F2F) interviews within other geo-cultural settings (3 participants);
3. teleconference (TC) meetings with participants located within their own geo-cultural settings (3 participants).

Table 3.10: Modalities/Localities of Interview Participants

Organization	Representative	Modality/Location
Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT)	P#1	F2F, Tobago, West Indies (during Board Retreat)
Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC)	P#2	TC, Barbados, West Indies (while in BAC office)
Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE)	P#3	-F2F, Cartagena des Indias, Colombia, SA (at Conference on Higher Education for Latin America and the Caribbean)
CARICOM Secretariat	P#4	-F2F, Port of Spain, Trinidad, West Indies (while working as educational policy consultant, 1 year after departure from CARICOM)
Guyana Accreditation Council (GAC)	P#5	TC, Georgetown, Guyana, West Indies (while at home, Guyana)
University Council of Jamaica (UCJ)	P#3	Same as for President, CANQATE above
University of the Southern Caribbean (USC)	P#6	F2F, Maracas Valley, Trinidad, West Indies (while in Office of Academic Administration)
University of the West Indies (UWI)	P#7	TC, Cave Hill, Barbados, West Indies (while in office at Cave Hill, UWI)
	P#8	-F2F, Cartagena des Indias, Colombia, SA (at Conference on Higher Education for Latin America and the Caribbean)

Ethical Review

Formal ethical approval is required by the University of Sheffield within its 'Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants, Data and Tissue'⁹. In doing ethical research with human subjects the research has to be scrutinized by the university research community. Within this policy framework, the School of Education's Ethics Review Policy aims 'to ensure that research in the School is carried out to the highest ethical standards and in conformity with the University's Research Ethics Policy'¹⁰. Ethical review adopts a procedural approach. It enabled me as the researcher to think critically and ethically about how and why I valued my research process, how I conceptualized the research design, what kinds of questions I asked the participants, how I engaged and asked the participants such questions and how I collected, analyzed and reported the research. Consideration was given to ethical review in the early stages of research conceptualization.

Before embarking on the study, the School of Education's ethics review process was followed. The School's Ethics Review Panel undertook a review of the research proposal, recommending ways to improve the design before the study was carried out. The process involved applying for ethics review by completing the research ethics application form together with supporting documentation; namely a university participant information sheet and participant consent form. These are contained in Appendices 3.5 and 3.6. Both the participant information sheet and consent forms were to be presented to the participants during the

⁹ www.shef.ac.uk/researchoffice/gov_ethics_grp/system.html.

¹⁰ www.shef.ac.uk/education/ethics/index/html

research. Once submitted to the ethics administrator, the application was forwarded to three research ethics reviewers who provided feedback requiring adjustments to be made. The ethical clearance is illustrated in Appendices 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9. After making minor adjustments, the forms were resent to the ethics administrator who passed them for final review and clearance. The process ensured that the methodology was carefully documented and followed for the study.

Informed Consent, Anonymity and Confidentiality

Prior to conducting interviews, informed consent was obtained from all participants. Participants had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the research process and so determine whether they wanted to be involved prior to participation. Thus, informed consent was critical to ensure that I had full confidence for participation by the participants. They were told that:

- i) they could withdraw at any time if they chose to;
- ii) although their names were recorded in the stages before and leading up to the interview, they would be kept anonymous in the publication of the thesis;
- iii) the information they provided would be confidential and that they had the option of not recording some or all of the statements made during the interview or following transcription; and

iv) after the first draft of the transcription, they would have a chance to review what was stated and could make amendments that are more comfortable for them.

Once participants agreed to do the interviews, they were asked to sign the consent forms prior to the interviews.

Negotiating Research Sites/Participant Access

From both a methodological and ethnical perspective, it is absolutely important for me to acknowledge how I went about negotiating which participants and research sites I accessed in my study. First let me explain what I mean by access. Access is what method I employed to make contact with the participants and to get informed consent from them. I have already spoken to informed consent earlier in the chapter. I have also described in this chapter how I negotiated access for each of the policies I selected, the participants I interviewed, the locations where they were interviewed and the locations and means by which I obtained the documents for my study.

Methods

Experiences in the Field

Good educational research can expect that ethical research practitioners document their field research experiences including their observations as evidence. I believe that by describing my field experiences it would not only give a good sense of what I did and why but would justify my approaches in the field. Moreover, discussing field research experiences is not only about ethics. It is also about advancing the research causes as well. There are many aspects to this I would want to share. For instance, how was I positioned in the field? What did I notice about being in the field? Did I trouble my own taken-for-granted assumptions? Were there any surprises? Did they change me in any way? How was my understanding advanced? What overall life lessons did I learn while being in the field? These are some of the issues about my field research that I chose to express at this location in my thesis.

Cohen et al. (2007a) highlight a range of issues that affect the research in the field. They suggested that (i) the researcher's personal issues such as emotions, attitudes, beliefs and values; (ii) issues of advocacy in the sense that as a researcher going into the field one may identify with same emotions, concerns and crises of participants; (iii) role relationships with others in the field; (iv) maintaining a boundary as a researcher and not as another participant; and (v) balancing distance in the field with involvement as researcher all influence the field research process and outcomes. As expressed by Robinson-Pant (2005)

doing interviews via distance also presents its own challenges in terms of dealing with the relationship between the venue, time constraints and general logistics. There are restrictions based on the degree of remoteness of the researcher from the participants and venues involving the study. There are also difficulties when managing time to collect valid data through a rigorous research process from multiple sources and destinations.

To clarify my experiences, I would begin by referring to my position in the field. First of all, the field was a very culturally and geographically diverse and rich place. The field was sometimes direct interaction with the participant; it was technologically-based; it was voice data from audio; it was in different geographical settings sometimes outside of the territory being studied; it was in a non-Anglophone country outside the Caribbean and was distance from me as researcher, sometimes long distance. Described as such, the field was useful to do good inter-cultural comparisons. Despite this, I felt that the field brought certain disadvantages. It required that I consistently reported what was unique about each setting so that I accounted for the likely nuances that occurred during field interviews. For instance, depending on the time of the interview (after a hectic conference; in between shopping periods at the conference; whether late at nights or early in the morning) the moods of the interviewees and interviewer would change and would not always be consistent. Being exhausted after a long hectic conference, both interviewer and interviewees would not be very hyped and motivated to do an interview but it was usually based on convenience to both parties. In such cases it was the questioning of a persistent interviewer that had to

keep the interviewee motivated and sustained to respond to questions for more than one hour.

As an insider researcher I was constantly aware of biases and was cautious to note them in my self-reflection. I was also careful in my interviewing. I remained committed to the established process of interviewing, to record what was reported by the interviewees and to make some critical observations about the interview setting. I tried to remain distanced in the sense that I did not want to establish my positionality most times while doing the interviews but when needed to guide the questioning I did take time and effort to establish the basis for the question so that the interviewee would understand why I was asking it. In some instances, it did require my sharing some of my own ideas based on my esteemed position as a principal actor and researcher also. This would have brought clarity to the research process and the questions. Despite this, I must confess that I was sometimes hesitant to go into more detail as I should knowing that the participants were themselves esteemed researchers and actors. However, depending on the responses I received, where they appeared to be brief, I would engage the interviewees by establishing more facts and opinions in order to get responses.

As I intimated, while I entered the field with certain assumptions, some became more exposed than others. I think my ontological understanding about policy formulation as process was one which engaged primarily politicians, bureaucrats and technocrats from both international and national origins and hardly ever consulted the educational practitioners and masses. I also felt that research into policy was not substantially done. I wanted to check this with the participants to

substantiate my claims. Another interesting issue had to do with the mechanism of policy formulation. Using Dale's typology I initially conceived it as being a model using a mix of mechanisms such as policy borrowing, policy learning and policy harmonization. However, the exact nature of the mechanism and typology would be confirmed from the field, especially when doing data analysis. I had the view that the policy implementation models would not have been properly defined. I assumed that the research would highlight the extent of the situation and what could be done to ensure implementation of policy. Based on my knowledge of the participants, I also assumed that they would clarify what they actually did in relation to the policies. I was also expecting some participants to articulate their positions that would not accurately report what they actually did. Coming out of the field, I realized that most of these assumptions were valid. However, I felt also that there were some take-for-granted positions I held which were not ideally what I assumed they would be. For instance, the point about research into policy did not exactly hold true. In fact, there was a substantial amount of stakeholder consultation (though not exclusively so) and primary data (not all relevant) that were utilized in the data gathering process for the research. Another interesting observation had to do with the implementation models. While certain tools and terminology were not necessarily used in the research process, the concept of implementation was being considered to some degree unlike what I perceived it to be initially.

In terms of what was surprising, I would not say that as a result of the research I was surprised to any reasonable extent. In fact the only situation had to do with

the corroboration of evidence by my own self-reflection and among the policy researcher/analyst participants. This surprised me because I had my own views about the readiness of participants as elite professionals in the field to share that others contributed meaningfully to the process. When I asked that question some were ready to indicate names of others while others were slightly hesitant or were unable to recall accurately. Interestingly, some of their positions about motivation for policy and the manner in which it did exist resonated and correlated well with each other. In some cases, some participants though did not readily name other key actors who were well known to the process. For instance, although the literature refers repeatedly to one principal researcher in the field of accreditation mechanisms and policy from the University of the West Indies who contributed immensely to the process of research as evidence, no one named this critical work as pertinent to the process of development of accreditation policy in the region. I believe this was an issue of how personalities, power and positionality for success played out among participants. I thought that the researcher would have known sufficiently enough to apprise the development of policy and that this work would have been featured more prominently by all the principal actors for accreditation policy in the region. I did however note the researcher's contribution in document analysis stages of my research. Another useful point to note was the notion that policy implementation was not seriously considered during policy planning and research. This was observed to some extent during the first set of interviews. Thus, arising out of these interviews, a decision was taken to go back to the field a second time to solicit more information about policy impact during

implementation. This led to the two interviews from two leading regional universities.

Thinking more about the research and its process in the field I cannot say that I was changed in any significant way. I think though that I developed a serious appreciation for ethical field research and for policy research processes using interviews in different settings unlike my previous professional and other academic experiences. All of this may contribute to the advancement of the discipline as the field observations have established a way forward for education policy analysts to do ethical educational policy research, to formulate meaningful education policy and to manage policy implementation in Caribbean educational bureaucracies.

Interviewing Process

There are several purposes for interviewing as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 268-270). Cohen et al. also point to these purposes (Cohen et al., 2007a, p. 182). They included present constructions of events, feelings, persons, organizations, activities, motivations, concerns and claims. They also highlighted reconstruction of past experiences, projections into the future and verifying, amending and extending data. The interview is useful for gathering facts, accessing beliefs about facts, identifying feelings and motives, commenting on standards of actions, exploring behaviours and eliciting reasons and explanations (Cohen et al., 2007b). The interviewer has to, therefore, be prudent in handling

this important role so as to do justice to the construction and reconstruction of others' experiences.

In general, the questions for the interviews were devised by linking the main research question with the distinct themes coming from initial coding during document analysis. Prospective participants were contacted either by telephone or by electronic mail to determine their willingness to participate in the study. Once they indicated interest, using either electronic or regular mail, prospective participants were presented with a letter introducing the research, the University Participant Information (UPI) sheet and a copy of the interview schedule. Participants were informed that if they were not able to be interviewed that they would have the option of completing a questionnaire. However, none took up the option. The interview was conducted by two modalities: face-to-face (F2F) only or teleconference (TC). Five interviews were done in F2F settings whilst three were pursued using TC. This was already summarized in Table 3.10. Teleconference interviews utilized a speaker phone so that audio could be recorded using the audiotape. There were instances when audio was unclear. Participants were asked to repeat their statements to ensure that precise information was recorded.

The eight participants were interviewed using the semi-structured interview schedule as located in Appendix 3.11. and 3.12. Interviews shown in the first appendix catered to six participants who had experience with accreditation policy production, whereas the remaining two interviewees had experience with accreditation policy implementation. However, it must be noted that apart from

their own individual expertise and experiences, the participants represented several stakeholder organizations within the single regional policy of CARICOM or the country policy samples of Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. Given the experiences of some participants, they served to represent more organizations at both the national and regional levels.

Document Collection

Documents included published and unpublished policy reports, technical reports, manuscripts, personal files and web materials which were collected from documentalists from libraries of higher education institutions, government ministries and accreditation agencies as well as those referred by elites who were interviewed. Initially as many as sixty materials were collected but only forty four such materials were deemed relevant in that they addressed matters directly or indirectly related to the policies.

Textual materials were statements made in the document and interview texts which represented the voice of researchers and text writers as well as those of the participants respectively. These statements were highlighted within the textual materials using a yellow highlight marker for interview records and a green highlight marker for document texts. Key words or phrases were underlined within the highlighted text and then used as data elements for the coding process. Through this process, while over one thousand highlighted textual materials were produced, only 449 data elements were actually recorded in the file cards during

the coding and theme development stages. While this is discussed elsewhere in this chapter, it must be noted here that the data elements would have produced codes linked to the stages in the adapted Hogwood and Gunn/Ozga policy cycle and this would have undergone up to three iterations of theme development to respond to the research questions posed. This is shown in Figure 3.1. (Appendix 2).

Transcription Issues

About transcription, Kearney (2002, p. 112) says:

transcription freezes and magnifies the spoken word....the process of transcription creates a new text whose relations to the original data are problematic....transcription can erase information about emphasis, attitude of surprise, irony, humour, emotion, speaker identity, dialect etc. Hence, information about the timing of the speech (e.g. pauses, changes of fluency, simultaneous speech) is important to note in the transcription.

In my study, I recognized that transcription can indeed pose some interpretation problems, given that the spoken word is being captured in a moment of time when written and reported in text. While I make every effort to be cautious in my record of the linguistic and dialogic issues on the field to be analyzed as discourse, I make no pronouncements about these in my study as my focus was on getting consent from the participant to document and report in textual form his/her spoken word.

Methods of Data Analysis

Why Theoretical Thematic Analysis?

In my research, I apply theoretical thematic analysis as a technique for analyzing the various interview and document data. I use coding, re-coding and iterations of theme development to make critical sense of how the data is to be used when interpreting the policy processes I interrogate. I used the Hogwood and Gunn/Ozga model of policy analysis I developed for collecting and analyzing data. Interview and document data were linked to the initial themes from this model which was shown in Figure 3.1. (Appendix 2). They were then systematically coded, recoded and themed to produce new theme iterations. These new themes were matched against all the research questions, and the characteristics identified for each of the seven globalization mechanisms articulated by Dale's typology (1999). Therefore, by employing this systematic process of coding and theme development and by matching these different theme iterations to the nine research questions posed in my study, I am able to come to some reasonable conclusion and understanding about the assumptions and theories I mention in my study.

Doing Theoretical Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible method for identifying, classifying and referencing data trends and themes. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) argued that during thematic analysis the search for themes emerging from the data is important to the phenomenon description. It is 'a form of pattern recognition

within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis (*Ibid*, p.4)'. Thematic analysis is not a linear process but recursive one, where movement is back and forth as needed. It is also a process that develops over time and thus relies upon careful devotion by the analyst to ensure that the analysis is thorough. As a data analysis process, the data is organized into four levels. All documents and interviews collected in the research comprise the data corpus. Actual data being used in the analysis such as data from the corpus where a topic is being referred represents the data set. The data items are the individual pieces of data collected which make up the corpus data and the data extract would be the mass of data that have been coded from the data items.

Theoretical or deductive thematic analysis was devised as a top-down approach for determining themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Unlike inductive thematic analysis and grounded theory, which are data-driven methods, do not account for the analytic preconceptions of the researcher. According to Braun and Clarke (*Ibid*, p. 84) in theoretical thematic analysis researchers 'cannot free themselves from their theoretical and epistemological commitments and data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum'. It is driven by the researcher's theoretical and analytic interest in the area and provides a detailed analysis of some aspects of the data rather than a description of the data. As Braun and Clarke (*Ibid*, p. 84) relate:

You can either code for a quite specific research question (which maps on to the more theoretical approach) or the specific research question can evolve through the coding process (which maps on to an inductive approach).

Unlike theoretical thematic analysis, in grounded theory, for instance, generalizations are made from themes generated from coded data. These generalizations are important in establishing some theory or another. This study does not employ such an approach. The study purposes to analyze a conceptual model which is based on theoretical frames of defining, researching and negotiating policy as established by Hogwood and Gunn (1984) and Ozga (2000) and so uses the model to create iterations of themes from which some generalizations are made. By understanding how and why higher education accreditation policies were defined, researched and negotiated in policy production processes the relationship between the local, regional and global can be appreciated. In this regard, in one model proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, pp. 86-87), six phases of thematic analysis of the data corpus are recorded in the process as outlined in Table 3.2. Phases 3, 4, 5 and 6 bear some similarity to what was described by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006, p. 5) in the six stages for data coding using thematic analysis they adapted from the work of Crabtree and Miller in 1999. In addition to the actual coding for analysis, they suggested the need for a coding manual which they expressed should be developed to guide the coding process and outcomes as well as a process for testing the reliability of codes. These six stages are compared to the three phases proposed by Braun and Clarke in Table 3.3.

Table 3.2: Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006)

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial codes.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire dataset, collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic map of the analysis
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Table 3.3: Comparison of Thematic Analysis Phases Model by Braun and Clarke with Adapted Data Coding Model by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane

Braun and Clarke Thematic Analysis Model	Fereday and Muir-Cochrane Data Coding Model
Familiarizing yourself with your data	Summarizing data and identifying initial themes
Generating initial codes	Summarizing data and identifying initial themes
Searching for themes	Applying template of codes and additional coding
Reviewing themes	Applying template of codes and additional coding
Defining and naming themes	Connecting the codes and identifying themes
Producing the report	Corroborating and legitimizing coded themes

Theoretical thematic analysis was the method used to determine trends in themes for analysis of accreditation policy cases. Prior to coding and theme development, a coding manual was devised to support the coding process. Using Boyatzis (1998) model, codes were written and identified a priori using a template to develop the coding matrix as in Table 3.12.

Table 3.12: Example of Codes Developed *A Priori* Using Coding Template

Code Label	Definition	Description
Code 1: Policy Origin	The initial proposal or idea which enabled policy proposers to conceptualize policy	Statement expressed in written such as document form or conversation such as interview that shows that the policy strategy and idea was being developed
Code 5: Policy Reception	The means by which the policy is received by different stakeholders during the policy formulation and implementation stages	Statement expressed in written such as document form or conversation such as interview that shows that the policy strategy, idea, process, text or outcome was being understood and applied by the participant(s) during the stages from initiation through evaluation of policy

This template included: (1) code label/name; (2) definition of the theme and (3) a description of how to know when the theme occurred. Each of these items was defined in the coding template to guide the selection of codes.

The data to be coded started with creating categories under the three main components, that is, 'Defining Policy', 'Researching Policy' and 'Negotiating Policy' as was identified in chapter 1 as main themes (see section on Conceptualizing the Research). For each of these main themes, sub-themes were

generated. By referring to the code definitions and descriptions written in the coding template, the data elements, which incorporated 555 data elements, were matched to each of the sub-sub-themes. This was done by repeatedly paying close attention to the key words and phrases and resolving their meanings as they related to the sub-sub-themes coming from the adapted Policy Cycle model. Where there were some concerns, the member checking group was employed to confirm these meanings. Finally, the 555 codes that were developed in this way represented key words or ideas from each of the data elements.

The next step in the coding process entailed recoding. Recoding meant taking a second closer look at the first set of codes generated by the process and searching for similarities in the codes to match them. In this process, 449 codes were produced with as many as one hundred original codes being better matched. In this process, I created a code map which was simply a velvet material canvas on which sticky notes of each code were placed for ease of checking comparisons. By moving coded sticky notes around I was able to establish better matches on the canvas.

After the recoding, I began my theme development. Creating themes meant grouping related codes as I did with the sticky notes on canvas to search for relationships in words and phrases indicated in the codes. This was done in the first instance to generate 166 initial themes and then was subsequently done through a process of referencing, matching, re-classifying and re-naming to

produce two other sets of themes in two additional theme development stages. These stages are all represented as Stages 1 to 4 below which starts by showing examples of how the coding matrix was produced all the way through how the three country policies for Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago were examined.

Having produced these themes, they were then matched to each of the nine research questions and presented between chapters 4 to 6 in the findings. Matching the themes to the questions employed a similar procedure as before. Each of the questions had key words and phrases (an example is given for Stage 3). The themes were then successively re-themed into another theme iteration to ensure that these new themes ideally represented what the question was asking. These new themes were then incorporated in the analysis of the question and discussed in each of the data analysis chapters, that is, chapters 4 through 6.

During the coding process, Jules' (2008) method of calculating occurrence of congruency was used. In his method, the number of occurrences of each 'word', 'phrase' or 'statement' was determined and then all similar or congruent data elements were classified as one related theme grouping. Examples of these are illustrated in Appendix 3.14 (a-d). When ascribing codes in the thesis, 'P' represented 'expert participant' coming from interviews and 'PR' and 'TR' represented 'policy report' and 'technical report' respectively from the databank. The numbers given for each referred to the corresponding numbers for interviewees in Table 3.8 or documents in Table 3.9.

Stage 1: Setting Up a Data Coding Matrix/Assigning Data Codes

Appendix 3.14a: Example of File Card Content for Producing Data Code

THEME NO.:	01		
THEME NAME:	Defining Policy		
SUB-THEME LEVEL:	1	SUB-THEME LEVEL:	2
SUB-THEME NO.:	011	SUB-THEME NO.:	0111
SUB-THEME NAME:	Origin of Policy		
SUB-THEME NAME:	Source of Policy Idea		
DATA ELEMENT:	National governments should introduce <u>laws</u> governing <u>establishment and operation of tertiary level institutions*</u>		
DATA SOURCE:	National Report		
DATA CODE:	Laws to be established for TLIs		
DATA FACTOR:	Cause		

**key words/phrases for generating data code*

The example of how data was constructed and resolved during analysis is shown above in Stage 1. The information represented the file card content for one code under Theme 1: Defining Policy. In this example, the Data Coding template describes Origin of Policy idea as ‘a statement which shows policy strategy and idea (e.g. political intent/strategy) was being developed’. The primary words from the data element that correspond with a source of political strategy are ‘laws’, ‘establishment’ and ‘tertiary level institutions’. It was assumed that the policy could be established as a law to govern how tertiary level institutions operate and hence these three key words were used to construct the data code in the template. This approach was essentially repeated throughout the data coding analysis process.

Stage 2: Identifying Initial Themes

Appendix 3.14b: New Theme Developed A Priori from Related Data Codes

DATA CODE 1:	<u>Recognition</u> of foreign <u>qualifications</u> in Trinidad and Tobago was a <u>problem</u>
DATA CODE 2:	Currency and value of local and foreign <u>qualifications</u> in Barbados was an <u>issue</u>
DATA CODE 3:	ACTI <u>wanted</u> equivalency of <u>qualifications</u> in the region
KEY WORDS/PHRASES:	<i>"recognition", "qualifications", "equivalency", "problem", "issue", "wanted"</i>
NEW THEME:	Lack of Qualifications Recognition

In this stage, three of twelve data codes were used to arrive at one new theme: 'Lack of Qualifications Recognition'. The key words shown could be put into three groups: i) "lack" was represented by "problem", "issue" and "wanted"; ii) "qualifications" and iii) "recognition". Member checking was employed by consulting two members of the independent thematic analysis group. In fact the discussions led to use of any one of the three words but then it was felt that "lack" appropriately represented the ideas being conveyed. Given that this process was repeated for determining all 166 themes, member checking was only employed in about one quarter of the instances when the researcher saw it necessary to resolve differences. These words were circulated to member checkers to come to some consensus only in cases where this was needed. While themes were being developed the number of occurrences where they were represented in the Data Coding Matrix was recorded and this value was seen as significant to determine the degree of rigour of the research data. For instance, the themes 'Tertiary

Institution Diversity’ was documented thirty times in data codes whereas the theme ‘Tertiary Qualifications Framework’ was only recorded once. The first theme would have been found in data codes related to the ‘defining, researching and negotiating policy’ components of the research and also from varied interview sources and policy and report documents. It therefore means that this theme, as opposed to the other, would be a very important theme in the research and so while doing the analysis it was considered very frequently in relation to the nine research questions and policy analysis models being studied.

Stage 3: Renaming Themes for Research Questions

Appendix 3.14c.: Example of Thematic Analysis Per Question

QUESTION: What are the documented positions on accreditation policy and processes?

CHARACTER 1: Information on policy

CHARACTER 2: Information on policy process

CHARACTER 3: Research as policy process

PRIMARY THEME 1: Protection of People OCCURRENCE: 4

PRIMARY THEME 2: People Mobility OCCURRENCE: 22

PRIMARY THEME 3: Regionalism and Free Movement OCCURRENCE: 12

PRIMARY THEME 4: UWI Benefits from Movement OCCURRENCE: 2

PRIMARY THEME 5: USC Employees Benefit OCCURRENCE: 1

PRIMARY THEME 6: USC Faculty Benefits OCCURRENCE: 1

PRIMARY THEME 7: USC Not Benefiting Overall OCCURRENCE: 5

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: “*People (e.g. Employee/Faculty)*”; “*Benefit*”, “*Free*”;
“*Mobility*”; “*Movement*”

SECONDARY THEME: CSME Free Movement OCCURRENCE: 47/555

In this stage, new themes were developed *A Priori* by matching main phrases and characters in the nine research questions to the initial themes. In the example given, three main characters emerged: ‘information on policy’, ‘information on policy process’ and ‘research as policy process’. The initial themes which related to these characters were recorded as primary themes with their corresponding occurrences. High occurrence themes were resolved as most important for secondary theme development. Key phrases or words which related to the primary themes were compared, reconciled and generated secondary themes (CSME Free Movement), by applying Dale’s typology of mechanisms.

Stage 4: Renaming Themes for Country Samples

Appendix 3.14d.:Theme Development for Barbados Policy: Contextualization to Local Demands

DATA CODE 1:	Cabinet to Establish Local Agency
DATA CODE 2:	Legislation to be Contextualized
DATA CODE 3:	Not All Policy Areas Borrowed
DATA CODE 4:	Variance Exists in Registration Across Agencies
DATA CODE 5:	BAC Can Change Legislation
DATA CODE 6:	TLIU Report in Legislation
DATA CODE 7:	BAC Act Include Examining Certificates of Recognition
DATA CODE 8:	Students Repeated Courses
DATA CODE 9:	Policy Has Differences Requiring Redress
DATA CODE 10:	BAC Act Requires Education Act Amendments
DATA CODE 11:	TVET Council to Work With BAC
DATA CODE 12:	National Strategic Plan to Inform BAC
DATA CODE 13:	TVET Council Existed
DATA CODE 14:	BAC to Amend Legislation
KEY WORDS/PHRASES:	<i>“local”</i> ; <i>“legislation”</i> ; <i>“contextualized”</i> ; <i>“variance”</i> ; <i>“change”</i> ; <i>“differences”</i> ; <i>amend”</i>
PRIMARY THEME:	Contextualization to Local Demands

Three country policies (Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago) were examined within the CARICOM policy. For country policies, the 449 data codes were examined and those identified that best correlated to each of the three countries. Data codes were grouped according to having synonyms or similar phrases and then thematically defined as for primary themes developed. The occurrence of the data codes for the theme was stated as a percentage of the entire data set. To use the example of Barbados, one of the themes developed *A Priori* (Contextualization to Local Demands) came about as shown.

In order to arrive at the themes some rationalization of the code meanings was needed. The word 'contextualized' was quoted among the data codes in relation to the 'legislation'. The establishment of the agency by legislation required 'change' and 'amendment' in relation to 'variance' and 'differences' to suit that the 'local' environment. What was interesting was the use of the latter words with implicit meanings that there were needs or demands that required attention. Some of the examples given were in relation to 'Cabinet', 'issuance of certificates of recognition' in Barbados, relationship to the 'TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) Council and the linkage to the 'National Strategic Plan' in Barbados.

Summary and Conclusion

The chapter summarized my research design and the methods I have adopted for data collection and analysis. It consisted of my reflective positionality, which accounts for my understanding of accreditation policy, analyzing the single policy and then comparing three policies using theoretical thematic analysis of data from forty four documents and interviews with eight elite participants. Data analysis entailed a data corpus consisting of 449 data elements. I had to carefully ensure that the research process was well managed at all stages, so as to avoid analytical problems. More importantly, critical emphasis was placed on the ethical practice in the research, taking into critical account my experiences in the field. The research design documented a method which has potential for other interpretive researchers doing policy studies on Caribbean education policy analysis approaches.

The method documented the study of the regional higher education accreditation policy model which was developed and implemented in five territories, but emphasizing policy production mechanisms in Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. Although theoretical thematic analysis was adopted as a general method, it somewhat varied in technique depending on which questions or theories were being analyzed.

Ethical issues were carefully considered in the research study by ensuring that what was articulated in the design was practised. Ethical clearance from the University of Sheffield provided the basis for ethical research conduct.

Additionally, my experiences in the field were duly recorded to account for nuances and variations that may have occurred when the study was being conducted in different research settings and with diverse participants.

In brief, the research design and methods applied presented some challenges, but also established a valuable framework for future reflexive critical education policy studies within the Caribbean.

Chapter 4

Perceptions of Caribbean Accreditation Policy Processes: Focus on Policy Definition

Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on the issue of how accreditation policy was defined, with some mention of how policy research supported policy definition. To do this, it reflects on the divergent perceptions of accreditation policy processes in the Caribbean through my experience, documentary sources and the voices of research participants. Theoretical thematic analysis was the method used for analysis of these perceptions. In short, the chapter speaks to my perceptions, as one key observer and participant of accreditation policy process, along with the accounts of others- documented in interviews, reports, policy papers, laws and related archives who collectively contributed to the understanding of policy definition and how research influenced policy definition.

The main question guiding this chapter is: What current understanding of policy processes is employed in the establishment of accreditation policies within the Caribbean? I collected data from elite informants in the field of accreditation policy in the Caribbean. Their perceptions allowed me to draw out several themes for further discussion about how policy has been defined.

Defining Caribbean Higher Education Accreditation Policy

Before I consider how higher education accreditation policy was defined within the Caribbean region, it is useful to discuss some theories which help to explain what policy is and how policies are produced. There are many different ways of defining policy. Hogwood and Gunn (1984, p. 15-18) considered policy as 'specific proposals', 'decisions by government', 'a programme', 'output', 'outcome', 'model or theory' or 'process'. In my discussion on policy definition, I am keen on understanding how the processes of policy have contributed to how policy itself has been defined. I seek to interpret how the definition of accreditation policy is to be regarded with respect to 'decision-making', 'accreditation system proposals', 'a regional or national programme of accreditation', and possibly 'outputs of the accreditation policy'. Taylor et al. (1997) have argued that public policy in education is necessary, for establishing cultural norms in schools and regulating teacher and student performance to managing educational change. To me this is important, because the very purpose of accreditation policy is to establish systems for regulation of quality assurance practices and outcomes in higher education institutions. In this context, the accreditation policies facilitate the assurance and enhancement of the quality of teaching, administration and student performance and achievement within higher education establishments that generate and implement them.

Ball (1990) and Ranson (1995) have suggested that, in a policy cycle, policy is defined within different contexts, that is, as contexts of political strategy, influence, text production, practice and outcomes. They represent different micro-

political processes and political actors who engage in policy production at the local level. These processes determine what constitutes the policy. They account for the ideas and concepts that are to be incorporated in the policy production stages and the personnel who shape them. The contexts of political strategy and influence, however, seemed to be most relevant to policy definition. *Political strategy* refers to factors and ideas supporting how and why political choices are made, while *influence* would analyze how political actors (both individuals and groups) are organized and their corresponding reasons for promoting certain policy ideas. The other contexts, that is, *text production*, *practice* and *outcomes*, actually address all stages involved in policy analysis. These stages refer to how the actual policy text is produced, how educational practice is influenced by the policy and what actions are affected by the policy during implementation. In the case of the accreditation policy, they are not being considered because they were least directly related to the policy definition process. The actual texts and interviews did not actually capture *text production*, *practice* or *outcomes* necessarily as part of the policy definition process. Essentially, *political strategy* and *influence* are those contexts I refer to when I talk about policy definition. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) have given an account of what we regard as a policy definition in their policy analysis model. As I have described in chapter 1, in their model, policy definition addresses the origin of the policy idea, the identification of the policy problem and the determination of the policy causes as key stages in policy analysis. In some measure, this activity requires data gathering and

research to understand the policy issue and so support the conceptualization of the policy.

When embarking on data analysis for this chapter, my focus was on interpreting the textual and interview data as themes to generate a discussion about how the accreditation policy was being defined, not just in terms of process but also in terms of the ideas surrounding its definition. The accreditation policy that was being examined in the study was a regional draft legislative document (CARICOM, 2002) produced by the CARICOM Secretariat to assist all CARICOM member states in establishing national accreditation systems. The document was prepared by Dr. Alvin Ashton, a consultant, who also prepared the seminal report in 1996 entitled “Towards a Regional Accreditation System” for and on behalf of the CARICOM Secretariat and the Association of Caribbean States. The CARICOM Secretariat engaged all member states in a consultative process which would have involved research and development of the policy as legislation to suit their own national contexts.

The draft legislation provided for the establishment of a national accreditation agency to govern higher education quality assurance and accreditation. It contained four parts, with as many as thirty sections. The main components of the legislation included functions (Part II, Sec. 4), powers (Part II, Sec. 5-8, 18), financial provisions (Part III) and general matters (Part IV). The functions and powers of the agency are contained in four main technical areas, that is, registration/authorization of institutions, accreditation of programmes or institutions, recognition of qualifications and the recognition of CSME skills.

Section 4 (clauses 1 and 2) of the draft legislation outlines the functions of the agency. This is where the legislation speaks to the main technical areas that are to be addressed by the national agency. The draft legislation states:

Section 4 (1): Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the national accreditation body shall be the principal body in (name of country) for conducting and advising on the accreditation and recognition of post-secondary and tertiary educational and training institutions, awards, whether local local or foreign, and for the promotion of the quality and the standards of postsecondary and tertiary education and training in (name of country)
(CARICOM, 2002, Part II, 4: 1)

The national accreditation agency was to cover a wide-spectrum of responsibilities for enhancing and assuring the quality of postsecondary and tertiary education and training within each territory where it was to be established. In fact, in accordance with the legislation, this agency would have powers above any other agency established within its borders, thereby governing all institutions, both local and foreign, offering programmes and qualifications within the jurisdiction. Further to this, the national remit requires that the agency 'provide for the advancement of education, learning, skills and knowledge' (CARICOM, 2002 Draft Bill, Part II, 4: 2.a) and 'to promote the free movement of skills and knowledge within the Caribbean Community' (*Ibid*, Part II, 4:2c). It has been duly noted that these functions are part of the larger remit of the agency to implement the accreditation policy to facilitate the development of education within the territory and for the free movement of skilled nationals within the CSME.

While CSME skills recognition seemed to have been a major function of the agency, there were several other functions that were meant to be addressed by the legislation which would have been captured by the four main technical areas spoken to. For instance, the legislation provided for the registration of institutions within and outside of the territory; the maintenance of a register of such institutions; the accreditation and re-accreditation of programmes and institutions; the validation and recognition of new courses and programmes; provision of advice on the recognition of foreign institutions; the determination of the equivalency of programmes and qualifications; the promotion of national quality assurance; and the advice given to the relevant Minister on the issuance of charters, licenses or other authorizations to institutions (*Ibid*, Part II, 4:3a-r). It is these functions which are being examined as part of this study. When questions were asked of interview participants, information was also gleaned about the specific intentions of the legislation to address the four main technical areas. This provided me with the opportunity to elicit feedback from participants as to how these technical areas were being defined in the regional legislative draft document and why they were being considered when the policy problem was being established.

Having captured the documented positions of elite participants, I accounted for how accreditation policy processes were defined in the region, with five main themes that were connected to the main research question. These themes were: i) 'Accreditation Policy Consultations'; ii) 'Quality in Tertiary Education

Institutions’; iii) ‘Tertiary Education Policies’; iv) ‘Role of Regional Players’; and v) ‘Accreditation System Models’. All themes related to each other in that they all concerned the design and development of accreditation systems. Contrary to my initial thought, the definition process seemed to have conceived that research into the development of accreditation systems was essential. It was noted that by defining the institutional quality and accreditation system models one would address the key organizational relationships which enable research into accreditation policy development. The definition process also presumed that tertiary education policies and regional players were the main policy constructs and people who informed the accreditation strategies to be executed. I will now discuss these themes as they relate to my understanding of policy definition processes.

How Accreditation Policy Consultation Supported Policy Definition

Experts interviewed for the study found that ‘Accreditation Policy Consultation’, was the means by which the accreditation policy was researched to identify the policy problem. For instance, the nature of involvement of research consultants who came mostly from certain territories, accreditation agencies and universities, and who, through their own reflexivity, brought their own personal, organizational and political agendas to the policy was worthy of noting in the policy definition stage. These persons seemed to be somewhat influential in the stages involved in the consultation process. Two key issues were researchers’

interpretation and their judgments. Ozga (2000) contended that personal values have been known to affect the activities of policy researchers, who may use their own subtle and implicit ideas and personal preferences, and so introduce within the policy. This in turn would impair researchers' judgment about the policy and contribute to lack of objectivity. Selection of consultants as researchers without clearly determined methodological and ethical approaches could make the research questionable. One research participant noted that during policy planning stages, there was a division of labour for consultancies arranged by CARICOM. The data suggested that specific territories were assigned to certain research consultants, but the procedures for selection and assignment were rather unclear. This is what this participant had to say:

Now the initial work was given to experts in the area of accreditation. I remember (named experts from Trinidad, Jamaica and Suriname). We sort of split up the countries. I think (*expert from Trinidad*) got about 3, (*expert from Suriname*) got the OECS (Organization of Eastern Caribbean States) and (*expert from Jamaica*) got also. And they did it. (P#4)

It is important to recognize how consultations with diverse groups representing social and cultural constituencies provide for democratic processes in policy development. This issue was considered during the policy definition stages. Like research consultants, stakeholder participants in the policy research were drawn from different countries and different stakeholder groups across the tertiary education sector, government and private enterprises. Employers, labour unions, bureaucrats, technocrats, as well as institutional administrators, faculty and graduates were consulted to varying degrees across the region. In fact, it appeared

that Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago seemed to have more stakeholders consulted than other territories for developing the regional and national policy framework. What was uniformly expressed in all consultations was the absence of students. One participant who played a role as research consultant during the policy research made this clear:

The people from the Ministries of Education like the Permanent Secretaries and Chief Education Officers were involved. People in the private sector organizations such as banks (bank named), employers, trade unions because they wanted to be involved. Principals of all state and private institutions that participated. But I must say that one component that was missing I did not speak to any students. If I had a second chance I would have interviewed students. (P#3)

Ranson (1995, p. 441) asked two key questions concerning the model and processes of policy making. He questioned: 'Who participates in the policy process? Is the policy generated and controlled top-down or is involvement a democratic process in which representatives take part in all or some stages of policy?' All of these questions are ideally considered during the policy conceptualization process when the policy is being defined. In this regard, as for me, the absence of the voice of students in the research process raised questions about the original strategic intent, educational value and expected outcomes of the policy. Indeed, accreditation policy is intended to mainly assure students that the programmes, qualifications and institutions they plan to be associated with are reputable. One may therefore reason, that there would be some important and legitimate concerns that students would want to share in shaping this policy. Regarding the consultation process, another view echoed a similar position which

was referred to in a technical report to internationally funded workshops being primarily facilitated by one research consultant:

....workshops were conducted by (*expert from Jamaica*) in Barbados, Suriname, Guyana and St. Lucia.....At the regional level the ACTI, CARICOM, CXC, the Caribbean Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training and several professional associations have played a critical role. Their work has been assisted by funds from the Canadian International Development Agency, the European Union, the Organization of American States and the Commonwealth Secretariat. (TR#9)

Even more interestingly, this consultant had to unilaterally advise on implementation arrangements for accreditation policy in each territory. The issue that the conceptual model and ideas surrounding this policy would have been greatly influenced by a single individual's perspectives is indeed problematic, given that this policy was to impact human resource development within as many as 15 territories, approximating a population of 6.7 million. Thus, there are ethical and sociological implications of this approach to analysis for policy. In general, I would argue that questions as to the moral value of an individual's knowledge and personal perspectives of society need to be entertained when deciding on the methodology of policy research. Pring (2000, p.145) raised a valid argument when he talked about 'the importance of principled thinking' when doing educational research. He asked what were considered good reasons for making decisions about research and what were good dispositions or attitudes of the researcher. Perhaps, it would have been useful for researchers to consider these issues when doing the research to inform accreditation policy. Related to this concern was the data collection process. Data collection came through these

consultations and different kinds of primary and secondary data were collected, analyzed and applied. However, what was common to all territories was the adoption of mixed research methods. Different kinds of data being generated from slightly different kinds of methodologies naturally would lead to different interpretations for policy definition. One participant reported that researchers performed surveys followed by analysis of policy documentation in some countries, while another indicated analyzing existing surveys to look for trends and then doing qualitative research. Despite methods varying slightly, the consensus seemed to have been that both qualitative and quantitative research were done using primary and secondary data as evidence for policy.

The Influence of Tertiary Education Institutions on Policy Definition

On the subject matter of 'Quality in Tertiary Education Institutions', experts seemed to have agreed on three major points of interest; i) the diversity of institutions, ii) standardization of quality assurance and iii) institutional data as concerns which influence the policy definition process. The number and variety of local and offshore tertiary institutions within the Caribbean region was the biggest concern under this theme. In connection with this point, both the issue of the diversity of institutional or systems quality assurance approaches in the region, and the absence of data from institutions to inform quality assurance were considered. Diversity was identified in the institutions' legal establishment, capacity, educational missions, institutional goals, modes of operation and

programme delivery modalities. Speaking about offshore universities in particular, a technical report identified how grave the issue was:

There are over 100 foreign universities operating whether virtually or in various forms of commercial presence in the English-speaking Caribbean and the number is growing. These matters are of importance because of the unstructured and unregulated proliferation of institutions purporting to deliver quality academic programmes. (TR#17)

While the report addressed the quality concerns about offshore universities operating in the region, the intention of the report could be deemed questionable. By belabouring the specific point, the author of the document argued in favour of promoting public safeguard, but concluding in the same document, that public regional and national universities were at risk of competition from offshore providers. The perception that offshore institutions lacked quality was frequently raised in discourses. These issues made me question what ideally constituted empirical evidence for the policy. Arguing a case for 'grounded' or 'grand' theories in social research, Tin (2001 p.32) said: "we embark on empirical work and collect data which initiate, refute or organize our theories and then enable us to explain our observations". This implied that any reference to quality of offshore institutions could be better made using empirical data to inform theories surrounding policy production. One participant made this clear in an interview:

There was no mechanism in place to monitor establishment of post-secondary institutions, particularly the offshore or foreign ones and the policy would stop the establishment of 'fly-by-night' institutions. (P#5)

This notion seemed to be connected to the idea that institutions did not have, or have not provided sufficient data as evidence of quality or, they lacked quality assurance systems that were regarded as effective. While offshore institutions were a prime target in the policy, some reference was made to national public institutions also. Regardless of what the perceptions were, they may have been formed because there was inadequate research to document information about the institutions which comprised the offshore sector. These perceptions may have been informed by personal opinions or political stances.

The Role of Regional Players in Defining Policy

In the context of 'Regional Players' as a theme, the UWI and ACTI played the most important part by researching and recommending accreditation models before the policy was developed. In some instances, the ideas and positions reflected in their written commentary seem to be self-serving. While UWI for instance, embraced 'offshore institutions' at times, in its writings about the issue it seemed to have also taken a competitive and protectionist stance because its own survival as an institution within the growing tertiary education sector was under consideration. Some comments were:

UWI, wearing its cap as a regional university, is at risk as the region prepares to engage the trade rules of the liberalized global economic system. (TR# 17)

For UWI to exist comfortably with its identity as a regional university it must demonstrate validity of status. (TR#9)

New UWI should lead and leverage its brand to make a quantum leap in the regional capacity to deliver quality education and training to citizens who are

demanding more than ever access to tertiary education that is a civil right.
(TR#5)

On the contrary, while ACTI did not assume any critical position on offshore institutions, it was primarily concerned with its own members' development. These members were primarily national community colleges, colleges and universities within the region. These points seem to have stemmed from competition for resources and markets. Competition for student markets may be a key reason for policy reforms. A good reference for this was the study by Ladner and Brouillette (2000) who examined resource-based policy reforms in Michigan as means of competition to improve institutions. They showed that students were the ones who determined higher education markets, and that with intense competition for students, institutions showed marked quality improvements. This in turn affected national policies.

How Tertiary Education Policies Enabled Accreditation Policy Definition

Development of 'Tertiary Education Policies' in the region was another major issue considered when defining accreditation policy. The development of accreditation policy was shown to have been linked to existing national and international tertiary education policies. The prime factors motivating tertiary education policy were higher education 'finance' and 'access'. With respect to access, both borderless education and workforce development strategies were involved. Interestingly, international tertiary education policies provided the

context for analyzing other country tertiary education systems and their corresponding accreditation models, while examining the globalization factors that are impacting them. One participant also shared what was considered to be the prevailing ideas concerning external triggers for establishing an accreditation model framework. This showed close resemblance to Jules' (2008) views about roles played in a tripartite policy discourse involving the local, regional and international actors:

We also had to look at what accreditation meant in the modern context, modern world. For example, what was the prevailing philosophy and understanding of accreditation in various countries especially to make sure that whatever policy you developed was in alignment with what those of other countries see as the main considerations for the development of this kind of thing. We looked at it from the national point of view, the regional point of view and from the international point of view. (P#4)

Additionally, in a published report this point was highlighted:

Intensification of the regional integration process necessitates that effective accreditation systems be put in place for international comparability of regional tertiary education. (TR#8)

As was mentioned in chapter 2, borderless and workforce education models presented challenges for Caribbean territories. Learning about and introducing these models from international quality assurance and accreditation systems required careful consideration of the Caribbean context. In terms of borderless education, for example, UNESCO places this in a very interesting global context. Williams (2003) described the strong tensions between trade liberalists and education practitioners in the commodification of education through what is

termed 'McDonaldization'. Williams has argued that educational borderlessness is a major profitable venture for private education providers and commercial entities. In much the same way, Hartmann's (2010) view that UNESCO's higher education priorities make it a global player in the global qualifications market is of significance in this discussion about the Caribbean. It echoes the strong sentiment that this hegemonic power makes UNESCO influential in any Caribbean discourse on education in a global context. Further emphasizing William's point, Ladner and Brouillette (2000) have enunciated that resource-based reforms in the United States, have created immense displeasure because of the 'income of cash-strapped public universities and institutions suffering from declining state budgets'. Higher education institutions face similar challenges where workforce development is concerned. The United States Department of Labor (2009) justified this issue in the wake of the current perceived global economic crisis. They supported the position that governments have to also manage their resources in support of corporate workforce development initiatives, and not just those in universities. They also confirmed that these resources needed to be strongly integrated in state and private sector measures for employment, career development and economic stabilization. It is here where there are challenges for Caribbean societies when thinking of workforce education models within regional and national accreditation contexts.

Notwithstanding the impact of borderlessness and workforce issues as globalization factors on Caribbean higher education, the issue of international standardization of such higher education systems was also considered in the

discourse among technocrats. Attwood (2009) identified comparability in universities as a feature of future quality assurance systems in England and Northern Ireland. It stands to reason that international comparability requires comparative studies on international systems so as to construct comprehensive regional accreditation systems. It is my view that such comprehensive accreditation systems must reflect on conventional and unconventional tertiary education models. It must also reflect on globalization issues to include borderless and distance education and educational vocationalization approaches. The issue of globalization has been frequently mentioned by participants during the interviews and reported in documentation. However, the discourse on accreditation policy has not adequately described the corresponding globalization factors that seemed to have influenced the policy, except for regional-national relationships and movement of people. In one instance globalization was reported to be:

erosion of national boundaries allowing for freer movement of students, faculty and information. (TR#9)

It must be noted here that globalization, which is a key topic for consideration in this study, is being analyzed within the context of accreditation policy processes and has been considered in chapter 6. Ideas on globalization were also represented under the theme 'Accreditation System Model' during the policy definition stage. In the case of the latter, the proposal was for the establishment of a parent regional agency to provide for oversight of the national systems of accreditation. National agencies were seen as being strategically-relevant, structurally-fit and operationally-suitable entities. To become such agencies the policy needed to

account for effective resources, such as adequate budgets, effective people and having implementable strategies. Such comments were made in policy reports and by interview participants who expressed this quite clearly:

It is anticipated that the secretariat (*accreditation council*) would be partially self-financing, with funds derived from the following sources (*sources named*) (PR#7)

In addition to the regionalization threat, there is a matter of cost. The establishment of all institutions requires resources. Acquiring resources to support and sustain national accreditation bodies in small countries with small tertiary systems and with competing demands from other sectors is no doubt a challenge. (P#9)

Having noted the ideas of technocrats who were involved in researching, advocating and writing the accreditation policies, the acceptance by main policy actors within the CSME was then addressed in the study.

The CSME: Acceptance of Higher Education Accreditation Policy Ideas

Having identified the documented positions of the elite participants I have interviewed and those stated in texts, I will now attempt to respond to how the ideas that were being proposed during policy definition were accepted within the CSME at the time of policy production. I think this is important because in the policy definition process, it is possible for ideas being recommended not to be accepted within the policy definition stages because of the varied interests of policy actors.

Jules (2008) showed that various audiences had different interests in education policies in the CSME, and that major policy actors pursued different activities to appease these audiences, depending on their roles and functions in the policy definition process. In terms of accreditation policies, diverse opinions seemed to have been held by different policy actors. The policy actors were those stakeholders mentioned earlier, namely Ministries of Education officials, accreditation agency professionals, heads of institutions, faculty in institutions, labour unions, employers, graduates and students. The study revealed three main themes which showed the extent to which CSME accreditation policy actors accepted the policy discourse. These were i) 'Accreditation Policy Engages Regional Participants', ii) 'CARICOM Countries Agreed to Regional-National System Model', and iii) 'Regional Institutions Supported System'. In general, the policy actors which included CARICOM countries and regional higher education institutions and bodies, were engaged through qualitative and quantitative research methods. The main position established by these actors was by having a dual regional-national accreditation system model operating in the Caribbean region, the CSME stood to benefit.

Acceptance of Accreditation Policy by Regional Participants

The first theme 'Accreditation Policy Engages Regional Participants' referred to three aspects. On the one hand, the consultation process, which was described in the previous section, was performed in all territories. On another, data was being

obtained from varying kinds of policy actors; such as politicians, government employees, technocrats, accreditation personnel, employers, and institutional heads, faculty and graduates. It was at this level that information sharing about the policy ideas occurred and positive feedback was being received by these stakeholders. While feedback was encouraged, I did not get the sense that the consultation process included a wide cross section of actors from the tertiary sector in each territory. It also did not encourage adequate in-depth discussions with these actors. Crossley and Holmes (2001, p. 398) referred to this issue when they suggested that, 'participatory approaches to research....contribute to human development processes....the common feature is to increase stakeholder participation in the research process and contribute to social change'. In fact, from my interaction with the participants from the two universities I interviewed, their lack of understanding of the policy ideas, intent and structure suggested that the policy research process was probably conducted for satisfying political expediency. Their views can be summarized in some of the primary themes documented in the study:

A: UWI does not implement the policy but complies.

B: UWI sees national accreditation as fragmenting regional institutions.

C: UWI sees institutional authorization as registration.

D: UWI has not benefited from free movement.

E: USC sees registration as institutional authorization which validates institution.

G: USC has not benefited from free movement.

Although the accreditation policy draft (CARICOM Draft Bill, 2002) referred to four main functions of accreditation agencies as registration, institutional authorization, accreditation and qualifications recognition, the statements made by senior personnel concerned with quality assurance and accreditation matters at UWI and USC showed a disconnect between implementation of these functions and the actual intention of these functions in the policy. What I have found even more interesting is, despite this disconnect, the UWI has been documented as one of the main proponents of regional accreditation systems, and having been aggressively involved in many years of research into accreditation policy development. One would not expect that UWI personnel responsible for quality assurance would be unaware of the policy intent. It is perhaps obvious, therefore, that there is need to ensure that policies are articulated and harmonized with institutional quality assurance strategies and systems. This also supported the view that continuous communication of such a policy with the main policy actors is needed to build shared understanding, agreement and engagement.

Fowler (2000) addressed the role of formal implementers of policy. She mentioned that government officials and intermediaries, which included delegated authorities, are actors in policy implementation. She maintained that successful implementation depends upon 'developing and maintaining the will and capacity of the intermediaries' (*Ibid*, p.270-271). It is, therefore, this lack of motivation and knowledge that creates problems for policy implementation. These issues have substantiated my initial notions about the policy process. It did in fact represent one of my key motivating factors for researching accreditation policy

processes. Having raised Dale's (2005) and Engel's (2008) points about exploring the different scalar governance relationships in chapter 3, I would only say here that the role of formal implementers needs to be understood in the governance systems for accreditation. Another key concern which was discussed above, was the underrepresentation of students in the policy consultation activities. Research participants generally felt that students were excluded in consultations and that they should have been duly recognized as important and accordingly considered.

Acceptance of Accreditation Policy By CARICOM Countries

Another important theme which was supported by policy actors in the CSME was that 'CARICOM Countries Agreed to Regional-National System Model'. There were two main issues considered during policy definition. One was the establishment of national bodies and the other was the adoption of partnership models within a regional system. CARICOM officials and Ministers of Education went on record as having supported the development of both regional and national bodies. Interestingly, their primary concern seemed to have stemmed from a keen interest in wanting to have the CSME established, because to them an accreditation system would enable freer movement of skilled nationals to make the Caribbean market work effectively. The discussions from Hall (2001), Demas (Hall, 2001) and Arthur (Government of Barbados, 2004) about the political intent of implementing the Grand Anse declaration that were proffered in chapter

4 highlighted why this was the case. This was recorded in an interview from a participant who observed these deliberations:

The policy directive came from two levels, the heads of government of CARICOM and the COHSOD (CARICOM Council on Human and Social Development) Ministers. I think these policies were in relation to specific needs that those who attended-Ministers and Heads-thought had to be met or satisfied in terms of the decisions about the accreditation thing actually giving effect to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. (P#4)

CARICOM made early progress in working towards the implementation of national accreditation bodies. One policy document reported this decision clearly:

The Seventh Meeting of COHSOD held in Guyana in October 2002 had agreed that emphasis be placed on the establishment of national accreditation bodies by March 2003 and in response to this decision Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis and Jamaica had all made significant progress in establishing national bodies that are consistent with this mandate. (TR#2)

Jules (2008) highlighted in his study the high level of political involvement through Heads of States and Education Ministers in the education policies he analyzed. He also noted that there was a similar state of affairs with the development of the accreditation policy, and the corresponding agencies. In fact, the policy has been regarded as one of the most successful CARICOM-led policies. This is not surprising given the benefits to the nation state and the region. In her chapter, Uvalic-Trumbic (2007) reflected on the global discourses in higher education policy that has impacted accreditation values and systems. Her thoughts appear to be relevant to the Caribbean regional discourses, where she underscored the important role of national governments and international organizations in

propelling a successful movement. One participant made a useful point about the policy success within the region, but was careful to comment about some gaps in the policy process:

I think so far it has been effective. Of course the monitoring and evaluation must continue. The empirical data must be collected along the way to get the impact of the policy. This is one of the policies that have gone to implementation in the shortest space of time from my experience. P#1

Acceptance of Accreditation Policy By Regional Institutions

On the theme 'Regional Institutions Supported System' the point was already made that CARICOM, CXC, UWI and ACTI were all concerned at varying levels during policy definition. CARICOM was the policy manager of the policy processes. Its primary function was to facilitate the policy research to develop models and get approval from heads of states for national engagement by governments of the region. While UWI, ACTI and CXC were concerned about their own organizations' interests, they also enabled many activities to promote regional accreditation through academic discourses, reports, consultations and implementation. The roles may have varied depending on the organization's perceived interests. For instance, UWI, being one of many higher education institutions was known to provide research and advocacy with respect to development of the policy, because of its history and position of influence with CARICOM. For UWI, this was seen as a fulfillment of its strategic mandate to

CARICOM but benefited in having a policy that would serve its own advancement in a competitive industry.

Martin (1998, p.15) spoke to this when he described the role of academia in research, in that it 'heightens the power of the researchers as well as builds bonds between the specialist research community and the specialist users of the research'. In much a similar way, ACTI benefited. It had a more direct relationship as it was regarded as an implementation agency for the policy. With reference to the relationship between CARICOM and ACTI, one report made reference to this rather clearly:

In response to the governments' identified need for regional harmonization of tertiary education, ACTI in collaboration with CARICOM, developed a proposal to address this need and presented this proposal to the annual regional Ministers of Education meeting in 1982. ACTI was mandated by the governments to be the primary implementation agency of this proposed mechanism with CARICOM giving administrative and technical support. The regional accreditation thrust had formally been launched. TR#8

What was strikingly obvious from the interviews and reports in the research was the historical place that regional institutions have in this policy process. Although ACTI was charged with the original mandate as described, and UWI played a key role in providing policy advice from the early stages, when the policy was being finalized as a draft document, the implementation arrangements were almost entirely between CARICOM and national governments. Having examined this closely my view was that countries began to take more ownership for the policy and wanted to embrace it as theirs and so did not want external parties to the process.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter established a context for defining accreditation policy within the Caribbean by firstly outlining the concept of policy definition. It announced the key messages from accreditation policy experts and actors, which speak to how the policy originated and with whom, how it was being identified and what constituted the processes for its conceptual framework.

Several key themes that emerged are important for discussion here. One interesting issue was that, like myself as an accreditation policy researching practitioner, policy researchers and actors who came from different establishments and experiences seriously influenced policy thinking through their personal and professional positionalities. While this is to be expected in policy conceptualization, in the case of the accreditation policy, organizational politics and the power of human agency engendered specific biases in the policy definition process. For instance, CARICOM's agenda of establishing the CSME and facilitating free movement of skilled nationals was a critical factor governing the policy's origin. Additionally, UWI's argument that offshore and borderless institutions presented challenges to the quality of the tertiary education sector and needed to be regulated accordingly was also significant issue under consideration when the policy was being conceptualized.

Secondly, what was also rather peculiar was the almost unanimous opinion among research participants that students, who represented the consumers of the accreditation policies that were being established, were essentially unsolicited

when the policy problem was being considered. In fact, this issue was characteristic during the policy consultation process. The theoretical and ethical value of the policy, therefore, comes into question. A third critical issue was the research methodologies that were going to be employed. While quantitative data was being generated for research during conceptualization stages, most of the research data came through conversations that researchers had with politicians, bureaucrats and technocrats in government and institutions. The concern being raised is whether or not these conversations generated sufficient information to formulate the policy.

Finally, there were several issues under consideration by regional bodies and actors within the CSME as the policy was being conceptualized. There seemed to have been favour found with the policy from the CARICOM Heads of governments to regional hegemonic entities. Regional institutions like the UWI and ACTI were actively involved and contributed vastly to the processes of policy definition by generating ideas of what the policy could be and why it was needed.

So having posed the main research question here, that is, '*What current understanding of policy processes are employed in the establishment of accreditation policies within the Caribbean?*', this chapter presents two points to answer the question. Prior to analyzing the views of others, my understanding was one which considered that while accreditation policy definition processes did employ some research, there was not enough, but that political choices were far more explored and more influential. From analyzing the views of others, through the study, this perception has slightly changed. There was more empirical research

performed than I had imagined, but not using appropriate methodologies to justify the policy choices. The second issue which stood out in terms of understanding was the policy considerations seemed to have involved an ideological difference between the regional hegemonic agencies. CARICOM supported free movement of skilled capital across nation states in the CSME, while regional higher education institutions like the UWI argued for the policy to regulate borderless and offshore institutions.

Chapter 5

Issues in National and Regional Accreditation Policy Processes:

Focus on Policy Research

Introduction

In the previous chapter I articulated how accreditation policy was being defined. In that chapter I gave an account of the origin, problem identification and conceptual understanding of the accreditation policy and showed how the key messages that were being transmitted and received across the region through the ‘voices’ of policy experts and actors were contributing to policy definition. In this chapter, the focus is on analyzing the accreditation policy research agenda and processes from national and regional perspectives. In developing the argument, I have recognized that issues in policy research are intimately connected with how the policy is being defined and negotiated.

The main research question addressed in this chapter is: *What are the perceived roles and implications of empirical research, civil society participation and politics in accreditation policy processes and how can they be improved in future Caribbean education policy processes?* To do this, I will start with a discussion of what is policy research and how participation by actors and political agencies and players has contributed to the research agenda. This would explain why I have deliberately chosen the themes I present in this chapter.

Understanding Research in Caribbean Accreditation Policy

Chapters 1 and 3 gave an overview of the value of research in policy production. These chapters essentially discussed the point that research provides evidence for policy. I intimated that Ozga's (2000) conceptual model for researching policy takes into account not just the importance of research and its associated methodologies, but also identifies the constituencies in research and what they bring to the research agenda and process. Research is not merely a distinct process from other stages in policy production. Research can be linked to the policy definition and policy negotiation stages in that evidence is gathered through a process of enquiry to define the policy and then negotiate it.

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have added to the debate by arguing a case for a global education policy research agenda. They suggested that appropriate research questions need to be correctly framed to understand the globalization of education policy. Similarly, Engel (2008) calls for an understanding of scalar politics in education policy production, which requires that critical research be undertaken to inform policies within scalar levels. Scalar politics attempts to capture the varied levels of influence in policy making from globalization to glocalization. There is the obvious need to use research to clarify the globalization agenda and how national and local entities may introduce them, while remaining conscious and relevant within their socio-economic and cultural contexts. Thus, an obvious connection exists among the research agenda, the research methodology employed and the policy actors within civil society that includes politicians. It is

within this research endeavour that a clear relationship among the actors and the research itself is understood.

During the accreditation policy definition stages in the Caribbean, ideas were generated about what the research may have entailed. These ideas could be viewed at two different scalar policy levels, that is both regionally and nationally. In regional terms, the research agenda and process may have engaged regional hegemonic entities such as CARICOM, UWI and ACTI. Nationally, Ministries of Education, technical entities and other constituencies may have been involved in facilitating research within its national context. Given this situation, there is need to have details of the research endeavour documented for the accreditation policy under study.

What I have undertaken to do in this chapter is to provide evidence of the research processes by addressing what was being researched, how this research was being organized and conducted, who was involved in the research and why they would have been involved. These issues are presented separately under two broad headings. The first explains issues that transpired during the regional processes while the second theme attends to those research issues that were incorporated at the national levels.

Regionalism and Higher Education Accreditation Policy Research

As explained in chapters 1 and 2, the issue of regionalism was critically considered in the policy production processes. Regionalism was not just a concept that was under consideration within the Caribbean, but also an issue that was being researched to inform policy making. Research into regionalism and its relationship to accreditation policy processes was considered from the thematic analysis of the accreditation policy. Here five main themes emerged that corresponded to stages in regional accreditation policy processes. These were: i) 'Coordinated Development Planning'; ii) 'CARICOM/Government Roles; iii) 'Expansion of Quality Access'; iv) 'Coordination of Regional-National Bodies' and v) 'Recognized Regional Human Mobility'. These themes collectively represented the idea that in the research process involving the accreditation policy, a regional-national ideological dichotomy existed which was perpetuated by different political, social and educational agendas. These research agendas either wanted a more regional or national focus on the accreditation mechanism or they preferred that the policy addressed institutional quality issues or student, graduate and labour mobility across the CSME.

Regional Planning Processes

'Coordinated Development Planning' was an aspect of research that was considered in the planning of the accreditation policy. While the policy was being conceptualized, research examined the needs of governments within the region to

consider other plans from developed countries, and so use these ideas and models to develop national plans for establishment of accreditation systems. When conducting empirical research for policy planning, three main but related activities were involved. In the first case, international policies and plans were being rationalized for preparation of regional plans. While there was some adaptation to the process, there may have been more model adoption and so policy transfer. One report highlighted this idea:

A better approach would be to adapt the various models to our own needs and circumstances on the basis of continuing research and a strengthening of regional collegiality. The principles in the foreign models that have general relevance will have to be recognized and re-engineered to relate to the peculiarities of the regional context. (TR#8)

Jules (2008) referred to 'externalization' of policy when he reported the period for education policy production in CARICOM. Externalization processes encouraged CARICOM nations to look outwardly and to adapt or adopt foreign models and policies. This was obviously being considered in the research stages of the policy.

The second activity which involved research referred to the mode of national policy engagement within the regional context. CARICOM had overall responsibility for, and was acting on behalf of, nation states within the region. In all policy cases, national engagement meant that draft national legislation being designed by CARICOM was to prepare a country's own legislation that would be context-specific. This was a research intensive activity. Like the previous activity, this stage was apparently, and essentially, utilizing policy transfer but supported

by contextualization. One expert's point substantiated the issues surrounding both activities:

It was necessary to have a policy to make sure that it was enforced and the views of the model legislation for the national accreditation council will be used in Barbados. There are changes with Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago but they generally followed the model. There is some local context but mostly it comes from the model legislation. (P#2)

What was regarded as 'enforcement of the policy' against the regional model and, the issue of having 'some local context', were the preferred approaches in most cases to produce the accreditation policy. The discussion in chapter 3 about the new regionalism and regionalization, substantially contributes to the present argument in that while nation states in the CSME are known to be taking a nationalistic posture, they are 'regionalizing', and so policy congruency becomes an ideal matter for them. Stromquist (2002 p. 57) suggested that this kind of coordination of policy facilitates 'any tradable good or service' and in this policy case accreditation is viewed by CARICOM and national governments as a tradable service. Stromquist's (2002, p.57) identification of 'policy modernization' as being the 'local interpretations and political and technical conditions' of policy, may be a relevant issue here. There is no doubt that national governments wanted some contextualization. While there was some intention to meet local demands, there was more an intention to adapt the regional policy, to modernize it and make it a local policy. Furthermore, the approach spoke largely to a planned process of infiltration of external values to satisfy a global agenda of having a 'harmonized regional accreditation system'. This was recommended,

without careful consideration of the truly national value systems and the tertiary sector requirements that would be linked to practices in administration, teaching and learning in institutions.

The third activity related to the process of research involved in the regional planning process for the development of the model framework for the national agency. The content of the legislation in some instances was not far off from the original regional model documents. This will be discussed in chapter 6 when looking at harmonization of policy within the policy negotiation context. Furthermore, when it came to incorporating regional ideas in national planning there was some resemblance in methodologies. In some cases, as in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, agency planning was done in two steps. The initial agency plan was developed by external consultants, government committees or Ministries of Education, but used no clear cut strategic or operational planning methods. Interview questions and reports did not reveal use of any strategic management processes, methods or tools. The plans were merely a list of functions and expected outcomes with associated budgets to receive state funds for implementation. There were no metrics or few measures for determining policy success. The intention was for accreditation agencies to manage the policy. These decentralized management practices that were delegated to the agencies appeared to follow the corporate managerialism philosophy. Espoused by Sinclair, Weller and Lewis and Yeatman (Taylor et al., 1997, p. 81) as 'rational, output oriented, plan-based and management-led', 'managing for results', 'doing more with less, 'focusing on effectiveness' and 'managing change better' these were preferred

approaches to implementation of policy. There was an obvious divide noted, however, between the articulation of policy values written in the form of legislation text created by CARICOM and the national governments, and the implementation planning done at the national level by governments and accreditation agencies. It appeared that the preferred model was for national governments to identify macro-policy plans for accreditation with budgets for implementation while national agencies would spell out their implementation plans in more detail. A few expert views reveal these general ideas. Some are being cited here:

A: A detailed strategic plan would have established their priorities and so on and would have said for the first year we recommend to the board this is what we should go with. You also need in the secretariat people who were good with project proposal development and therefore people could articulate what the project proposal was all about. It is very important in project execution that the researcher must have a proper understanding of what the project was all about. (P#4)

B: In terms of arriving at cost-benefit analyses, as far as I can recall I cannot say that this was done. (P#7)

C: There were no outcomes. (P#3)

Despite the inability to plan ahead at the regional level, after agencies were established, the tendency was for boards to introduce resource planning activities with the aim of identifying suitable human, material and financial resources to deliver goals and functions. In some instances, strategic planning was coordinated at this level. This was expressed by one expert who had a good recollection of what politicians were saying at CARICOM:

What they were saying was that the secretariat would come under the board. The board would spell out activities for a year or so. They would give the strategic direction and so on and that the secretariat would outsource the work rather than having a big staff to do it. They thought that the work would be so varied and so different that even if you employ staff full time you would have this versatility capability to carry out the work. The secretariat would have oversight and get the work done. (P#4)

CARICOM envisioned that staff personnel within the agencies would determine the implementation details through strategic and project management agendas. The corporate managerial philosophy for planned change and effectiveness would have been embraced at the level of the boards and secretariats of the agencies. Referring to Considine's theory, Taylor *et al.* (1997) argued that this model of corporate managerialism focuses on a 'narrowing of policy goals which are set at a higher level within the organization, with responsibility for achievement of such goals devolved to lower levels within the organization' (*Ibid*, p. 82). Additionally, Burbules and Torres (2000, p. 118) spoke about the shift towards a more neoliberal discourse in education policy characterized by 'new contractualism' or neoliberal politicization of public management. This discourse suggested a separation of powers from what one can term the 'political' and 'governance'. Corporate managerialism provided an argument for self-governance by public authorities, whose decision-making can be autonomous from politics. However in reality the twain hardly ever separated in practice.

CARICOM-Government Roles and Relationships

The research agenda and process highlighted that both CARICOM and national governments played very necessary roles and established formidable relationships to develop the accreditation policy mechanism within the CSME. As mentioned above, where the discussion focused on the coordination of development planning, the next theme 'CARICOM/Government Roles' showed many similarities. Contrastingly, however, it identified the relationships between the CARICOM Secretariat and the national governments that may have contributed to the planning process. It was also stated in chapters 1 and 2 that CARICOM was structured along the lines of a regionalization agency model for coordinating accreditation system efficiency. While this was the case with CARICOM, national governments were on the contrary more reflective. These opposing views could be seen as somewhat of a dilemma but could be argued by Pryke's (2009) idea that where globalization exists, nationalism is pushed to the side with regionalism, as a form of globalization, taking centre stage. Notwithstanding this, the policy research process pinpointed that national governments examined their internal mechanisms for facilitating tertiary sector effectiveness and determined the value of accreditation to national development. Four thoughts highlighted these points:

A: The recommendation was initially for a sub-regional accreditation agency overarched by a regional accreditation system. (P#4)

B: There are several issues affecting policy: national institutions, regional ones in the CSME and migration is another. The issue started with an elitist model for access and with increasing demand for access it created more spaces and accordingly quality became an issue. (P#7)

C: The motivating factors are improvement, articulation and national competitiveness. (P#3)

D: I think it may have started with the institutions who were concerned about issues of validity. Also, governments were concerned about validity and portability of what they were supporting within their countries. (P#3)

During consultation, it became apparent that the country support for the policy was at essentially two levels. On the one hand, national governments wanted a policy that would enhance country competitiveness, while the citizenry preferred a policy that would better administrative, teaching and learning practices in institutions comprising the tertiary sector as well as ensure validity in these practices. The views of experts for two different countries supported this point:

The motivating factors were improvement, articulation and competitiveness. (P#3)

I think that when it would have taken a different dimension was when we started to look at the quality of local institutions. (P#1)

Coordination of Regional-National Bodies

The theme 'Coordination of Regional-National Bodies' was another key concern with respect to regionalism raised by experts. In chapter 2, the purpose of the regionalism thrust was made clear. Policy actors, who were consulted, intimated that there were two driving forces that would have enabled the regional accreditation movement by CARICOM. One was the objective to establish the CSME as a free market with free movement of skilled capital, and the other was to have an accreditation system that would enhance the competitiveness of the region by having improved tertiary education systems.

The interviews I conducted, in particular, showed that coordination function seemed to have entailed four steps during the research phase in developing the policy. Firstly, having sponsored relationships with international agencies, ACTI had put forward a proposal in 1996 after several prior consultations in the early to mid 1990s for the regional accreditation movement. Secondly, CARICOM Heads discussed and agreed on the proposals in 1997 to be implemented by the CARICOM Secretariat. The implementation occurred by commissioning further studies using appointed consultants, and having reports presented back to CARICOM. The third step entailed CARICOM preparing a draft national legislation for countries to consider in 2000 to develop into national legislation. The fourth was the national consultation processes, which entailed establishment of the national accreditation bodies in 2004. While these steps were more or less standard, the actual national consultation and national legislative processes varied from country to country (Roberts, 2003). Described previously in the chapter, these largely depended on the consultant's preferred methodological approach, and the country's national engagement and policy formulation processes, a stance in line with what Rizvi and Lingard (2010) had argued. The desire for the policy to be harmonized and controlled at the region level, together with the view that policy research needed to be embraced by countries' own national processes, were problematic concerns.

These concerns have been raised by Hammersley (2002) in his argument where he examined the value of managing control and diversity in educational research for policy. Hammersley (2002, p. 102) contended that 'the contrast between

diversity and control does not match that between political virtue and vice; nor is it an opposition between the two, mutually incompatible, perspectives'. He further defended that in times of scarce resources, by using research coordination, democratic control should be done to maximize the benefits, especially where public funds are being spent on research for the public good. His argument is also one for diversity in the policy research process, with the goal of 'amplifying the voices of the marginalized' and that 'research be left to the freedom of the market' (Hammersley, p. 103) in a neoliberal democracy. In agreement with Hammersley, some of the views expressed show the various approaches and ideas surrounding the research into policy:

A: They were thinking of having an overarching regional accreditation mechanism and national accreditation bodies in respective member countries. And that overarching body was to provide guidance criteria and standards on the basis by which national bodies would be operating. (P#4)

B: If anything it will concretize where Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica go in accreditation in terms of harmonizing standards and that a common approach to how we go about accreditation. (P#2)

C: In Jamaica it originated with the institutions themselves and they approached government to set up a body which would bring more cohesiveness into the system through standards so that students can move from one country to another by means of articulation. (P#3)

D: I think when it would have taken on a different dimension in Trinidad was when we started to look at the quality of local institutions. (P#1)

These articulated positions showed that while the policy was the intended to support the establishment of harmonized accreditation systems across the region, the approaches being used as in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago to formulate the laws took on a more national agenda by looking at the quality of institutions

comprising the sector and wanting them to improve. This is where diversity was celebrated in the research process by examining socio-cultural and educational issues. These issues are further discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Expansion of Access and Human Mobility in the CSME

Access to quality tertiary education and the corresponding free movement of skills were critical regionalization issues considered in the research process. Another matter connected to policy research that was expressed was stated in the theme 'Expansion of Quality Access'. The expansion of quality tertiary education access in the region was seen as not just providing for public good, but as a means to social transformation. In conceptualizing the quality and access relationship, Gonzales and Espinosa regarded it as 'adding value' and 'transforming people' while Vessuri saw it as facilitating participation for 'solutions to urgent human problems such as population, the environment, peace and international understanding, democracy and human rights' (Sobrinho, 2008, p. 86, 89). Generally, experts agreed that diversity of institutions and programmes proliferating within the region was to be noted as a research issue for defining the regional policy. Thus, while data were collected on the issue, further research may have been needed to articulate the policy. The need for negotiated access of tertiary education opportunities, and the free movement of students and graduates within the region had to be supported within systems for quality assurance and accreditation at the national levels. Institutional legitimacy was, therefore, central

to the mechanisms for further quality tertiary access within the CSME. Different statements made by interviewees in the study have substantiated these claims.

A: There were a growing number of foreign institutions seeking to operate within Barbados. (P#2)

B: There was a move to borderless tertiary education in the Caribbean and governments wanted standards in place to safeguard citizens. (P#7)

C: I think the problem was that students needed to move more freely from one institution to another without repeating courses because it was a waste of resources and time and at the same time having quality instruction, standards for examinations and certificates to be recognized. (P#3)

As indicated, the lack of empirical data from the institutions within the region that could have substantiated the policy proposals for creating access was an issue. In fact, there seemed to have been more of a preoccupation with political ideals and agendas for access to be supported. By having regional tertiary sector data, the policy would have 'added value'. So that the validation of institutions' existence, the safeguard of public concerns and the creation of opportunities for citizens within institutions inclusive of avoidance of wastage of public resources were the principal aims.

The fifth theme 'Recognized Regional Human Mobility' was a critical research consideration which spoke to the issues of student and graduate mobility within a regionalized context. Experts I interviewed thought that regional human mobility was considered in the framework for movement of students, faculty and graduates within the CSME during the policy research. While this is the case, the matter was not necessarily entertained during the policy negotiation stage, because it was viewed as a strategy and outcome of the policy, and not something

politicians were concerned with at that stage of policy development. Different perceptions were identified by one expert who had different experiences of the policy. One view held was:

I would tell you that it is the work of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago that has impacted our work even in the entire Caribbean. I did not find that Accreditation Councils in other places have placed in our hands policies or procedures that can affect our operations so what we have done is extend what pertains in terms of our requirements for Trinidad outwards to other countries where we exist. We do this because we see all our students wherever they are as (name of institution) students and this is where we have our main operations in Trinidad. (P#6)

This point suggested that during policy development, there was a single improvement philosophy that was being driven by one accreditation agency that would have facilitated research into policy. The main objective of the philosophy was to benefit students, wherever they were located, so that they can move freely throughout the institutions in the region. Despite this idea being perpetuated through policy research phases, it should be noted that in implementation it is not necessarily the case. A contrary view was expressed by the same expert as far as movement was concerned:

I would say that our workforce on campus has benefited as we are able to get persons who are professionally qualified to work here. Our CARICOM students do not have a problem coming here. We have a fixed bond with the Immigration Division for our Caribbean students. So our students have at least benefited as they did not come through the CSME programme in a sense. (P#6)

The institution's philosophy and mission have identified where it wants to go with student mobility. However, in fact, this study contends that the actual policy has not been embraced in practice. This is so because the institution is somewhat

unfamiliar with the CSME free movement policy as it related to higher education accreditation.

Having elaborated the ideas and situations which have supported the regionalization of the accreditation policy, the next section is devoted to the national issues encountered during research into the policy. Some of these have been already mentioned in this section. Nevertheless, they can be elaborated to show the special instances where peculiarities were involved.

Nationalism and Higher Education Accreditation Policy Research

It has been hitherto described that 'thinking nationalism' was an ideal approach for some countries as they embraced the regional higher education accreditation model. Mention has already been made in chapter 2 of Pryke's (2009) conception of what it means to be nationalistic within a global setting. In this regard, a very important point to note is the relationship between the political process and national agendas for accreditation. In defending his three dimensions to education policy making, Ball (1990, p.10) examined the role of the political process. His proposal says that the political dimension should begin with a realist/interactionist theoretical strategy, which considers 'forms of governance and the changing role and nature of influential groups and constituencies in the policy process'. Political strategies, therefore, embrace stages in definition and negotiation of the policy where politicians are able to articulate their values and views for policy development. However, it is the research process which facilitates the provision

of pertinent data and information that may substantiate the claims to be made during the policy definition and negotiation stages. In this context, the research agenda and process harnessed information to allow for political support for the policy at the national level. This was considered in two main themes which were identified from secondary themes from coded data. These were: i) 'Regional-National Functional Relationships' and ii) 'Influence of Regional Players'. These have been already considered to some extent in the section above.

Nationalism and the Regional-National Political Setting

The relationships between regional and national discourses in higher education accreditation policy research were somewhat problematic. For one, the issue of articulating an understanding and process for the 'Regional-National Functional Relationships' required the commitment by politicians to ensure that there were synergies existing between the regional higher education accreditation mechanism and the national accreditation bodies. Politicians appeared to have believed that by having a well established policy framework that overarched the accreditation system, the policy would be effective. Therefore, the functional relationship between the national bodies and the regional system was their primary interest. There were two different levels of political action taken by governments. On the one hand, high level support came from heads of state and their Ministers of Education through the machinery of CARICOM. This was often quoted in documentation as the most popular form of political interest. In the case of

national political engagement, politicians' roles were mostly limited to ensuring legislation passage through Parliament and the approval by the executive of budgetary measures for the agency establishment. But one testimony showed that the supranational organizational buy-in and commitment was greater than for national efforts:

It was the decision for these countries to go ahead and develop these accreditation agencies and noting was happening. We conducted the necessary needs analysis to establish why this was taking place. What we found was that the country did not have the capacity to do it all. So CARICOM went ahead and of course with the support of these countries they developed a model through legislation. (P#4)

In the relationship between the regional and national political processes, hegemonic power issues may have played out during policy formulation. Foucault's (1998) theory of power raised some useful points that contributed to the debates about higher education accreditation policy. Foucault saw power as an organization within a multiplicity of force relations aiming to consolidate, transform or strengthen it. His is a productive and relational view of power. He viewed power as strategic relationships within society working to improve social organization. The dual accreditation mechanism relationships that have been proposed have received a lot of continued support from chief politicians and others within the national bureaucracy. This support served to strengthen the systems and to ensure improvement of political, social and educational functions within nation states.

The theme which focused on the 'Influence of Regional Players' was another research-specific matter in the regional-national relationship issue, involving

regional players such as ACTI, UWI and CXC. Their political strategies would have supported the policy through their research agendas, discourse through advocacy and their political posturing. These organizations held prestigious positions and roles in relation to the policy development process, particularly as they were approved by CARICOM in advisory capacities to inform the policy research processes. ACTI, UWI and CXC, being transnational agencies and regional institutions, shared similarities in political posture and power relations with CARICOM. Stromquist (2002) spoke about the changing university, for instance, being politically influenced by and influencing globalization. In a sense, they are taken seriously because they are representative of key Caribbean stakeholder interests and constituencies across regional borders. Transnational political discourses engender a managed relationship between centre and peripheral states, and according to Stromquist (2002, p.21) supported 'political-diplomatic ties, indirectly through the imposition of transnational capital via its institutional agents'. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) also suggested that transnational agents represented a notable thrust to developing countries by wielding high level influence and power. The central authority of CARICOM, working along with regional entities like UWI, ACTI and CXC to contribute to the development of national accreditation systems, is clearly an example of a complex 'centre-periphery', 'political-diplomatic' transnational relationship. An example was quoted in a 1996 report which showed the impact of transnational agencies on the development of the accreditation mechanism:

In 1996, ACTI and CXC received funding from the European Union to simultaneously assist CXC with the development of the Caribbean Advanced

Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) as well as to help ACTI advance the goals of the regional accreditation mechanism. (TR#8)

These agencies not only influenced decisions at the level of CARICOM but, being located through multiple sites across the region within each territory, influenced national policy discourse from below. UWI and ACTI, for example, showed tremendous power by virtue of their research activity to not only proffer advice to CARICOM, but to be represented on national committees or providing materials to inform the establishment of national accreditation laws and agencies. This was implied both in a policy document and one interview with a participant:

ACTI, UWI, the regional universities, CARICOM and other stakeholders arrived a common definition of tertiary education (PR#6)

To determine the equivalence of programmes and qualifications as compared to those in the framework established by the Caribbean Community, the Act referred to defining the TLIU (that is, UWI) document as a guide but only in Barbados and not anywhere else. This was probably due to the fact that the TLIU was located in Barbados. (P#2)

Other than these main themes, other interesting points about the role of politics at the national levels were already raised in chapter 4. These included CARICOM's selection of researchers, the issue of researchers influencing national discourses through selected methodologies, governments' political preference for regionalization and level of stakeholder feedback to influence policy. In all these instances, political and personal biases may have influenced choices made that could have had an impact on the policy processes as a democratic process of regional and national engagement.

National Higher Education Accreditation Policy Production

Political engagement can be just one aspect applied for understanding national higher education accreditation policy production processes. By comparing the actual policies, one can acquire a better appreciation for the means by which policies were produced. Comparative policy research studies have been very useful for determining the efficacy, degree of impact and likely sustainability of policies. Rose (2005) said that the primary concern of comparative politics is to explain why countries differ in their policies. He further explained that comparative policy is useful for learning and so can be applied to national public policy improvement between countries, that is, contribute to policy learning. This is what Jules (2008) regarded as 'externalization' of policy or 'policy transfer', where learning took place from the trilingual (national, regional and global) policy discourses.

In this section, the Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago national accreditation policy research processes are discussed.

When comparing all themes for each of the country policy cases, the two main issues which stood out were 'Quality in Local Institutions' and Harmonizing Existing Systems'. Experts who I interviewed regarded these as critical matters for consideration when researching the accreditation policy, and they were substantiated by documentation. It was said before that the issue of quality in institutions seemed to significantly debated, particularly at the national level. Quality indicators, data on institutional quality and existing benchmarks for

comparing institutional quality did not exist for public, private and offshore tertiary education institutions. Also, plans for the improvement of quality were being shared. This was unanimously agreed by all three territories. Similarly, the need for having harmonized accreditation systems among the three countries within the regional mechanism was also highly regarded by experts and also seen in policy and technical report documentation. A few comments supporting these themes are shown:

A: To get the quality of instruction you need to get qualified professors and more qualified teachers. You will need curricula that are more relevant. Thus you will need to improve your resources so there are more implications for financing. (P#3)

B: There was enrolment data in the institutions, graduation statistics and of course across institutions. But enrolment data was primarily for the public ones. I do not think there was any kind of reliable statistics for the private institutions but the public ones you had the data. I also looked at the number of institutions and the diversity among them including the number of teachers. (P#3)

C: There was some variance in terms of the processes like registration across the three of us. (P#2)

While there were some areas which compared well with each other across all policies, some countries showed a greater tendency to support different aspects of accreditation policy research during their policy production. For instance, Barbados showed the greatest attempts at contextualization than the others. Contextualization was noted in three main areas. The policy in Barbados recorded support for investigations on student complaints, the adoption of existing national quality assurance and equivalency guidelines and the facilitation of certificates of recognition for CSME nationals into Barbados. These issues, which were

documented as critical sections of the legislation, were direct concerns of the Ministry of Education and critical stakeholder interests in the country. With reference to the free movement of persons, this was what one expert recorded:

One of the reasons why the Council (Barbados) was established was to facilitate the free movement, knowing it was coming about. I am aware that there are free movement committees in other countries and I believe Barbados might be that because it manages and administers it.....I have a sense that this statement has to do with the country's experience dealing with the skills recognition programme....To have it in the Act means that we live up to the administration of it. (P#2)

In the case of Guyana there was a high concern for having an agency that would be beneficial to the country's social problems and for free movement of its citizens. The policy research process in Guyana was one which agreed to incorporate essential political, social and educational concerns in the country. For instance, I am of the view that the country's postcolonial economic and social development problems have been huge factors. Guyana has been historically regarded as a lower income society within CARICOM. For over decades after independence, mobility of its nationals has led to a 'Brain Drain phenomenon. A key example of this issue was suggested by one interviewee who articulated Guyana's position in relation to free movement:

I still think that it is because of the coming into being of this free movement and free market that governments in CARICOM are forced to do and do not have a choice. (P#5)

In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, key issues raised were designing regulations for accreditation, the use of local expertise to develop policies, the

relationship of accreditation to its national development thrust and the impact of resource planning for accreditation. Unlike Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, being an industrialized society, had a more advanced tertiary education sector with more qualified resources to support national development. One expert opinion which was obtained from the interviews suggested why this was the case:

The steady growth of the tertiary education sector is a precondition for developed country status but it also presents the country with several challenges. The major challenge at this time is posed by the growing number of queries from international as well as local and regional sources about the quality, international standing and acceptability of tertiary institutions and programmes in Trinidad and Tobago. It has therefore become necessary to establish a national quality assurance and accreditation system for the tertiary education sector in Trinidad and Tobago. (PR#8)

The country's Vision 2020 policy was articulated as the major macro public policy framework for national development. The view by experts was that accreditation needed to be linked to the Vision 2020 policy to make the country more competitive. It appeared also that Trinidad and Tobago spent more resources through its public agencies for planning the national policy for accreditation unlike other territories. The commitment of resources is arguably beneficial to national development as is national accreditation. Sobrinho and Goergen (2007) pointed to the social commitment of accreditation to national development by arguing that quality in higher education strengthens democracies and economies.

Summary and Conclusion

The chapter highlighted the regional and national issues that were raised and encountered in the accreditation policy research process. It highlighted four main issues that would be helpful for answering the main research question. Though more pronounced, when the policy was being defined and negotiated, policy research facilitated all stages in policy production. Interestingly, the research into policy was necessary and relevant to politicians, who were committed to seeing the policy produced.

As explained, the role of CARICOM coupled with that of national governments in the articulation and facilitation of the regional and national accreditation systems was very much featured. UWI, ACTI and CXC played key advisory roles and did contribute to the research agenda. However, they brought different institutional concerns to the policy research process, thereby skewing the policy intention in a manner to mostly suit their individual interests. For instance, UWI sought to have a policy which favoured their institutional legitimacy against that of the many offshore institutions that were operating in the region. Such interests would have caused the policy's intention to be questioned by other interest groups and stakeholders. The chapter also showed how hegemonic supranational agencies exercise power at the national level in the policy production process. These agencies set and coordinate the policy agenda and make demands on nation states in terms of their compliance with the regional mechanism.

The chapter articulated that CARICOM consultants were employed in some data collection, involving several consultations with stakeholder participants, a few workshops and in writing country reports for the policy. Whatever their roles, in some instances contextualization of the policies hardly occurred and the final policy text closely resembled the draft model legislation, except for Guyana where it was an exact replica of the draft. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago varied the legislative text somewhat, but not to the fullest extent possible. This brings into question the purpose and value of the research process and whether or not it added much value to policy development.

The issue of participation also required discussion. Consultations with stakeholders did provide feedback but the level of feedback, and absence of certain groups such as students and sometimes employers, were problematic. Consequently, at the national level democratic ideals would not have been ideally expressed in the policy. Thus to summarize, it is strongly apparent that while participation and research were employed, the regional ideologies supporting free movement and harmonization were prominent in policy production processes, and therefore had marked impact on the policy development.

Thus to respond to the research question *'What are the perceived roles and implications of empirical research, civil society participation and politics in accreditation policy processes?'* one may explain by reference to two issues. My initial perception has not changed since the last chapter. Despite the attempts by CARICOM and national governments to engender a consultative process where production of the policy is concerned the original intent and premise for the

policy remained the same and any activity which occurred confirmed this or supported the political intent. Secondly, while some territories paid attention to the need to contextualize the policy, regionalization was too intense a process to encourage it. Thus, some national contextualization agendas were successful, but not enough to withstand political pressures from CARICOM.

Chapter 6

Negotiating Globalization in Caribbean Accreditation Policy:

Is there Harmonization or Not?

Introduction

The previous chapter provided an analysis of the national and regional issues associated with the accreditation policy research processes that were under consideration. Having established these issues, chapter 6 attempts to analyze the negotiated mechanisms by which globalization impacted accreditation policy between the regional and national contexts. I use globalization theorists in this chapter to examine how policy is negotiated. Both Dale (1999) and Jules (2008) have provided a useful context for understanding how globalization influences education policy. Dale has argued that harmonization is one mechanism for studying globalization, while Jules has posited that harmonization is a main mechanism for negotiating educational policy production in the region.

A central argument posed is whether or not, according to Jules' (2008), harmonization played a key role in negotiating accreditation policy. It was already discussed in chapter 2 that harmonization was a much debated issue with respect to development of the CSME as a regionalization agenda and construct. Thus, harmonization presents itself as a key issue for discussion in this chapter, and of course the study. Themes were, therefore, analyzed with respect to these areas and in accordance with the research question, which was: *'To what extent has there*

been harmonization of accreditation policy mechanisms between the emerging CSME states and from CARICOM-produced policies?'

Contextual factors do have their place in policy analysis, particularly where one is trying to understand the relationship they have with global phenomena. Chapter 4 provided an understanding of these contextual factors when attempting to discuss policy research in regional and national settings. The themes that are presented in this chapter are: i) 'Quality of Institutions'; ii) 'CSME Free Movement'; iii) 'Stakeholder Consultations'; iv) 'Harmonized Accreditation' and v) 'Legislation Model'. Some of these themes have been previously discussed in chapter 5. Here, some aspects that need to be elaborated or were not sufficiently covered before are being outlined as a component of the discussions on the impact of globalization and harmonization.

Consultation Process and Policy Negotiation

The consultation process engaged politicians and policy advisers who argued in favour of different approaches to the policy, particularly where establishing the accreditation agencies to implement the policy was concerned. There were four main ways of getting the policy negotiated. Discussing and agreeing on options for the policy included looking at having a new national body, especially in cases where such entities did not exist. Alternatively, upgrading existing national bodies to carry out multiple functions was being considered, yet another approach was to establish a regional body to oversee or perform the roles of national bodies. In

terms of getting the policy established, obtaining governmental endorsement at the national level and, CARICOM approval through the highest offices in the region's government, were noted as issues. Political power was often cited as a necessary means to policy success. Quoting Norman's text on the *Free and Equal*, Taylor et al. (1997, p.154) argued that political negotiation 'will always be skewed in favour of the powerful'. In most cases this represented the state and main state actors who were politically appointed, and were considered to be the custodians of power. A good reference to this perspective was quoted by one research participant who worked in several contexts where opportunity made it possible to observe the policy negotiations from different political levels:

Other options were suggested which were not accepted. I must say that these options came up at meetings where the policy document was being discussed. It was expressed or rather it was mumbled. The remark was made that why have these accreditation bodies when Jamaica already has one. Why doesn't Jamaica become the accreditation body for the region? And that of course was just rejected outright. That was one. There was another option then why not set up this body at CARICOM? These were not written options. These were options that came through meetings and discussions. It was suggested let it be located at CARICOM and let CARICOM see about it. In any case you would have to put up tremendous capacity at CARICOM to do that. Infrastructure, human resources and so on. In any case the people must not feel that this is a foreign body located elsewhere. (P#4)

The medium of discourse was purely conversational and through official meetings. Ideas that were expressed may have been openly or discreetly stated and seemed not to be actually reported in public documents. In other words, had it not been for key observers of the discourse, the actual options being considered by policy makers would not have been known. What was also interesting about

the options were the kinds of political stances taken during the negotiation process. For instance, the quotation made reference to recommending Jamaica to become the model for accreditation in the region, by pursuing the accreditation regionally through the established Jamaican agency or facilitating it through the CARICOM Secretariat. On the contrary, others had a more nationalistic ideology, preferring national bodies to ensure that there was greater degree of national engagement in accreditation. Jules (2008) highlighted this point in his research. He showed that while nation states were 'regionalizing' with reference to education policies, there was still a tendency to be strongly nationalistic. The underlying principles governing the approach would have been a matter of ideology such as perceptions of the philosophy and activities to be pursued in accreditation or a country's or organization's political stance and preference. In his argument expressed in a lecture at the University of Lancaster, Fairclough¹¹ sheds some light on this issue. He suggested that in neoliberal discourse, performative power brings into being the very realities the discourse describes. It argues in favour of policy choices that can seemingly change the world. In this case, politicians negotiated for their preferred political options, whether they were openly or discreetly said.

¹¹ www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/staff/norman/paper5.doc

Receptiveness to Accreditation Policy Methods

During consultation several names, positions and organizations involved across the territories for which information surfaced. While interviewing research participants for this study, questions asked about the degree of stakeholder receptiveness evoked positive responses. Some of these were:

A: As a matter of fact they were very receptive. They really just had to be. They realized that these strategies had to be put in place if the CSME were to come on stream on time and if they wanted to be active participants in the CSME. (P#4)

B: Yes, they were extremely excited about quality, that's why it has to be successful. They were very ready for it. (P#3)

C: Generally I would say that they were receptive yes. There were questions about whether or not the countries could afford or had expertise to implement the policy decisions raised. (P#7)

There was some disappointment expressed by participants that the secondary data collected provided some information on the tertiary education sector, but not enough to draw reasonable conclusions. There was also the feeling that primary empirical data collected from surveys or consultations would be useful. From all angles it seemed that the consultative approach to data collection was most widely used and that consultations were well received by stakeholders.

Negotiating Globalization in Caribbean Accreditation Policy

To understand the influence of globalization on Caribbean nationalism, regionalism and the accreditation policy movement, one may apply the definitions

of five proponents of globalization. Stromquist (2002, p. 1-2), for instance, emphasized 'technology, time and space relations, flows of people and ideas and cultural hybridization' as defining issues in globalization, while Burbules and Torres (2000) supported the emergence of supranational institutions, global economic pressures, new global cultural forms, new media and technologies and hegemonic discourses as key issues characterizing globalization. Appadurai (2000) regarded the move from trait or physical/structural to process or social/political geographies, grassroots from below and social imaginary of ideas and ideologies as themes for analyzing globalization. Louisy (2004) contested that when looking at Caribbean education quality through a globalization lens the issue of 'context' is critical. Dale (1999) and Robertson and Dale (2008) negotiated the typology of mechanisms on national policies and methods for researching globalization on national policies respectively. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) debated the role of transnational agencies in policy production settings and the application of key questions for interpreting globalization of education policy in the national context. All of these positions are very useful ways of trying to appreciate the global context, and how it can be defined and understood within the regional and national policy production process settings.

In this study, five main themes emerged from the data to show how globalization influenced accreditation policy while the policy was being negotiated. These are: i) 'International Credibility and Recognition'; ii) 'Support from Other Countries'; iii) 'Regional-National Model Dichotomy'; iv) 'International Accreditation Models' and v) 'Borderless Education'.

Globalizing Institutional Legitimacy: Credibility and Recognition

Credibility in higher education was defined by Ren et al. (2003, p.237) as an 'identity with professional authority', while the concept of 'recognition' was viewed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2004) as 'mutual agreements', 'equivalence' and 'comparability'. The theme, 'International Credibility and Recognition', was reported in the study to mean the credibility and recognition of tertiary institutions, validation and articulation approaches and qualifications on the international market. In other words, this theme expressed how higher education institutions, their programmes and the qualifications they issued were to become recognized internationally by other institutions and publics. This may have involved how information about the institution's credibility became public. It also reflected how and why students and faculty from international jurisdictions were moving to other destinations to study, do research or teach.

As I have mentioned in chapter 4, tertiary institutional diversity was a major issue in the policy discourse. The regional tertiary education sector was viewed internationally as having a lack of evidence to support quality assurance. The sector's institutions, programmes and qualifications were required to demonstrate that they were credible and recognized. To this end, one policy text and one research participant's views provided testament of this:

A: Global trends and internationalization of tertiary education have created a situation in which the quality of programmes offered locally is being questioned and challenged. (PR#7)

B: The major challenge at this time is posed by the growing number of queries from international as well as local and regional sources about the quality, international standing and acceptability of tertiary level institutions in Trinidad and Tobago. (P#1)

These statements above are indications that the phenomena of globalization and internationalization have influenced international perceptions on tertiary education quality in the region. Thus, the movement of international students and graduates from their countries of origin to a Caribbean destination is evidence that regional institutions and their corresponding qualifications are being recognized. Erk (2009) argued that international mobility is a predictable outcome with the existence of quality assurance networks like the Bologna process in Europe. In chapter 4 it was argued that Caribbean academics have questioned the credibility of offshore institutions operating within the Caribbean, though one critical observation refuted these assertions:

The Caribbean has also experienced the movement of foreign students into the region in offshore universities, some of which also admit local students. (TR#17)

On the issue of graduates, the general idea was that they needed to compete with holders of similar qualifications on a global scale. To politicians, graduate portability was necessary, because it enabled the operationalization of the free movement component of the CSME. In this regard, Arawatari and Ono (2009) suggested that political concerns with systems for social inequality, especially with persons lacking tertiary education and employment opportunities were

driving forces in mobility. Interestingly, there was hardly a focus on foreign qualification holders alone. To support this position, one participant made this observation:

In light of the fact that we are now on the world stage and that we had to compete in this global market, your products or your graduates have to be of the highest quality and therefore they realized that it is not just a matter of putting these mechanisms in place for accreditation and so on to facilitate the free movement. (P#4)

The concern was raised that systems of validation and articulation working across the region have been influenced by international trends and ideas. Van Ginkel and Rodrigues-Diaz (2007) enunciated this when they analyzed the implications of the Bologna Declaration in Europe on the international credibility of higher education institutions. Hartmann (2010) argues that global politics of trans-national organizations like UNESCO promote key priorities for the international recognition of qualifications in the labour market. There was also the view that qualifications offered within the region have been accepted and their development influenced by such trans-national and extra-regional institutions. Jayasuriya and Robertson (2010) speak of this as a form of new scalar politics in higher education governance regulation. Making reference to the Bologna process, they bring compelling evidence to show that regulatory regionalism is a new regionalism thrust that does not escape the Caribbean.

From the study, a familiar view was that foreign universities endorsed and accepted qualifications for student entry into degrees or articulation between degrees. One report highlighted this:

The evaluation and validation of tertiary programs and recognition of tertiary institutions in the region have been important issues for as long as new programs were developed and new institutions established.....In many instances validation was achieved through external examinations, qualifications endorsement by or affiliation with reputable universities. (TR#8)

The matter of international credibility and recognition of the tertiary sector appeared to be characterized by an emerging underpinning ideological position that was perpetuated through discourses coming from within the Caribbean itself. Several writings have been overly critical of foreign institutions operating within the region, as they were being skeptical of holders of foreign qualifications coming back from studying overseas. Some interesting phrases and quotations noted in discourses were:

A: The policy was trying to deal with the whole issue of recognition of foreign qualifications. (P#1)

B: Number of proliferations of qualifications obtained.....from persons who went abroad coming back with various qualifications. (P#2)

These hegemonic discourses and ideas were seen to be repeated in the writings during negotiation of the policy. This suggested therefore, that those who held these views were quite convincing in their arguments and that there was a corresponding movement of people and ideas leading to a shared, but powerful, agreement on the issues. This is what Rizvi and Lingard (2010) debated when they suggested that political priorities take precedence in the allocation of educational values by governments.

Globalizing Policy Research and Policy Investment

Ozga (2000) and Ball (2008) support the view that both policy research and capital investment are key issues to be considered and negotiated during globalization. The theme entitled 'Support from Other Countries' showed involvement of policy actors or stakeholders from different countries who negotiated the process of research into the accreditation policy. Coming from different territories, technocrats from governments and accreditation agencies as well as personnel from tertiary institutions, comprised the majority of persons who supported the policy. Their support was in terms of offering their intellectual and skilled resources. They either facilitated policy research or gave consultative advice for the design of the accreditation policy and model. In terms of research, it was already said that researchers came from different territories and institutions within the CARICOM region. Researchers spared no effort to gather and analyze policy documents from other jurisdictions where there were accreditation systems in order to share established practices to benchmark the policy. Two positions show different aspects of how researchers contributed to the policy development process. One statement reported the intellectual debates which were occurring in the late 1990s that questioned how higher education would work within a federation of small island states in a globalized economy:

Studies undertaken by Caribbean nationals on the Changing Role of Small States in Higher Education point to a new pattern of regionalism based on independent and potentially mutually supporting institutions operating at different levels, articulating with each other within an inter-dependent system of higher education. (TR#6)

The second position was documented in the same period as the first statement quoted. This second position was connected with the justification made by one principal researcher, Dr. Alvin Ashton, as to why a regional accreditation system was important and how it would work. This researcher's report was archived as the CARICOM-approved report that established the framework for the regional model for accreditation.

In 1996, Dr. Alvin Ashton completed and presented at the annual ACTI Conference an ACTI commissioned document entitled 'Towards a Regional Accreditation Model'. The document sought inter alia to: develop a conceptual framework of a regional accreditation model; analyze the operations and methodologies of the principal national accreditation bodies for similarities; make recommendations as to the critical elements of accreditation as a process at the national and regional levels; and make recommendations as to how ACTI within the context of the model should deal with those countries whose accreditation capability is limited to a few equivalency personnel. (TR#4)

The consultative advice from other persons came through meetings, workshops and focus groups that were convened to discuss the policy options and to determine the way forward. As reported in previous chapters, heads of states, Ministers with responsibility for accreditation portfolios, permanent secretaries, chief education officers, heads of institutions, faculty, curriculum specialists, quality assurance personnel and graduates were duly consulted about the policy. However, it must be noted that there was also extra-regional support for the policy.

Stromquist's (2002) and Rizvi and Lingard's (2010) suggestions about considering the politics and economics of Appadurai's 'social imaginaries', such as the widespread flows of ideas and capital, provided a useful concept for

understanding the role of other countries in the development of the policy. Technocrats from financing agencies and, international organizations from other country and regional contexts, played key roles in providing financial and other kinds of support. It would be impossible to conceive that such agencies did not bring their own agency and geo-political agendas to the financing initiatives. Even in quality and performance management of institutions, financing has its primary function. Sorlin (2007) argued convincingly that in today's higher education sectors, where country resource-based management and institutional diversity are key factors in funding, performance-based policies are becoming important issues. These agendas were not made clear from documents examined or the interviews conducted during the research, as it was not a main point of focus. If separate interviews were to be conducted with financing agencies, perhaps it may have elucidated and elaborated these agendas. Apart from the regional players who were identified in chapter 3, financial assistance for accreditation policy development was provided by transnational agencies:

At the regional level the ACTI, CARICOM, CXC, the Caribbean Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training and several professional associations have played a critical role. Their work has been assisted by funds from the Canadian International Development Agency, the European Union, the Organization of American States and the Commonwealth Secretariat. (TR#9)

One useful outcome of international financial assistance was the development of an EU-sponsored document by the ACTI, UWI (Tertiary Level Institutions Unit or TLIU) and CXC providing *Procedures and Guidelines for the Regional Mechanism for Accreditation, Equivalency and Articulation* (Revierre et al.,

2000). This seemed to have been a fully supportive venture without much technocratic advice from the EU. It is to be noted that this document did not only inform the design of the accreditation mechanism but was seen as having useful criteria for higher education institutions to develop their credit-based systems. Unlike other countries, this document was only singled out in legislation in the case of Barbados. One participant felt that this was 'probably due to the fact that the TLIU was located in Barbados' (P#2). It was also noted with some strong words of advice 'however, caution perhaps should be taken quoting the TLIU document in the legislation as it could be seen as gospel truth' (P#2).

The inclusion of the report in the Barbados legislation may have been for two reasons. On the one hand, it may have been about contextualization to the Barbadian situation. On another, because this procedural guide was proposed to be a regionally-relevant document the inclusion could also be seen as strategic negotiation to essentially benefit the authors or owners of the document. These examples showed the function of global discourses by transnational institutions like the UWI, and application of policy transfer tools through policy information flows in policy production processes.

Globalization within a Borderless Caribbean Context

Appadurai's (2000) concept of the social imaginary which analyzes the social context of globalization, involving cyclical flows of ideas and ideologies, may be

relevant when thinking about borderlessness and Caribbean accreditation systems.

In arguing the mobility factor within a borderless context, Rizvi and Lingard articulated it this way:

An inevitable consequence of this mobility is an increased circulation of ideas, images and ideologies across national spaces, and the emergence of transnational policy networks around a particular set of ideas. These ideas are reproduced in business schools that an increasingly large number of international students now attend and that produce corporate leaders. (*Ibid*, p. 37)

‘Borderless Education’, as a theme in the study, meant that borderless tertiary education conveniently opened up access opportunities to citizens across regional barriers, thus encouraging networks of institutions, programmes, teaching and students across the region. There was a sense that the quality of borderless education provisions in the region was an impetus for formulation of the policy.

One interview participant made mention of this:

The initiative came from the governments. There was a move to borderless tertiary education in the Caribbean and governments wanted standards in place to safeguard citizens. (P#7)

There seemed to be an understanding that the terms ‘borderless education’ and ‘offshore education’ were used interchangeably in relation to the accreditation policy. Offshore institutions were recognized as having moved across borders to deliver their programmes ‘onshore’ within a Caribbean territory. The region’s preoccupation with the quality of offshore institutions could be regarded as being comparable to that of the quality of borderless education. Borderless education

can also be interpreted as distance education. A technical report which highlighted the extent to which distance education is provided by offshore institutions in the region was referenced in chapter 4 as TR#17. This report regarded globalization and internationalization as contributing to the establishment of offshore universities, to include distance education in the region as one of urgency. This matter was taken seriously and critically enough in terms of the policy definition and negotiation processes. Notwithstanding the possibilities of borderless spaces for delivery of tertiary education, Hewitt (2004) argued that the territorial and border disputes between CARICOM member countries can pose serious threats to creation of a borderless space within a CSME integration movement. Working out these issues would therefore be naturally crucial to the establishment of a borderless space within which an accreditation system can exist.

Globalizing the Model for Accreditation Systems

The next two themes ‘Regional-National Model Dichotomy’ and ‘International Accreditation Models’ were somewhat related in that they showed the mechanisms negotiated for globalization of accreditation systems in the region. In the first instance, the processes and relationships between globalization and the regional and national accreditation systems were analyzed, particularly during policy production processes. Secondly, the models themselves were adapted, adopted or informed by international accreditation systems. Models chosen for the regional or national accreditation systems were developed from international

model experiences, but paid closer attention to possible harmonization approaches for the dual systems. There were several interesting points arising from these themes. Included among them were: i) the impact of the internationalization of tertiary education; ii) the inclusion of international quality assurance models into accreditation systems; iii) the sharing of international accreditation practices; iv) the establishment of harmonized accreditation systems; v) the need for supranational agency proposals; and vi) the need for national agency proposals.

Research into international quality assurance and accreditation models provided useful sharing of what was generally considered as 'best practices' for developing a dual regional-national accreditation system. Van Ginkel and Rodrigues-Dias (2007) and Uvalic-Trumbic (2007) both argued this issue. Again, claims made by Jayasuriya and Robertson (2010) support the view that regulation of higher education institutions is part of a regional thrust for governance of accreditation. In fact, the research often documented 'best practices' from developed countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, and these informed the proposals made for the regional and national accreditation bodies. My analysis of the globalization policy discourse identified several issues that are connected with the research. The movement of accreditation ideologies, the emergence of transnational agencies impacting nation state sovereignty, the development of new cultural practices in education and the influence of external ideas on the social order of small-island developing states were probable issues for discussion. I will account for these perspectives through a select number of quotations from the interview and document data.

Looking at the value of accreditation to the development of the region's workforce and the corresponding 'Brain Drain' phenomenon, one international report made clear reference to its ideology which the region soon embraced:

A World Bank report, *Access, Quality and Efficiency in Caribbean Education: A Regional Study*, commented on the high level of emigration of professional, technical and skilled workers out of the region. (TR#6)

Another technical report identified the ideological impact which global discourses have on the emergence of the accreditation systems. It articulated a viewpoint which suggested not just sharing of ideas to influence the region's systems, but the notion that Caribbean stakeholders should acknowledge, even possibly celebrate, their fortunate position to have benefitted from such ideological frameworks. The report said:

The global network brings to the fore diverse systems and trends. The stakeholders in the Caribbean are therefore in the salutary position where they can draw on this global resource to influence the shape of emerging quality assurance systems. (TR#9)

This statement also posited the view that some forms of hegemonic values from imperialist-type global networks were beneficial to Caribbean accreditation and, therefore, Caribbean society. Sen (2001) and Leong (2002) gave a different view when they implied that this form of neoliberalism was detrimental to society's cultural capital and was exploitation. I agree with Sen and Leong that this was a neoliberal, bordering on imperialistic, motive, as I feel it works against the spirit of accreditation policy as an educational development model catering to building indigenous postcolonial democratic societies.

As in other education policies analyzed by Jules (2008), the political dynamics and positions of transnational agencies were key strategic influences of globalization on accreditation policy negotiation processes. Essentially, as CARICOM (2008) mentioned, the CARICOM policy and work programme were developed to establish regional accreditation agencies. The authority and political prowess of transnational agencies such as CARICOM, and the ideological shift towards regional bodies, powered and steered the regional and national accreditation movement. Ministers of Education in CARICOM supported the accreditation movement. CARICOM enabled the legislative drafting for the establishment of agencies and the machinery of CARICOM ensured that legislation models were embraced by countries throughout the region. Three useful statements which articulated these issues were:

A: Standing Committee of Ministers of Education (1997) accepted the idea of establishment of a regional accreditation mechanism and CARICOM undertook many activities to advance the adoption of the model and support its establishment. (PR#7)

B: The drafting of the National Accreditation Council (Agency) Bill 2002 with assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat has been a useful initiative by the CARICOM Secretariat. (TR#9)

C: So CARICOM went ahead and of course with support of these countries they developed a model through legislation. (P#7)

The paradigmatic shift from national accreditation to regional models posed challenges to Caribbean ideals about issues of nationalism, sovereignty and development. This was summed up in one participant's recall of politicians' views:

Another challenge for policy makers was that they felt that if you had national bodies a super body was not needed. They could do work themselves and speak to each other.....It was suggested let it be located at CARICOM and let CARICOM see about it.In any case in something like this the people must feel it is their own. They must not feel that this is a foreign body located elsewhere. (P#4)

The political views represented different ideological positions from governments. This largely depended on whether or not they preferred a nation-state or regionalization agenda (Hewitt, 2004). Participant interviews from two countries, namely Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, revealed nation building agendas which supported accreditation models. In both cases, the countries' strategic visioning placed accreditation at the forefront of improving civil society and, therefore, contributing to national development. Regionalization was also a goal for these countries. Thus, CARICOM's supranational new regionalism agenda influenced the policy's establishment.

Harmonization in Caribbean Higher Education Accreditation Policy

I discussed the implications and purpose of Dale's (1999) model for analysis of globalization effects on national policy production processes in chapters 1 and 3. Among the five possible mechanisms, harmonization was featured as one which may be of relevance to higher education accreditation policy negotiation processes. I then discussed Jules' (2008) research study findings, which showed that over a seventeen year period of Caribbean education policy production, harmonization appeared to have become an emerging and preferred approach

within the context of the establishment of the CSME. Thus, in this section, I argue whether or not harmonization, as postulated by Jules, was the preferred option among the globalization mechanisms that impacted on Caribbean states.

Policy Analysis Mechanisms and the Nation State

I have already established the theoretical underpinnings of Dale's typology of external effects on national policy in chapter 1. The typology enables the policy analyst to determine the kind of mechanism(s) by which national policies are being negotiated in response to globalization. For the five main proposed policy mechanisms in this typology which is shown in Figure 1, various defining characteristics were given as indicators to determine whether or not the policy mechanism was in operation. For instance, when one compared 'harmonization' with 'borrowing', there are some essential similarities and differences in the indicators. Both mechanisms require formal and voluntary relationships, explicit processes and conscious decisions to be made. In terms of the difference, 'harmonization' engaged multiple policies, multinational parties and collective bargaining processes whilst 'borrowing' utilized national policy processes and bilateral parties (Dale, 1999).

In relation to answering this question, *'To what extent has there been harmonization of accreditation policy mechanisms between the emerging CSME states and from CARICOM-produced policies?'*, all primary themes were carefully examined and matched against the policy mechanism characteristics or

indicators to arrive at new themes. This process resulted in relatively good matches for three policy mechanisms with 'harmonization' having sixteen new themes; 'borrowing' having eight new themes and 'dissemination' also having eight new themes and these were found to be the most appropriate mechanisms. This analysis, therefore, suggested that when the regional and national policies were being produced, these three mechanistic approaches were relevantly applied. It appeared that the national accreditation policies were 'borrowing' strategies and models from international ones and from one Caribbean territory with another. While borrowing, the policy followed a process of 'dissemination' resulting in the policy being shared across various territories in the region. Finally, by borrowing and dissemination, national accreditation policies were apparently creating a framework for 'harmonization' of accreditation policies and systems so that there would be the existence of compatible bodies and systems in all territories of the CSME.

Harmonization involved a mutually beneficial relationship between CARICOM and Caribbean countries (Jules, 2008). CARICOM heads of state and Ministers of Education brokered this relationship with regional and national entities. The process was fairly explicit in that it was defined by CARICOM, and practical steps were being taken to ensure that the policy was delivered nationally. By having a unified policy language (according to Jules' 2008 policy trilingualism theory), multiple partners were involved in defining the policy. Collectively, the CARICOM Secretariat, Education Ministries, existing accreditation bodies and regional and national higher education institutions entered into negotiations and

bargained the policy. In general, the policy objective was to improve the tertiary education sector in all territories in the CSME. This was supported by one consultant's policy report:

In CARICOM, because of the existing state of tertiary education, governments' major contribution lies not in involvement in accreditation per se but in doing more to facilitate the overall development of tertiary education in respect of countries by putting in place the broad policy and legal framework needed to support accreditation. (PR#3)

As a multilateral policy aiming to enhance the regional tertiary sector, this policy was established across the region to improve institutional performance, produce better graduates, facilitate greater tertiary access, augment institutional and programme credibility, allow for free movement of skills and promote Caribbean competitiveness in the global arena. These are essentially benefits which most proponents of accreditation systems have described (Ashton, 1996; Roberts, 2007; Sanyal and Martin, 2007; Uvalic-Trumbic, 2007).

It has been said that policy borrowing characteristics were similar to those for harmonization. However, while there was a focus on development within the nation state in borrowing, the tendency was for policy information sharing between the government and CARICOM Secretariat. In this way, the country's policy production processes were employed and involved several policy actors, including the Government and Parliamentary bodies of the particular state. The case of Trinidad and Tobago illustrated this issue quite well:

First step was to take it to Cabinet to get their approval for it. The second step was to set up a committee to implement it and the third step would be to get approval for that implementation strategy from Cabinet....The Committee was

absolutely essential because of the different interests that had to be brought to bear. (P#1)

To a large extent, the dissemination mechanism was facilitated by CARICOM. It was essentially characterized by the sharing of the main policy concept written in the CARICOM draft model, while utilizing different policy ideas from each territory that were either in 'draft' or already articulated. The key policy ideas being disseminated were 'institutional authorization', 'quality assurance', 'accreditation', 'qualifications recognition' and 'CSME skills recognition'. These were all major themes examined in the study, especially from the interviews with elite participants.

Were Caribbean Accreditation Policies Harmonizing?

Having mentioned the concept and prospects of harmonization earlier (Dale, 1999; Jules, 2008; Robertson and Dale (2008), I will discuss the issue further to elaborate whether or not Caribbean accreditation policies were harmonizing. With reference to the discourse on harmonization, four main new themes represented what was happening with accreditation policy processes in the CSME. 'Decentralized Quality Assurance Model', 'Regional Agency Oversees National Body', 'Harmonized Accreditation Model' and 'Varying Quality Practices' were these themes.

The theme 'Harmonized Accreditation System' was clearly representative of a harmonization policy mechanism. In fact, there were active discussions about having consensus for harmonizing functions and processes in accreditation. Gift's (2005) analysis of having mutually beneficial agreements was applicable, in that such agreements made the policy processes and accreditation agency functions more accepted publicly. The regional draft agreement was essentially a multilateral harmonized one, which was to be negotiated and approved by all states, as national policy. This agreement framework highlighted the contending view about policy, that *one size fits all* (Ball, 1990; Taylor et. al., 1997). While the multilateral agreement may be a good starting point some changes needed to suit particular situations. One thought that was expressed was:

There would be variance in terms of the processes like registration across the three of us (*national accreditation agencies*). We need to have a common approach to bring us credibility and to ensure that they are accepted. (P#2)

Another example of policy harmonization can be found in the first theme which involves the development of a 'Decentralized Quality Assurance Model'. Here two features are noteworthy. The first can be seen with the UWI and ACTI where there were diverse systems (divergence) for quality assurance, established on a centralized model (convergence) existing within the institution or association. Roberts (1999) said this was what Mc Intyre called the 'hub' and 'spokes' model. The second agreed with Ashton's (1996) proposal for the establishment of national accreditation agencies using a regional model framework. In both cases, divergent systems were being perpetuated using a standard model framework.

Some of the divergence seen in the harmonized frameworks represented policy borrowing situations.

A clear cut case of policy borrowing within a harmonized system could be seen with the policy case of Guyana. In terms of policy production processes, the Guyana case in fact showed the overall intention to transmit uniform ideas, norms and values of accreditation starting with CARICOM but ending in the nation states. The Guyana model characteristically showed replication of concepts, values and functions in the text of the national legislation. This was already alluded to in this chapter. However, in the cases of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, the policy cases showed greater variance from the CARICOM draft legislation. The divergence from the initial proposed accreditation model that was developed by CARICOM shows strong national support for adaptation to local environment and situations, and hence policy contextualization was obvious. In the end, limited changes were made. Concerning this, one interesting comment made was:

It was necessary to have a policy to make sure that it was enforced and that the views of the model legislation for the national accreditation council will be used in Barbados. These are changes with Jamaica and Trinidad but they generally followed the model. There is some local context but mostly it comes from the model legislation. (P#2)

The themes 'Regional Agency Oversees National Body' and 'Varying Quality Practices' seemed to have opposing philosophical underpinnings. The former suggested more of policy borrowing, while the latter more of policy harmonization. In setting up a regional agency to oversee the national

accreditation bodies, the primary objective was to establish mechanisms for compliance, standardization and uniformity across the region. In this way, the regional body would espouse certain value systems for the CSME and promote common practices for accreditation agencies. In fact, one participant compared the relationship between the regional and national bodies and said 'national body was an offshoot or child of the regional one' (P#4).

'Varying Quality Practices' were different methodologies employed for developing, measuring and improving quality in higher education institutions within a harmonized system. Some were influenced by UWI, some by the Universities of Guyana or Belize and others by institutions of higher education in the United States or the United Kingdom (Ashton, 1999; Roberts, 2005). The varied approaches to quality assurance in the region represented a key concern for accreditation policy. These diverse quality assurance mechanisms were, therefore, suited to the particular institution's needs, the students' requirements and in some cases the country's demands. This represented contextualization of the quality assurance systems and, hence the accreditation policy would have to be harmonized around them. One report showed that:

Regional quality assurance which started in a limited, normative and ad hoc fashion with UWI now had the opportunity to be more inclusive, systematic and comprehensive. (TR#10)

While this is the case, the models for national accreditation emerged from two national agencies since the 1980s and were influenced by national universities in others. Supporting this position, one technical report identified that:

National accreditation had started with Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica and, in a more limited way, with the Universities of Guyana and Belize. (TR#1)

Consequently, the harmonization of the regional policy framework was being supported by other mechanisms that facilitated policy knowledge sharing or borrowing and dissemination of policy information towards national settings where contextualization was taking place.

Summary and Conclusion

The main research question addressed in this chapter demands that an appreciation of the negotiation processes for higher education accreditation policy be established. The chapter accounted for the scenarios surrounding globalization and internationalization of the policy, the contextual factors impacting on policy development and the mechanisms influencing policy within the nation state. These issues are all relevant to the understanding of policy harmonization. Three key issues for consideration in the higher education accreditation policy harmonization emerge from the analysis.

To begin with, the discourse on globalization of higher education accreditation policy in the Caribbean focuses on the adoption of ideologies associated with

international accreditation models. The notion that the region has benefited from these external ideological frameworks seems to be extensively accepted and justified through the data.

Another major issue has to do with the means by which policy concepts are shared and defined across the region. There have been different influences, strategies and outcomes established to encourage national policy borrowing within a larger system of regional policy harmonization and dissemination. Comparison of the Guyana legislation with that of the Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago cases supports this, as there were limited changes made to the draft legislation in both instances.

A third point to note is that policy research and negotiation processes were apparently characterized by conscious technocratic support and political decisions and so seemingly addressed local needs. This methodology was replicated throughout the region and so showed strong bias towards policy borrowing, but the consultation approach appeared to create a façade of national dialogue for local contextualization. Although the methodologies used for policy production were essentially uniform, they generated similar outcomes for all the territories. In all territories the same legislation model was used, the mechanisms for policy making were similar, the final legislative texts were basically standard and all established agencies were harmonizing their functions and implementation approaches. Again, though one may agree that there was adaptation in some instances, the overall policy notably demonstrated consumption models to promote a federal policy framework by CARICOM.

Dale's (1999) typology has been useful in that the research has clearly substantiated that harmonization, one of Dale's mechanisms of globalization, occurred at the regional level, with nation states also pursuing policy borrowing and dissemination mechanisms. The research also supported Jules' (2008) conclusions that education policy production in CARICOM embraces harmonization as a model for functional cooperation in the region. Thus, I have answered the research question of whether or not harmonization took place and have demonstrated that there is compelling evidence to this effect: harmonization was an important mechanism.

Chapter 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This doctoral research study aspired to respond to five main objectives which have been discussed throughout chapters 4 to 6 by means of responses to the key research questions posed and their interrogation through the various data sets. In consequence, the study raised key issues and proffered recommendations for policy, educational research and, wherever possible, innovative solutions in quality assurance and accreditation. This chapter sets out to discuss the overall research findings as they related to the main objectives of the research. Moreover, recognizing that the study does not explore all aspects fully, or that certain key issues raised are not within the scope of the study, the chapter also seeks to point the way forward for further research into the matters raised.

Revisiting Research Objectives and Questions

The study identified five main, but related, objectives from which the research questions emanated. It was stated that the objectives were informed by my reflexive positionality, having been a key observer doing accreditation policy analysis within the research settings. Therefore, the research attempted to investigate some main assertions and assumptions which I had about the issue of accreditation policy processes in the wider Caribbean.

Stages In Policy Production and Implementation

On the first objective, which entailed getting insights into those factors that influence accreditation policy processes in the region, while the study emphasized the stages of defining, researching and negotiating policy, it specially identified issues involved in national and regional accreditation policy definition (in chapter 4) and negotiation (in chapter 6) as being the main aspects of policy production. These two stages generally embraced the political dimensions of policy production and heavily leaned to involvement of politicians who are administratively supported by their bureaucrats and technocrats. This practice showed alignment with Ball's (1990) framework for a political ideological dimension supported by political realism and interactionism. Interestingly, while policy researchers and policy research are deemed useful to the process, the researchers and research activities can often be interpreted as 'upholding the status quo', simply providing useful data or making contributions that are not ideally regarded in policy. Accreditation policy production processes, therefore, appear to be expressions of a much larger culture of policy production in the Anglophone Caribbean region where political action is sometimes mistaken for policy process. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) made a very useful related point. They said that within a discursive structure of policy production, 'it is the social efficiency view of education that appears to be increasingly dominant, especially among large corporations and intergovernmental organizations, as well in many national governments' (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, p. 79). This would certainly have explained why research was not as highly regarded in the study, given that

negotiations with transnational and local policy actors are quite intense and require much concerted effort on the part of policy planners who have to take divergent views into account. Hewitt's (2004) discussions about the harmonization issues in the CSME and the value of data sources to the policy production process are noteworthy. She talked about loose statistical systems which were fragmented and CARICOM suffering from the lack of dedicated resources to supply the data needed for the CSME. This point would also have explained why in the policy production stages, research and policy researchers would not have been regarded as priorities in the production of the final policy text.

Another important issue from the study was the obvious disconnect between policy production and implementation processes. As seen with the accreditation policy, policy ideas and strategies which were recorded in the texts were not necessarily translated into implementation action. Human agency, which was responsible for making the policy work, lacked a firm understanding of the policy. Policy actors, therefore, did not know what was needed to implement the policy in their institutions. This issue was clearly seen in the case of the University of the West Indies. During the 1990s, the University was seen as a key agent in researching, advocating and advising on the policy, but when it came to implementation of the policy within the academy, university administrators charged with the responsibility for the accreditation portfolio were not as familiar with the policy itself. This could be related to Fowler's (2000) interpretation of the role of policy actors in the implementation process. Understanding Fowler's

view, I see that there could be a distinction between policy designers, policy intermediaries and policy implementers. While some agencies played multiple roles, some like the UWI, may have had to interface with the policy as a consumer, after many changes during the production processes.

Yet another important point was the consultative process used for negotiating policy with stakeholders recorded in chapter 6. The consultations did not reach all social groups, especially those who would have been most affected by the policy. Students and employers were not or hardly engaged and this would have had ethical and practical implications for the policy in the real world. Where students are concerned, Savrock (2008) debated that they are becoming increasingly interested in having greater levels of responsibility, autonomy and involvement concerning decision making in education. Quoting Pennsylvania State University Assistant Professor Dana Mitra's analysis of student voices in education, Savrock argued that while students are feeling alienated from the change processes, they could contribute to quality improvement in academic settings. Raddon and Sung (2006) also agreed that employers' stake in workforce development is through the commissioning of data on demand-led skills and corresponding jobs for the economy. They supported the view that in their roles, employers should contribute to decisions about higher education and vice versa. Thus, employers' voices should be heard in much the same way as students. Not forgetting other stakeholders like academics and civil society as a whole, the roles and voices of students and employers in policy production are at the heart of what constitutes effective governance within policy making contexts in democratic societies.

Globalization and Policy Harmonization Processes

The second objective spoke to the issue of harmonization of policy between regional and national systems. This can be best understood from the discussions on policy harmonization in chapter 6. The model of harmonization was very obvious at the regional level. Some policy borrowing and dissemination occurred at the national levels with contextualization being done in few territories. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago policy cases were noteworthy examples here. These policies would have mostly harmonized in that the draft regional legislation model was essentially adopted with similar accreditation system models being followed in the territories. Minor changes to the policy were identified in the legislation texts. This approach is exactly what Jules (2008) observed developing over seventeen years of education policy production in CARICOM. Although Jules saw the policy language being contextualized in territories, the intertextual discursive materials showed frequent congruence in the choice of words and terms used in policy. For instance, Barbados emphasized having the recognition of CSME skills certificates for holders of such certification in their country probably because of special considerations in the national immigration policy for migration of non-Barbadian CARICOM nationals. Only in such cases did contextualization exist and these would not have been seen as policy harmonization. Not necessarily a negative issue for political sovereignty, Appadurai's (2000) description of what he termed 'relations of disjuncture' as lack of uniformity and convergence would have been seen in the decisions made and actions taken in relation to contextualization approaches in this policy.

Having introduced the intention of the policy in chapter 2 and discussed further in chapter 3, the higher education accreditation policy was designed to embrace and facilitate free movement of skills as a new regionalism agenda promoted by CARICOM. The region's postcolonial context would have encouraged these harmonization regionalization ideals. As a hegemonic neo-liberal agenda and according to Held's hyperglobalist model (cited in Tikly, 2001), there appeared to be newer and greater forms of regional capitalism and governance discourse engaged and systems being developed. Globalization effects provoked and almost compelled countries within CARICOM to work towards the Grand Anse declaration for implementation of the CSME. Recalling the Grand Anse declaration as a framework for regional human resource development (HRD), Jules (2008) reported this by observing:

HRD policy at the regional level became institutionalized with the 'free movement of skills' in both regional and international agendas.

(Jules, 2008, p. 283-284)

In the same research, Jules also recognized the regional higher education accreditation movement as being essential to HRD. In this regard, this study highlighted that the accreditation policy was the first successful initiative across the region to provide for social harmonization and market unification. In this circumstance, the study produced sufficient data to lend support to whether or not policy harmonization of accreditation systems was occurring.

Political Ideologies and Research in Policy Production

The third main objective of the study included viewpoints about empirical research, civil society participation and politics from higher education accreditation policy experts who were interviewed as part of the research in chapter 5. This chapter mainly addressed policy research agendas and processes. As alluded to earlier, the policy processes were skewed towards a political dimension bias in the stages of analysis. Empirical research, though performed, did not adopt a suitable methodological framework for capturing key uniform data from quantitative sources or by qualitative methods. Even though the methods were of similar types, the actual methods employed across different territories seemed to be undocumented or unclear and this raises credibility issues about the research. Data would have therefore been a problem for policy production. In this regard, I have already noted Hewitt's (2004) view that the policy research capacity was lacking in member states of CARICOM, which was a possible reason for lacking methodological frameworks to facilitate appropriate data collection.

One key concern is the choice of questions for collecting policy data. Rizvi and Lingard's (2010) supported this concern by proposing the need for a question framework for policy analysis and suggested that policy analysts need to be mindful of their own reflexive practice when asking questions about policy. Some pervading questions I have are: 'how valuable was the research to policy? Was the research data ideally being used? Was research truly a panacea for political decisions in policy?' There were compelling and convincing observations to argue

the point that the higher education accreditation policy process was largely a political endeavour to satisfy political motives and that research was a convenient means to that end. However, it seemed that civil society groups who were involved were briefly consulted either in short meetings or workshops. Perhaps this was meant to provide essential empirical data or names of officials to satisfy the political demands that the processes of consultation did take place and hence the process was democratic or at least was perceived this way.

Comparing Accreditation Policy Processes

The responses posed above now bring to the fore the main research question and problem statement. 'How do Higher Education Accreditation Policy Processes Compare Among Emerging CSME Territories?' When analyzing the question, two main issues emerged from the research that were connected to the analysis of globalization models and discourses. In general, national policy production mechanisms employed different contexts which were influenced by external agendas. According to Jules (2008), this could be seen as policy 'externalization'.

The first issue is that accreditation policy processes were political endeavours within all territories. They borrowed international models, adopted consultative activities and prepared and adapted national legislation for developing an accreditation system. These would have all led to the establishment of national accreditation bodies that operated within their jurisdictions. According to Gift

(2005), these approaches would have, therefore, followed the 'convention approach', a multilateral agreement, to ensure harmonization.

The second issue is that there were essential differences in the policy production processes among territories. The methodologies which were employed by assigned consultants were dissimilar, as well as some minor variances existing in the legislation. These would have been dependent upon the contexts of each territory. Those countries with national development plans, more robust policies, better developed tertiary education systems, history of accreditation and available qualified human resources were better able to undertake steps toward policy contextualization and vernacularization, whereas the countries without such contexts went for 'pure' policy borrowing with some harmonization. From the data analysis thus far, the model adopted a mix of systemic and organizational education reforms within the regional tertiary education sector. This meant that the accreditation system was the overarching framework for quality assurance at the institutional level. Also as proposed by Ball (1994), the kind of analysis undertaken in the policy production process followed a critical analysis approach and hence justified why the thesis research question was selected.

Mechanisms Involved in Higher Education Accreditation Policy Production

By referring to Dale's (1999) typology of mechanisms, along with the traditional policy production mechanisms of policy borrowing and policy learning, this study has provided a suitable context for agreeing that policy

harmonization, borrowing and dissemination occur during policy production in the region. While the higher education accreditation policy case clearly articulates this, there may be justification in suggesting that these mechanisms also exist in other education policy production processes coordinated by CARICOM. Furthermore, the research justified Jules' theory that functional education cooperation in CARICOM embraces harmonization mechanisms. The research thus confirms the accounts of Dale and Jules of the mechanisms through which globalization and regionalization operate in education policy.

Benefits and Further Research Agendas

Chapter 1 mentioned that there were several significant benefits to be derived from the study. Some of these could be recommendations for policy, educational research or innovative practices in higher education in the Caribbean. It is important to discuss these recommendations with the goal of documenting ways to improve the research approaches in the future, and to show how the findings can be applied to both policy and academic contexts.

Reflexive Positionality and Policy Research

The study articulated that my reflexive positionality, and that of policy researchers involved in accreditation policy processes, were useful for understanding and valuing the thesis research process. According to Ozga (2000)

and Sikes and Goodson (2003), the values and biases of the researchers are often 'taken-for-granted' assumptions about what constitutes the research, why it is to be done, how it will be done and how the results will be used to benefit society. As a researcher, I attempted to document my own reflexivity and positionality in the research process. I declared my biases and prejudices with the hope that the research would be ethical and morally appropriate and produce justifiable arguments and knowledge. Although this research provided an avenue for accounting for the experts' accreditation policy experiences, it announces the concern that policy should be ideally informed by empirical educational research and that personal judgments and values should be declared and somewhat limited by an ethically and morally suitable research methodology. This is a key recommendation from this thesis. Agreeing with Rizvi and Lingard (2010), policy research should establish clearly documented and suitable methodologies taking into account the choices in appointment of researchers, the epistemological and ontological stances and values they bring, the biases they confront and methodological preferences they have for educational research. Such an approach in being cognizant of the researcher and analyst would reject a stance of 'epistemological innocence' and be necessarily reflexive in approach.

Critical Policy Studies

The study effectively involved an evaluation of a single policy construct by adopting critical policy analysis studies using theoretical thematic analysis. With

some exceptions, this methodology is virtually absent in literature on education policy in the Caribbean, and so presented obvious advantages to Caribbean education policy analysis assignments. It may be useful for policy makers and researchers to consider critical policy studies as a methodological means for making public policy decisions in education, especially where the scope of the policy is multi-national and multi-sectoral. I support Jules' (2008) dissertation recommendation, that it would be instructive for the CARICOM Secretariat to consider adopting such methodological approaches to doing policy studies on education policies within the Caribbean. I would also suggest that evaluation of such policies within the Anglophone region CARICOM serves would be beneficial.

More specifically, the higher education accreditation policy study provided some empirical evidence for evaluation of the success of the accreditation policy across the region, particularly in three territories, namely; Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. This information may be helpful to CARICOM in that it provided useful feedback on how the policies the Secretariat has developed were performing across the region. CARICOM may desire to undertake further work to improve recommendations for higher education accreditation. It would also be useful to have countries enhance their policy analytical capacity by training education policy analysts to determine policy effectiveness, whilst examining lessons learnt about choosing certain options for policy adaptation or contextualization. The examples that were given of Barbados including certain

items in its legislation, as well as Guyana not making any text changes were mentioned here for reference.

Another point has to do with the philosophy of nationalism versus regionalism, as it related to the policy. The regionalism ideals had to be embraced but at the expense of nationalism agendas. Girvan (2003), Arthur (Government of Barbados, 2004) and Hewitt (2004) argued that this was essentially the main issue when thinking harmonization and integration in the region. The questions which surfaced included: 'Was the policy aiming to embrace regionalization agendas first, or was a national development model the main goal?' This leads to questioning the reasons as to why national systems were established before regional and sub-regional systems, although the latter were proposed. Perhaps more research could be entertained along these lines because while this study identified the concern, it does not seek to explore the reasons for them.

Social Equity in Education Policy

It is reasonable to assume that contextualization in accreditation policy would have been influenced by concerns involving social equity. Multiculturalism and egalitarian ideals were therefore critical matters for developing postcolonial Caribbean societies. Prakesh (cited in Hoogvelt, 2001) reasoned that hybridity as a multicultural issue strengthens social equity in the postcolonial context of a country, something which Puri (2003) shared in her discourse of creolization in the Caribbean. Hybridity in the Caribbean region speaks to multicultural

ethnicities, cultural positions and experiences. While the research covered five different geo-political and cultural settings in varying degrees, it did not highlight the values and the roles of multicultural settings in establishing accreditation policy. However, the research did provide some information on democratic involvement in terms of the level of solicitation of stakeholder views categorized by institutional and personnel types. What was lacking was information on the political and socio-economic groups who undoubtedly contributed to policy production in their territories. Two interesting issues for follow up for educational research could be an investigation into the dynamics of multicultural societies in education policy in the Caribbean, and the issue of stakeholder participation by policy actors in education policy production and implementation. The former study would provide for a comparison of ethnic and religious values and expressions which inform education policy within different multicultural societies. Because of the socio-cultural landscape, two such countries which stand out are Belize and Trinidad and Tobago. The second research issue could help determine the kinds of stakeholders who play very critical roles in education policy and how they go about their activities to inform policy.

Sustainable Education Policy Analysis Models

Quality assurance is viewed as an important aspect of sustainability in higher education. Corcoran and Wals (2004) implied this when they spoke to the value of educational change and innovation in sustainability. Thus, accreditation systems,

and their corresponding policies, are really about developing sustainability in higher education systems. Questions have arisen about which models for policy analysis in the Caribbean are indeed effective and can establish such sustainable higher education policies and systems. Kenneth Hall (2001), Kenny Anthony (2003) and Owen Arthur (2004) have posited ideas about whether the CARICOM, and hence the CSME, can foster regional harmonization and integration, liberty, equity, social justice and freedom from domination and hegemonies. These ideas need to be taken into account when modeling for regional education policy analysis as a sustainable development process.

The models for policy analysis need to articulate measures for capturing globalization imperatives, but by making the policy production process relevant to the national contexts. This study makes reference to a conceptual policy analysis model outlined in Figure 3.1, which it has argued is an appropriate methodology for analysis of education policy production and implementation. The literature prescribed public policy frameworks as convenient tools for supporting development of policies. However, these models are mostly for developed countries. Even if they do exist for education, again such models suit developed country settings. There are no official education policy frameworks for small island states such as those of the Anglophone Caribbean. In light of the outcomes of this study, it would be useful to consider contextual frameworks and similar methodologies for analyzing policy production since none specifically exist for the region. Thus, it makes sense for a model framework to be developed and adopted within the regional education policy making systems. I am

recommending that such policy models/frameworks could be engaged as a starting point for intellectual debate on the issue.

Final Thoughts

The study showed conclusively that higher education accreditation policy production in the Caribbean tended to embrace policy definition and negotiation processes that emphasized the political preferences by CARICOM, governments and hegemonic regional organizations. In other words, political agendas were pronounced during policy production. These political agendas were being articulated by the varied policy actors and were meant to address both national sovereign demands and regional goals.

Contrastingly, research, while conducted, facilitated consultations to support the political agenda. The research approach did not follow any agreed and specific methodology, but yielded information from few stakeholder groups that would have been taken up by politicians and other policy actors in their negotiations. However, the policy production processes that were being observed seem to have encouraged policy harmonization to facilitate the regionalism agenda of CARICOM in establishing the CSME. This was a main focus of the policy from its inception and therefore was well received by regional policy actors. Having made reference to these issues, this study highlights that policy production would be most effective when it considers social equity, globalization contexts and uses a policy analytical methodology.

References

Ali, E. (2004). *Policy or Politics?: Interpreting Educational Reform in Caribbean Society*: Unpublished paper for EdD Module 5 Assignment. The University of Sheffield

Ali, E. (2006) *An Interpretation of the Suitability of the Caribbean Educational Policy Framework Model for Analysis of Accreditation Policy in Trinidad and Tobago*: Unpublished paper submitted as Assignment for EdD Module 6. The University of Sheffield.

Alleyne, R. S. (2003). *Policy Paper on the Establishment of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago*. Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education.

Anderson, A; M. Freckleton and C. Kirton. (2002). 'New Regionalism in CARICOM: Prospects and Challenges'. In M. Derne and K. Nurse (eds). *Caribbean Economies and Global Restructuring*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

Anthony, K. D. (2003). *Has the Moment Passed? Reflections on Caribbean Integration after Michael Manley*. Inaugural Michael Manley Memorial Lecture, Kingston.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Public World Series Volume 1. University of Minnesota Press.

Appadurai, A. (2000). 'Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination' *Journal of Public Culture* Vol. 12: (1). 1-19.

Arawatari, R. and T. Ono (2009). *Inequality, Mobility and Redistributive Politics*. Osaka University Graduate School of Economics and Osaka School of International Public Policy Discussion Papers in Economics and Business. Vol: 9 (12).

Ashton, A. (1996). *Towards a Regional Accreditation Model*. Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions.

Attwood, R. (2009). *Comparability the Watchword for Audit Plans*. Times Higher Education

<<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=409392>>

Accessed on: 14/12/09

Ball, S. J. (1990). 'Policy Matters!' (reprinted in his edited *Politics and Policy Making in Education* London: Routledge, pp. 3-21)

Ball, S. J. (1994). *Education Reform: A Critical and Post-Structural Approach*. Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Ball, S, J. (2008). *The Education Debate: Policy and Politics in the Twenty-First Century*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

Barrow-Giles, C. (2002). *Mass Support for Regionalism: Capitalising On a Permissive Climate* Unpublished paper presented to the Caribbean Studies

Association, CSA Annual Conference, Nassau, Bahamas. Caribbean Policy Development Centre.

Beckles, H. (2005). *UWI At Risk! GATS, WTO and Higher Education Liberalisation in the Caribbean*. The University of the West Indies

Bowe, R., S. T. Ball and A. Gold. (1992). 'The Policy Process and the Processes of Policy' (reprinted in their edited *Reforming Education and Changing Schools*: London: Routledge, pp. 6-23)

Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Braun, V. and V. Clarke (2006). 'Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology' *Qualitative Research in Psychology* Vol. 3: 77-101

Burbules, N. C. and C. A. Torres. (2000). 'Globalization and Education: An Introduction.' (reprinted in their edited: *Globalization and Education: Critical Perspectives*. Routledge, New York pp. 1-26)

CARICOM (1989). *Grand Anse Declaration*.

<http://www.j.s.gov.jm/special_sections/CARICOMNew/grandAnse.pdf>

Accessed on: 12/09/08

CARICOM (2002). *Draft Agreement for Establishment of the National Accreditation Bodies*. CARICOM Secretariat. Guyana

CARICOM (2004). *Working Document for the Eleventh Meeting of the Council on Human and Social Development: Investing in Human Resources with Special Reference to Education*. CARICOM Secretariat. Guyana.

CSME (2007). *Labour Administration in the Context of the CSME*. CSME Unit of Trinidad and Tobago

<http://www.csmett.com/content2/csme/speeches/labour_administration.shtml>

Accessed on: 12/05/07

CARICOM (2008). *Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Community Accreditation Agency for Education and Training*. CARICOM Secretariat. Guyana

Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). (2009) *Approved Projects*.

<<http://www.caribank.org/titanweb/cdb/webcms.nsf/AllDoc/C55DE8EAF022350C042573A70057BA59?OpenDocument>> Accessed on: 21/06/09

Carr, W. (2004). *Understanding Education, Unit 2, The Foundation Module*, Department of Educational Studies, The University of Sheffield

Carrington, L. (2001). *Recent Reform and Development Programmes in Higher Education in the Caribbean*. The University of the West Indies. Kingston

Carryl, I. (2004). *Final Work Programme to Complete Establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy*. CARICOM Secretariat. Guyana

Cocoran, P. B. and E. J. Wals. (2004). *Higher Education and the Challenge of Sustainability: Problematics, Promise and Practice*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, The Netherlands.

Cohen, L; L. Manion and K. Morrison. (2007a). 'Naturalistic and Ethnographic Research' (reprinted in their edited *Research Methods in Education*. 6th Edition. Routledge: London pp.197-188)

Cohen, L., L. Manion and K. Morrison. (2007b). 'Historical and Documentary Research' (reprinted in their edited *Research Methods in Education*. 6th Edition. Routledge: London pp. 191-204).

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, C.A: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). 'Collecting Qualitative Data'. (reprinted in their edited *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* pp. 190-219) Thousand Oaks, C.A: Sage Publications

Crossley, M. and K. Holmes. (2001). 'Challenges for Educational Research: International Development, Partnerships and Capacity Building in Small States' *Oxford Review of Education*. Vol. 27 (3). 395-409

Dale, R. (1999). 'Specifying Globalization Effects on National Policy: A Focus on the Mechanisms' *Journal of Education Policy*. Vol. 14 (1). 1-17.

Dale, R. and S. L. Robertson. (2002). 'The Varying Effects of Regional Organizations as Subjects of Globalization and Education' *Comparative Education Review*. Vol. 46 (1). 10-36

Dale, R. (2005). 'Globalization, Knowledge Economy and Comparative Education'. *Comparative Education*. Vol. 41 (2). 117-149

De Lombaerde, P. and L.J. Garay (2006). *The New Regionalism in Latin America and the Role of the US*. Presented at the International Symposium on: New Linkages in Latin America: Economic Integration and Regional Security, Sophia University and the Japan Center for Area Studies. Tokyo.

Engel, L. (2008). *Rescaling the State: The Politics of Educational Decentralization in Catalonia*. PhD Thesis. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. ProQuest Information and Learning Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

Erk, N. (2009). *Quality Assurance, Market Performance and Higher Education Quality Assurance Assessment*. Proceedings of the 2009 EMU Conference on Higher Education and Research, Slovenia.

Fereday, J. and E. Muir-Cochrane (2006). 'Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: a Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* Vol. 5 (1). 1-11

Foucault, Michel. (1998). *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1: The Will to Knowledge*. London: Penguin.

Fowler, F.C. (2000). 'Policy Implementation: Getting People to Carry Out a Policy' (reprinted in his *Policy Studies for Educational Leaders: An Introduction*. Prentice-Hall Inc. pp. 269-301)

Gale, T. (2001). Critical Policy Sociology: Historiography, Archeology and Geneology As Methods of Policy Analysis. *Journal of Education Policy* Vol: 16 (5): 379-393

Gamble, A. (2007). 'Regional Blocs, World Order and the New Medievalism' in M. Telo (ed) *European Union and New Regionalism: Regional Actors and Governance in a Post-Hegemonic Era*. Ashgate Publishing Limited, Hampshire, England

Gift, S. I. (2005). *The Liberalization of Higher Education: Some Positive Elements and the Opportunities they Represent for the Caribbean*. Presentation to the Task Force on the Liberalization of Trade in Higher Education. University of the West Indies

Girvan, N. (2003). *Towards A New Regionalism*. Presentation to the Inaugural Session of the 5th International Meeting on Globalization and Problems of Development, Havana, Cuba

Government of Barbados (2004). *The Caribbean Single Market and Economy: The Way Forward* < <http://www.barbados.gov.bb/docs/csme.pdf>> Accessed on: 23/03/09

Government of Trinidad and Tobago. (2005). *A National Policy on the Development of Tertiary Education and Training: A Green Paper*. Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education. Port of Spain

Greenbank, P. (2003). 'The Role of Values in Educational Research: The Case for Reflexivity' *British Educational Research Journal* Vol. 29 (6). 791-801

Grenade, W. C. (2007). *CARICOM: Coming of Age?*. Jean Monnet/Robert Schuman Paper Series. University of Miami-Florida European Union Center.

Hall, K. O. (2001). *Introduction. The Caribbean Community: Beyond Survival*. Ian Randle Publishers: Kingston-6

Hammersley, M. (2002). 'Diversity or Control in Educational Research?' in his edited *Educational Research, Policymaking and Practice*. Paul Chapman Publishing: London pp. 102-115

Hartmann, E. (2010). 'The United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Pawn of Global Player?' *Globalisation, Societies and Education*. Vol. 8: (2). 307-318

Harvey, K. M. (2004). *Can the CSME Provide a Basis for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean?* Unpublished paper presented at the 5th Annual Conference on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, The University of the West Indies, Trinidad

Hettne, B. (1996). 'Globalization, the New Regionalism and East Asia' in T. Tanaka and T. Inoguchi (eds) *Globalism and Regionalism*. Selected Papers Delivered at the United Nations University Global Seminar '96 Shonan Session. Hayama, Japan.

Hettne, B. and F. Soderbaum. (2006). 'Theorising the Rise of Regionness'. *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies*. Vol. 33: (1). 113-124

Hewitt, L. (2004). *Harmonization and Integration Issues Posed by Data Sets of Diverse Origins That Must Be Made Supportive To The CARICOM Single Market and Economy Information Needs*. Unpublished paper presented at the 5th Annual Conference on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, The University of the West Indies, Trinidad

Hogwood, B. W. and L. A. Gunn (1994). *Policy Analysis for the Real World*. Oxford University Press.

Holmes, K. and M. Crossley. (2004). 'Whose Knowledge, Whose Values? The Contribution of Local Knowledge to Education Policy Processes: A Case Study of Research Development Initiatives in the Small State of St. Lucia' *British Association for International and Comparative Education*. Vol. 34 (2). 197-214

Hoogvelt, A. (2001) *History of Capitalist Expansion (Chap 1): Globalization and the Postcolonial World- The New Political Economy of Development*. John's Hopkins University Press: Baltimore 2nd Edition

Jamaica Information Service (2009). Six CARICOM States Formalize CSME. <http://www.jis.gov.jm/special_sections/CARICOMNew/sixCARICOMstates.html> Accessed on: 17/06/09

Jamaica Teachers' Association (2000). JTA and Education Policy- Professor Errol Miller. < <http://www.jamaicateachers.org.jm/anniversary/031.asp>> Accessed On: 21/12/08

Jayasuriya, K. and S. L. Robertson (2010). 'Regulatory Regionalism and the Governance of Higher Education'. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*. Vol. 8: (1). 1-6

Jules, T. D. (2008). *Re/Thinking Harmonization in the Commonwealth Handbook of Caribbean: Audiences, Actors, Interests and Education Policy Formation*. Unpublished EdD dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Kearney, M. (2002). *Classroom Use of Multimedia-Supported Predict-Observe-Explain Tasks to Elicit and Promote Discussion About Students' Physics Conceptions* Unpublished PhD dissertation, Perth: Curtin University of Technology.

Kelly, G. J. (2006). 'Epistemology and Educational Research'. In: J. L. Green, G. Camilli and P. G. Elmore (eds). *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research*. American Educational Research Association. Washington, DC

Ladner, M. and M. J. Brouillette. (2000). *The Impact of Limited School Choice on Public School Districts*. Mackinac Centre for Public Policy. Michigan, USA.

Liasidou, A. (2009). Critical Policy Research and Special Education Policy Making: A Policy Trajectory Approach. *Journal for Critical Policy Studies*. Vol. 7 (1): 107-130

Leong, Y. (2002). Political Discourse- Theories of Colonialism and Postcolonialism.

<<http://www.postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/neocolonialism1.html>> Accessed on: 23/11/08

Leo-Rhynie, E. (2007). 'Some Implications of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy With Special Reference to Gender and Education'. In K. Hall and M. Chuck-A-Sang. (eds). *CARICOM Single Market and Economy: Genesis and Prognosis*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

Lewis, Y. (2003). 'The Self As A Moral Concept'. *British Journal of Psychology*. Vol: 42 (2). 225-236

Lincoln, Y.S. and E.G. Guba. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications

Louisy, P. (2001) 'Globalization and Comparative Education: A Caribbean Perspective' *Comparative Education* Vol. 37 (4). 425-438

Louisy, P. (2004). 'Whose Context and for What Quality?: Informing Education Strategies for the Caribbean' *Compare*. Vol. 34 (3). 285-292.

Martin, B. (1998). *Tied Knowledge: Power in Higher Education*. ONLINE: <http://www.uow.edu.au/~bmartin/pubs/98tk/tiedknowledge.pdf>. Accessed on: 21/10/09

McGuire, C. (2007). 'Irish Marxism and the Development of the Theory of Neo-Colonialism' *Eire-Ireland Journal*. Irish American Culture Institute. Vol. 41 (3). 110-132.

Merriam, S. B. (1988). *Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Miller, E. (1998). 'Education for All in the Caribbean: A Mid-Decade Review of Issues' *Caribbean Journal of Education* Vol. 19 (1). 1-35

Nightingale, D.J. and J. Cromby, (1999) *Social Constructionist Psychology: A Critical Analysis of Theory and Practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Nixon, J., M. Walker and P. Clough (2003). 'Research as Thoughtful Practice' in P. Sikes, J. Nixon and W. Carr (eds) *The Moral Foundations of Educational Research: Knowledge, Inquiry and Values*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Ozga, J. (2000) 'Researching Education Policy: Some Arguments' in P. Sikes (ed) *Policy Research in Educational Settings: Contested Terrain*. Editor's Series: Doing Qualitative Research in Educational Settings Open University Press

Pollard, D (1997). 'Revisiting Chaguaramas: Institutional Development in CARICOM Since 1973' *CARICOM Perspective*. No. 67

Pring, R. (2000). *Philosophy of Educational Research*. Continuum, London

Pryke, S (2009). 'The Weakening of Nationalism?' in his edited *Nationalism in a Global World*. Palgrave Macmillan, UK

Puri, S. (2003). *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism and Cultural Hybridity*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. 1st Edition

Raddon, A. and J. Sung. (2006). *The Role of Employers in Sectoral Skills Development: International Approaches*. Working Paper No. 49. Centre for Labour Market Studies. University of Leicester.

Ranson, S. (1995). 'Theorising Education Policy' *Journal of Education Policy* Vol 10 (4). 427-448.

Rawolle, S. and B. Lingard (2008). 'The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and Researching Education Policy'. *Journal of Education Policy*. Vol: 23(6). 729-741

Ren, K.A; P. Dilley; and M. Prentice (2003). 'Identity Research in Higher Education: Commonalities, Differences and Complementarities' in J.C. Smart (ed) *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research* Vol. XVIII Kluwer Academic Publishers: MA, USA

Revierre, R, V. Roberts, L. Whittington and B. Peters (2000). *Procedures and Guidelines for a Regional Mechanism for Accreditation, Equivalency and Articulation*. Tertiary Level Institutions Unit, University of the West Indies

Rizvi, F. and B. Lingard. (2010). *Globalizing Education Policy*. Routledge, United Kingdom.

Roberts, V. (1999). 'Programme Articulation: The Making of a Regional Tertiary Education System' *Journal of Education and Development in the Caribbean* Vol. 3 (2). 145-169.

Roberts, V. (2003). 'The State of Quality Assurance in the Region'. *Journal of Education and Development in the Caribbean*. Vol. (7): 1 (pp. 13-26)

Roberts, V. (2007). 'Accreditation and Evaluation Systems in the English-speaking Caribbean' (pp.45-940). in K. Hall and R. M. Cameron (eds) *Higher Education Caribbean Perspectives*. Ian Randle Publishers, UK.

Robertson, S. L. and R. Dale. (2008). 'Researching Education in a Globalising Era: Beyond Methodological Nationalism, Methodological Statism, Methodological Educationism and Spatial Fetishism' in J. Resnik (ed.) *The Production of Educational Knowledge in the Global Era* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers

Robinson-Pant, A. P. (2005). 'Choosing a Research Approach' (reprinted in her edited *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Educational Research* Open University Press: UK pp. 58-92)

Rose, R. (2005). *Learning from Comparative Public Policy: A Practical Guide*. Routledge, New York

Sanyal, B. C. and M. Martin. (2007). 'Quality Assurance and the Role of Accreditation: An Overview' in A. G. Roca, J. Tres, B. Sanyal and F. Lopez-Segrera (eds) *Higher Education in the World 2007- Accreditation for Quality Assurance: What is at Stake*. Global University Network for Innovation. Pelgrave: MacMillan

Savrock, J. (2008). *Student Voice Is An Integral Component of School Reform*. Pennsylvania State University. < <http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/news/news/news-items-folder/mitra-student-voice>>. Accessed on 24/02/10

Sen, A. (2001). *The Perspective of Freedom. Chap I*. In: *Development As Freedom*. Oxford University Press.

Sikes, P and I. Goodson. (2003). 'Living Research: Thoughts on Educational Research as Moral Practice' in P. Sikes, J. Nixon and W. Carr (eds). *The Moral Foundations of Educational Research: Knowledge, Enquiry and Values*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Sobrinho, J.D. and P. Goergen (2007). 'Social Commitment in Higher Education' in A. G. Roca, J. Tres, B. Sanyal and F. Lopez-Segrera (eds) *Higher Education in the World 2007- Accreditation for Quality Assurance: What is at Stake*. Global University Network for Innovation. Pelgrave: MacMillan

Sobrinho, J. D. (2008) 'Quality, Pertinence and the Social Responsibility of the Latin American and Caribbean University' in A. L. Gazzola and A. Didriksson (eds.) *Trends in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean* International Institute of UNESCO for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

Soderbaum, F. (2008). *Consolidating Comparative Regionalism: From Eurocentrism to Global Comparison*. GARNET 2008 Annual Conference, Sciences Po Bordeaux, University of Bordeaux

Sorlin, S. (2007). 'Funding Diversity: Performance-based Funding Regimes as Drivers of Differentiation in Higher Education Systems'. *Higher Education Policy*. Vol: 20. 413-440

Stoer, S. R. and L. Cortesao (2000). 'Multiculturalism and Education Policy in a Global Context (European Perspectives)' in N. Burbules and C. A. Torres (eds). *Globalization and Education: Critical Perspectives* Routledge: London

Stromquist, N. P. (2002). 'Theorizing Education'. In: *Education in a Globalized World: The Connectivity of Economic Power, Technology and Knowledge*. Boulder: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers

Taylor, S., F. Rizvi, B. Lingard and M. Henry. (1997). *Educational Policy and the Politics of Change*. Routledge: London

Telo, M. (2007). 'Introduction: Globalization, New Regionalism and the Role of the EU'. (reprinted in his *European Union and New Regionalism: Regional Actors and Global Governance in a Post-Hegemonic Era*) 2nd Edition. Ashgate Publishing: Hampshire, England

The University of the West Indies- Office of the Board for Undergraduate Studies (2007). *Quality Assurance and Quality Audit: A Pilot Training Manual (Module 2. The Quality Assurance Unit University of the West Indies*.

Tikly, L. (2000). 'Globalization and Education in the PostColonial World: Towards a Conceptual Framework' *Comparative Education* Vol. 37 (2). 151-171

Tin, M. (2001). 'Social Theory and Social Research' (reprinted in his edited *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. Buckingham, Open University Press. pp. 28-45)

United States Department of Labor (2009). *Workforce and Education Strategies for Achieving National Economic Priorities: Recommendations to the US Department of Labor from Workforce Development, and Adult Education Organizations*. United States Department of Labor.

Uvalic-Trumbic, S. (2007). 'The International Politics of Quality Assurance and Accreditation: From Legal Instruments to Communities of Practice' in A. G.

Roca, J. Tres, B. Sanyal and F. Lopez-Segrera (eds) *Higher Education in the World 2007: Accreditation for Quality Assurance: What is at Stake?* Global University Network for Innovation. Pelgrave MacMillan.

Van Ginkel, H.J.A. and M.A. Rodrigues-Dias (2007). 'Institutional and Political Challenges of Accreditation at the International Level' in A. G. Roca, J. Tres, B. Sanyal and F. Lopez-Segrera (eds) *Higher Education in the World 2007- Accreditation for Quality Assurance: What is at Stake.* Global University Network for Innovation. Pelgrave: MacMillan

Van Vught, F.; M. Van der Wende and D. Westerheijden (2002) 'Globalization and Internationalization: Policy Agendas Compared' in J. Enders and O. Fulton (eds) *Higher Education in Globalizing World: International Trends and Mutual Observations* Kluwer Academic Publication: Netherlands

Wickham, P. W.; C.L.A. Wharton; D. A. Marshall and H. A. Darlington-Weekes. (2004). *Freedom of Movement: The Cornerstone of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).* Caribbean Policy Development Centre.

Williams, S. (2003). 'UNESCO in Action Education: Borderless Education' *The New Courier*. Vol (2): Literacy for Change. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

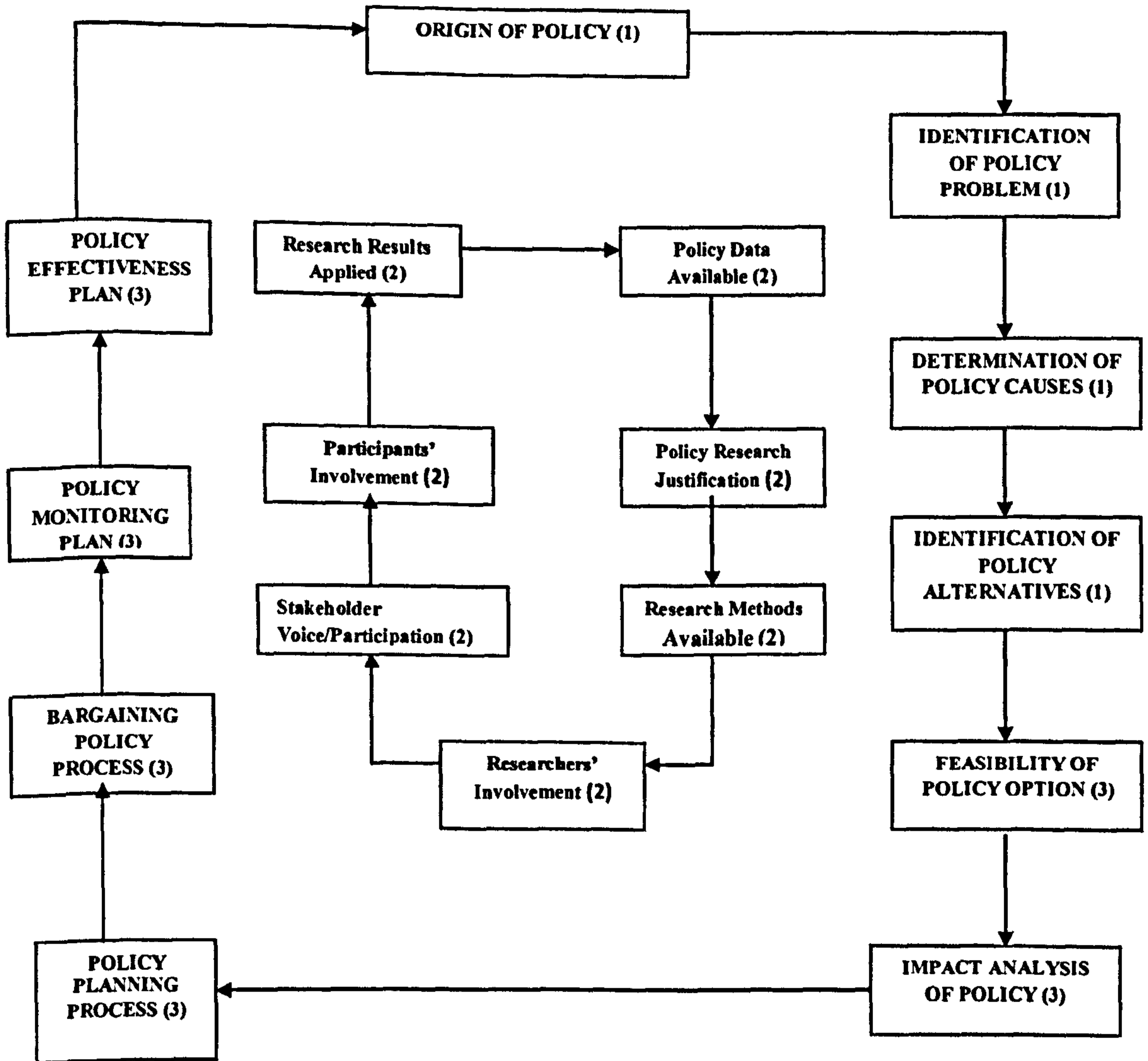
Willig, C. (2001). *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology: Adventures in Theory and Method.* Buckingham: Open University Press

Woodhouse, D. (1999). 'Quality and Quality Assurance' (reprinted in his *Quality and Internationalization in Higher Education* Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development pp.1-33)

World Bank. (2002). *Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education*. World Bank Group, Washington, DC.

Young, K. E.; C. M. Chambers and H. R. Kells (1983). 'The Changing Scope of Accreditation' (reprinted in their edited *Understanding Accreditation* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass)

Figure 3.1: Policy Cycle Model



Key: Defining Policy (1); Researching Policy (2); Negotiating Policy (3)

Adapted: from model by Hogwood and Gunn (1996)/Ozga (2000)

Appendix 3.4: University of Sheffield Participant Information Sheet



UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Participant,

With reference to the research project title, you are being asked whether or not you could voluntarily take part in this doctoral research project by offering information. It is important for you to become familiar with what the research intends to achieve and what is expected of you during the research study. Accordingly, you may wish to read the following information sheet quite intensely to get a good understanding of the research project before giving consent to participating. Please do not hesitate to ask the interviewer/investigator any question(s) about what seems to be unclear to you so that it can be clarified.

Thank you for taking the time out to read this document and for considering this research study in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Bob Lingard/Dr. Jennifer Lavia

Research Supervisor s

Eduardo Raoul Ali

EdD degree candidate

What is the aim of the project?

The methodological framework is based on a fundamental research question posed by the investigator on account of his doctoral coursework research and professional experiences looking at national and regional accreditation policy. The question is: 'How do accreditation policy processes compare among emerging CSME territories?'. This question was raised in light of CARICOM's increasing efforts to establish national accreditation bodies within a regional mechanism in every CSME state to recognize qualifications and facilitate free movement of skilled persons in the region. From this investigator's observations, it appears that the pace of emergence of these bodies has increased within the CSME since January 2006. By the end of 2005, only Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados had officially established their policies and created working national bodies. However, since the beginning of 2006, Guyana, Suriname, Belize, Bahamas and other countries have either completed their legislation for the national bodies or about to do so. As documented in previous doctoral assignments (EdD Modules 3, 4 and 5) the investigator's perception is that education policy, including accreditation policy, is genuinely a political endeavour involving supranational agencies, national state politicians, bureaucrats and selected technocrats in the Caribbean. Thus, from my research I have observed that education policy may be seldom 'evidence-based' and in so doing does not draw on information from stakeholders or involve the analysis of genuine empirical data on the education sector from within the nation state or in the Caribbean region.

In light of the above, this research therefore aims to: critically analyze policy processes that have been employed in the formulation and implementation of accreditation policy processes for tertiary education (which commenced with a draft bill in 2000) in the newly established CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) territories.

From doing this project the researcher will be able to:

- 1) Understand what factors can influence or have influenced the shaping of processes that lead to the conceptualization, drafting, legitimizing, and implementation of accreditation policies at the level of the Caribbean region (and at national levels);
- 2) Appreciate the extent to which regional and national accreditation policy has 'converged' or 'diverged' from the draft regional (CARICOM) legislative document approved by CARICOM in 2000;
- 3) Generate and compare viewpoints from regional and national accreditation experts in selected CSME territories about the role and implications in empirical research, civil society participation and politics play in accreditation policy processes.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to be part of this research project due to one of two reasons:

1. Your organization was named among a group of very important stakeholders who either had a part to play or have some critical role to play in accreditation policy in your country or the Caribbean region; AND/OR
2. You are an individual who has been singled out to participate in this project because of your direct high level influence in development and/or delivery of national and regional accreditation policy.

In total, at least eight persons will participate in this study who either represent or work closely through regional policy-making bodies, regional tertiary institutions, regional accreditation professionals and regional/national accreditation bodies.

Do I have to take part?

The decision to take part in this project is entirely up to you. For you this exercise is a voluntary one. Should you refuse to participate there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Once you have agreed to take part, you will be provided with this information sheet to retain in your possession and you will be asked to sign a consent form. Furthermore, given that the research involves audio interviews you will also be asked to listen to what you have said and asked to agree whether or not this is what you want to say. Once you have agreed with the content, a transcript of the conversation will be prepared and you will again be required to verify the transcript and consent to delete voice data. Afterwards, you will have another visit from the investigator at which point you will be given an acknowledgement card with the name and contact information for the investigator so that you may always stay in touch to ask any pertinent questions about the research progress or outcomes. Above all, if you decide to withdraw from the process at anytime, you may do so. There will be no liability, penalty or loss for withdrawal for whatever reason or at anytime.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The research component of the project should be completed by December 31st 2007. Thus, all participants will have the opportunity to fully offer their input by that date and would have completed their transaction with the investigator. The participant will only be required to meet or have communication with the investigator no more than three (3) times:

1. a one and half (1½) hour interview at the convenience of the participant to document and audio tape responses to the questions. A replay of the audio-

tape will then occur to confirm that this is what the participant wished to say on record;

2. contact with the investigator within one week of the interview to offer a written transcript of the conversation for verification by email, by mail, by fax or in person; and
3. At your discretion, you will be asked for a brief meeting with the investigator (no more than five (5) minutes) at which point your voice data will be erased from the audio-tape or the tape destroyed in your presence.

Where telephone interviews or questionnaires are concerned, you will be asked to spend about the same length of time (1 ½ hours) either by being interviewed or completing the form. At the time of the interview you will be given opportunity to confirm your documented views. In terms of the questionnaire, you will be asked to sign to verify your participation and then contacted via email to further verify your information. Thus participants may have to make adjustments to their routines for about this period of time to allow for interviewing. After this, the investigator will be involved in writing his research report and this will lead to the production of the doctoral thesis. The first draft is expected to be completed by mid July of 2007. At this moment, preliminary findings and conclusions will be shared with participants for their information.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Participants may wish to note that there are no immediate disadvantages or risks associated with taking part in this project. The information they share will be kept in strictest confidence. It must also be noted that organizations nominating participants must be comfortable with the fact that the views expressed are the views of the interviewee/participant and not necessarily those of the organization. The participant may however draw upon his own professional experiences when sharing his opinions related to the research.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Given the intent of the research project, there are no individual benefits to the participant. However, the participant will be able to make some input into the design of a model for developing education policies in the Caribbean. At the same time he/she may be able to offer some advice for the implementation of the accreditation policy in Trinidad and Tobago by means of his/her involvement in the project.

What happens when the research study stops?

In the event that the research stops or slows down due to some unforeseen reason, the participants will be notified and assured that their information will be kept confidentially and used in another research study at a later date if this develops with the Department of Educational Studies. Participants may then have the opportunity to be part of another research project if that develops in place of this one.

What if something goes wrong?

In the event that there is a failure on the part of the investigator or the process is not what was claimed in this information sheet, you may contact the investigator to voice your concerns so that it may be rectified or resolved. Should you have used this means of redress and have not received appropriate recourse, you may lodge an official complaint with the University's Registrar and Secretary who is the official person for receiving complaints on behalf of the University of Sheffield. The University's Registrar may be contacted at:

University Registrar, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield, S10 2TN, United Kingdom. Tel: +44 114 222 2000

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All information you provide for the purposes of this research project will be kept in strictest confidence. Information to be publicly disseminated originating from you will not carry your name or contact information so that you will not be recognized. All personal data will carry a unique coded identifier and stored in safe electronic and manual files that can only be accessed by the investigator or any approved University official such as investigator's research supervisor.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

At the end of the research project, the investigator will write the thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Studies. All participants in the research will not be identified by name or contact details in the thesis. The investigator will seek to have the thesis bound and then deposited in the University of Sheffield libraries prior to embarking on getting the thesis published. Publication of the thesis will be based on appropriate consultation with the thesis supervisor. Thus, a copy of the bound and published thesis may be available in the University of Sheffield School of Education library for viewing.

Who is organizing and funding the research?

The research project is organized and self-funded by the investigator. As such, the investigator bears all costs for the design, execution and analysis of the research. The University's School of Education is actively involved in the supervision of the research and as such plays a very vital role in organization process.

Who has reviewed the project?

The University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Committee is responsible for reviewing the project to ensure that it meets with the University's ethics standards and procedures. The Department of Educational Studies Ethics Review Procedures has also been followed given that the Department has this responsibility for the degree research.

Contact for further information

For further information on this research project, you may wish to contact the principal investigator:

Eduardo R. Ali, Doctoral candidate, Department of Educational Studies, University of Sheffield, c/o 33 Picton Court, 109 Woodford Street, Newtown, Port of Spain, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Alternatively, you may contact the Student Supervisor:

Dr. Jennifer Lavia, Lecturer/Director, Caribbean Programme, c/o Department of Educational Studies, School of Education, University of Sheffield

Appendix 3.5: Participant Consent Form



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Critical Comparison of Accreditation Policy Processes in the Emerging CSME Territories: Analyzing Text and Perspectives from Regional Accreditation Leaders

Name of Researcher: Eduardo Raoul Ali

Participant Identification Number for this project:

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated: *[insert date]* for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses.

4. I agree to take part in the above project.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Person taking consent
(if different from researcher)

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

Copies:

One copy for the participant and one copy for the Principal Investigator / Supervisor.

Appendix 3.6: Ethical Clearance: 1st Reviewer

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEWER'S COMMENTS FORM

This form is for use when ethically reviewing a research ethics application form.

1. Name of Ethics Reviewer:	Alan Skelton
2. Research Project Title:	A Critical Comparison of Accreditation Policy Processes in the Emerging CSME Territories: Analysing Policy Text and Perspectives from Regional Accreditation Leaders.
3. Principal Investigator (or Supervisor):	Bob Lingard/Jennifer Lavia
4. Academic Department / School:	Education

5. I confirm that I do not have a conflict of interest with the project application

6. I confirm that, in my judgment, the application should:

Be approved:	Be approved with <i>suggested</i> amendments in '7' below:	and/ Be approved providing <i>requirements</i> specified in '8' below are met:	<u>NOT</u> be approved for the reason(s) given in '9' below:
	x		

7. Approved with the following suggested, optional amendments (i.e. it is left to the discretion of the applicant whether or not to accept the amendments and, if accepted, the ethics reviewers do not need to see the amendments):

Will a participant information sheet be provided?
Will it be possible to identify the 8 'experts' involved (any implications for A7)?

8. Approved providing the following, compulsory requirements are met (i.e. the ethics reviewers need to see the required changes):

9. Not approved for the following reason(s):

10. Date of Ethics Review: 19/1/07

Appendix 3.7: Ethical Clearance: 2nd Reviewer

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEWER'S COMMENTS FORM

This form is for use when ethically reviewing a research ethics application form.

1. Name of Ethics Reviewer:		Dr Jennifer Lavia	
2. Research Project Title:		A Critical Comparison of Accreditation Policy Processes in the Emerging CSME Territories: Analyzing Policy Text and Perspectives from Regional Accreditation Leaders	
3. Principal Investigator (or Supervisor):		Eduardo Ali	
4. Academic Department / School:		Education	
5. I confirm that I do not have a conflict of interest with the project application ✓			
6. I confirm that, in my judgment, the application should:			
Be approved:	Be approved with <i>suggested</i> amendments in '7' below:	Be approved providing <i>requirements</i> specified in '8' below are met:	<u>NOT</u> be approved for the reason(s) given in '9' below:
✓			
7. Approved with the following suggested, optional amendments (i.e. it is left to the discretion of the applicant whether or not to accept the amendments and, if accepted, the ethics reviewers do not need to see the amendments):			
8. Approved providing the following, compulsory requirements are met (i.e. the ethics reviewers need to see the required changes):			
9. Not approved for the following reason(s):			
10. Date of Ethics Review: 05/12/2006			

Appendix 3.8: Ethical Clearance: 3rd Reviewer

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEWER'S
COMMENTS FORM**

This form is for use when ethically reviewing a research ethics application form.

1. Name of Ethics Reviewer:		Dr Suzy Harris	
2. Research Project Title:		EdD Thesis	
3. Principal Investigator (or Supervisor):		Eduardo Ali	
4. Academic Department / School:		Education	
5. I confirm that I do not have a conflict of interest with the project application ✓			
6. I confirm that, in my judgment, the application should:			
Be approved:	Be approved with <i>suggested</i> amendments in '7' below:	and/ Be approved providing <i>requirements</i> specified in '8' below are met:	<u>NOT</u> be approved for the reason(s) given in '9' below:
✓			

7. Approved with the following suggested, optional amendments (i.e. it is left to the discretion of the applicant whether or not to accept the amendments and, if accepted, the ethics reviewers do not need to see the amendments):
8. Approved providing the following, compulsory requirements are met (i.e. the ethics reviewers need to see the required changes):
9. Not approved for the following reason(s):
10. Date of Ethics Review: 15/8/06

Table 3.9: Document Databank for Case Studies

Document Category	Documentary Evidence	Policy Case Being Studied
Law (7) L# 1-7	<p>Act No. 16 of 2004 to establish the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>Act No. 16 of 2007 to amend the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>Act No. 12 of 2004 to establish the National Accreditation Council of Guyana</p> <p>Act No. 11 of 2004 to establish the Barbados Accreditation Council</p> <p>Act No. 20 of 2004 to establish the National Accreditation Council of Belize</p> <p>Act No. 23 of 1987 to establish the University Council of Jamaica</p> <p>CARICOM draft Accreditation Bill to establish National Accreditation Bodies within CARICOM territories</p>	<p>Trinidad and Tobago; CARICOM</p> <p>Ditto</p> <p>Guyana; CARICOM</p> <p>Barbados; CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p>
Policy Report (8) PR# 1-8	<p>CARICOM (2002). Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas Establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy: Signed by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community on July 5, 2001 At Their Twenty-Second Meeting of the Conference in Nassau, the Bahamas. CARICOM Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana.</p> <p>I. Carryl (2004). Final Work Programme to Complete Establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. CARICOM Secretariat, Guyana.</p> <p>E. London (2003). Final Report on Preparing for the Establishment of A National Accreditation System in Trinidad and Tobago. Inter-American Development Bank.</p> <p>E. Ali (2003). Comments on the London Report for Establishment of the Accreditation System in Trinidad and Tobago. Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education.</p>	<p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM; Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago</p>

	<p>E. Ali (2004). <i>Organizational and Functional Systems for the Establishment of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago</i>. Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education.</p> <p>R. Alleyne (2003). <i>Policy Paper on Establishment of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago</i>.</p> <p>Government of Barbados (2002). <i>Cabinet Note on the Establishment of the Barbados Accreditation Council</i></p> <p>Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education. (2003). <i>Implementation Team Report for Establishment of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago</i>.</p>	<p>Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>Barbados</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago</p>
<p>Unpublished Position Paper (6)</p> <p>TR# 1-6</p>	<p>Alvin A. Ashton, (1996). <i>Towards A Regional Accreditation Model</i>. Report to the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions</p> <p>R. Alleyne (2006). <i>Position Paper on the Registration of Post-Secondary and Tertiary Institutions in Trinidad and Tobago</i>. Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>M. Jose-Lemaitre. (2005). <i>Keynote Address at the Opening of the 2nd CANQATE Conference: Quality Tertiary Education in Single Market Economies: Challenges and Benefits</i>. International Conference. CANQATE.</p> <p>B. Tewarie (2006). <i>Education and Development in the Knowledge Economy of the Twenty-First Century</i>. Address to the Conference of Presidents and Governors General of CARICOM.</p> <p>S. Gift (2005). <i>The Liberalization of Higher Education: Some Positive Elements and the Opportunities they Represent for the Caribbean</i>. Submitted to the Task Force on the Liberalization of Trade in Higher Education, University of the West Indies.</p> <p>TLIU. (2005). <i>Human Resource Needs Assessment of CARICOM Countries: The Tertiary Education Sector Response</i>. University of the West Indies</p>	<p>CARICOM; Barbados; Guyana; Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p>

	A. Cal (2006). Legislation and Accreditation Systems: The Belize National Accreditation Council and its Regional Context.	CARICOM/Belize
Published Position Paper/Text (11) TR# 9-19	<p>R. Reviere, V. Roberts, L. Whittington and B. Peters (2000). Procedures and Guidelines for a Regional Mechanism for Accreditation, Equivalency and Articulation. Tertiary Level Institutions Unit, University of the West Indies.</p> <p>V. Roberts. (2007). Chapter 5: Accreditation and Evaluation Systems in the English-speaking Caribbean (pp.45-940). In: Higher Education Caribbean Perspectives. K. Hall and R. M. Cameron (eds). Ian Randle Publishers.</p> <p>V. Roberts (2003). The State of Quality Assurance in the Region. Journal of Education and Development in the Caribbean. Vol. (7): 1 (pp. 13-26)</p> <p>D. Jules, E. Miller and L. Ancilla-Armstrong (1999). Caribbean Education Strategy. World Bank Report.</p> <p>B. Chevanne. (2003). Legislation of Tertiary Education in the Caribbean. IESALC.</p> <p>A.Chan. (2007). Chapter 11: The Belize National Report on Higher Education (pp. 206-233). In: Higher Education Caribbean Perspectives. K. Hall and R. M. Cameron (eds). Ian Randle Publishers</p> <p>U. Paul. (2007). Chapter 14: National Report on Higher Education Institutions in Guyana (pp. 281-313). In: Higher Education Caribbean Perspectives. K. Hall and R. M. Cameron (eds). Ian Randle Publishers</p> <p>H. Evans and O. Burke. (2007). Chapter 15: National Report on Higher Education in Jamaica (pp. 314-354). In: Higher Education Caribbean Perspectives. K. Hall and R. M. Cameron (eds). Ian Randle Publishers.</p> <p>D. Rampersad. (2007). Chapter 17: Higher Education in Trinidad and Tobago (pp. 384-394). In: Higher Education Caribbean Perspectives. K. Hall and R. M. Cameron (eds). Ian Randle Publishers.</p>	<p>CARICOM; Barbados; Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM; Barbados; Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM/Belize</p> <p>CARICOM; Guyana</p> <p>CARICOM/Jamaica</p> <p>CARICOM; Trinidad and Tobago</p>

	<p>H. McD Beckles. (2005). Final Report of the Task Force on the Liberalization of Higher Education and Its Impact on the UWI and Tertiary Education in the Region. UWI Annual Business Meeting of Council. The University of the West Indies</p> <p>E. Miller (2002). Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Presented at Seminar on Higher Education and Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean: Responding to Expansion and Diversification, Brazil. Inter-American Development Bank.</p>	<p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p>
<p>Online Files (6)</p>	<p>Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago website at http://www.actt.org.tt</p> <p>Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions website at http://www.acti.org</p> <p>Barbados Accreditation Council website at http://www.bac.gov.bb</p> <p>CARICOM Secretariat website at http://www.caricom.org</p> <p>Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education website at http://www.canqate.org</p> <p>International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) website at http://www.inqaahe.org</p>	<p>CARICOM; Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM; Barbados</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM; Barbados; Guyana; Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM, Barbados; Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago</p>
<p>Personal Files (7)</p>	<p>Ali, E. (2005). Practice Makes Perfect!: Research Can Support An Improved Process for Establishment of Caribbean Accreditation Policies. Presented at the 2nd CANQATE Conference in Port of Spain, Trinidad</p> <p>Speaking Notes for Paper Presented at 2nd CANQATE Conference</p> <p>Ali, E. (2004). Policy or Politics?: Interpreting Education Reform in Caribbean Society (pp. 29). Submitted for EdD Module 5: Contemporary Issues in Education Policy and Research. School of Education. University of Sheffield</p>	<p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p> <p>CARICOM</p>

	<p>Ali, E. (2005). An Insider's Perspective of the Philosophy of Vision 2020: Is Trinidad and Tobago's tertiary Education on Course to Development? (pp. 26). Submitted for EdD Module 4: Education and Development. School of Education. University of Sheffield.</p> <p>Ali, E. (2005). Research Can Support an Improved Process for Establishment of the National Accreditation Policy in Trinidad and Tobago (pp. 47). Submitted for EdD Module 3: Processes of Educational Research. School of Education. University of Sheffield.</p> <p>Ali, E. (2006). An Interpretation of the Suitability of the Educational Policy Framework Model for Analysis of the Accreditation Policy in Trinidad and Tobago. (pp. 38). Submitted for EdD Module 6: Research Design and Management. School of Education. University of Sheffield.</p> <p>Ali, E. (2006). Decolonizing Education Policy in the Caribbean: Shifting Our Practice from an Internationally-Dependent Policy Consumption Model to a Contextually Relevant Policy Research Model. Decolonizing Methodologies Seminar. University of Sheffield</p>	<p>Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM; Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM; Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>CARICOM</p>
--	--	---

Appendix 3.10: Interview Schedule for Accreditation Policy Experts

**UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DOCTORAL THESIS RESEARCH STUDY**

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE:

A Critical Comparison of Accreditation Policy Processes In The Emerging CSME Territories: Analyzing Policy Text and Perspectives from Regional Accreditation Leaders

INTRODUCTION:

Before you complete this schedule, please refer to the University Participant Information (UPI) Sheet which was provided to you to obtain your consent to participate in this study. Having this questionnaire means that you opted to complete the form rather than have a face-to-face interview with the investigator.

Please also note that for the purposes of this research exercise, the term '*policy*' is being regarded as both the analysis of the contexts around which policy statements/legislation are written; and the analysis of the policy statements/legislative texts themselves. In addition, the term '*policy maker*' is used to refer to any individual(s), body (bodies) or organization (s) that is/was responsible for the political decision to effect planning and implementation of the policy/legislation. The term '*policy option*' refers to the political strategy alternatives considered by the policy maker in arriving at the policy to be implemented.

This study will give you a chance to reflect and record your experiences as they relate to one or more accreditation policies you may have worked with. It will also afford you to answer key questions which are taken from a policy analysis tool¹ developed by the investigator.

In the study, the following accreditation policies are being analyzed:

1. the 2002 CARICOM legislation for national accreditation agencies;
2. the 2006 CARICOM agreement for the Caribbean Accreditation Authority;
3. the National accreditation policy statements/laws for Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago;

As far as it is practically possible, please answer the following 20 questions drawing upon your professional experiences in research, analysis and/or formulation of accreditation policy in your country and/or the wider Caribbean region.

PART ONE: ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

a) i) Your Name (optional):

.....

ii) Your Current Position/Organization (optional)

.....

b) Name of Policy/Policies you have worked with:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

c) Country/countries affected by policy/policies:

.....
.....

d) Number of Years Experience with this policy/these policies:

.....

e) Number of Years Experience with policy analysis or policy formulation:

.....

f) If at all possible, can you summarize the educational experiences you have had that may be related to this policy /these policies?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

g) With reference to this policy/these policies, would you say that your role was that of i) a researcher, ii) an advocate, iii) an analyst, iv) a text writer, v) an implementer and/or vi) other? If so to any, please elaborate.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

h) What did you value most about this policy/these policies and why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

i) What did you value least about this policy/these policies and why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

j) You work within _____ (name of country), not so? Do you think that being in _____ (name of country) will in anyway affect, influence or prejudice this interview and thus your responses to the questions being asked today?

.....
.....
.....
.....

k) Have you participated in any accreditation policy activity while you have been in _____ (name of country) which you wish to declare? What has this addressed that may be relevant to this interview today?

.....
.....
.....

l) This interview is being conducted in _____ (name of site, location). Do you think that being in this exact location and given the current setting it will have any positive or negative effect on the interview process and results?

.....
.....
.....
.....

PART TWO: DEFINING THE POLICY ISSUE

1. As far as you can recall, with whom did the policy idea/concept originate and what did you see as the motivating factor(s) for this policy?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. What problem(s) do you recall was/were being addressed by the formulation of the policy? Was it easily defined or was it difficult to understand?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. What might have caused the problem(s) that was/were being addressed in the policy?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4. At the time, did you see the problem being solved by the policy alone? Please elaborate.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

PART THREE: CONDUCTING POLICY RESEARCH

5. What pertinent information/data was available at the time to understand the policy problem(s)?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. Was any research needed to clarify the case for policy? If so, what questions were asked in order to address the policy issue?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

7. Not giving names, who would you say were the principal researchers involved in policy analysis?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

8. i) Not giving names, who were the research participants involved in the policy research process?

.....
.....
.....
.....

ii) How receptive were these participants to seeing this policy/these policies implemented?

.....
.....
.....
.....

iii) In your opinion, do you think that any stakeholders were a) completely or b) partly ignored during the process of developing this policy/these policies? If so whom and why did this happen?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

9. What research methods do you recall being used to analyze the problem(s) further?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

10. Do you think these research methods were adequate, that is, they enabled sufficient empirical data to be obtained about the policy problem(s)?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

11. If you say that empirical research was done to understand the policy problem(s), how was the information used to construct the policy?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

PART FOUR: ANALYZING POLICY OPTIONS

12. What were the alternatives/options offered for addressing this policy?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

13. Was there any cost/benefit analysis performed to arrive at clear options which may vary in cost, impact/success and risk, for example? Can you describe them and explain the merits and demerits of each option, if feasible?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

14. What outcomes or results did you expect in the policy options?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

15. What criteria or metrics were arrived at to measure the effectiveness of the policy options?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

16. Was there any trade-off on the policy options with the policy maker?

.....
.....
.....
.....

17. How did the policy maker decide on a preferred policy option?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

18. What did the policy maker agree to do to implement this preferred policy option?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

19. At the time, were there any mechanisms and/or tools devised to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy measures? If so, what?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

20. If you have seen the policy being implemented in your country or regional context, would you say that the policy was effective or not? Why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix 3.11: Interview Schedule for Higher Education Professionals

**UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DOCTORAL THESIS RESEARCH STUDY**

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE:

A Critical Comparison of Accreditation Policy Processes In The Emerging CSME Territories: Analyzing Policy Text and Perspectives from Regional Accreditation Leaders

ACCREDITATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS

Main question:

Has the establishment of Accreditation Councils by means of a national policy been successful in your country?

PART ONE: ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

a) i) Your Name (optional):

.....

ii) Your Current Position/Organization (optional)

.....

b) Name of Policy/Policies you are familiar with:

1)

2)

3)

c) Country/countries affected by policy/policies:

.....
.....

d) Number of Years Experience with this policy/these policies:

.....

e) Number of Years Experience with policy analysis or policy formulation:

.....

f) If at all possible, can you summarize the educational experiences you have had that may be related to this policy /these policies?

g) With reference to this policy/these policies, would you say that your role was that of i) a researcher, ii) an advocate, iii) an analyst, iv) a text writer, v) an implementer and/or vi) other? If so to any, please elaborate.

h) What did you value most about this policy/these policies and why?

i) What did you value least about this policy/these policies and why?

l) This interview is being conducted in _____ (name of site, location). Do you think that being in this exact location and given the current setting it will have any positive or negative effect on the interview process and results?

PART TWO: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION

a) (i) Are you familiar with the role of the Accreditation Council in quality assurance and accreditation?

.....

ii) If yes, what is this role?

.....
.....
.....
.....

b) Has the Accreditation Council’s work in quality assurance and accreditation impacted your institution in any way? If so, how? If not, why not?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

c) Who would you say has benefited most from the work of the Accreditation Council in quality assurance and accreditation?

.....
.....

d) Who would you say has benefited least from the work of the Accreditation Council in quality assurance and accreditation?

.....
.....

PART THREE: QUALIFICATIONS RECOGNITION

a) (i) Are you familiar with the role of the Accreditation Council in recognition of qualifications?

.....

ii) If yes, what is this role?

.....
.....
.....
.....

b) Has the Accreditation Council's work in recognition of qualifications impacted your institution in any way? If so, how? If not, why not?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

c) Who would you say has benefited most from the work of the Accreditation Council in recognition of qualifications?

.....
.....

d) Who would you say has benefited least from the work of the Accreditation Council in recognition of qualifications?

.....
.....

PART FOUR: GRANTING AUTHORIZATION TO INSTITUTIONS

a) (i) Are you familiar with the role of the Accreditation Council in granting authorization to institutions to operate in the country where this legislation/policy has been established?

.....

ii) If yes, what is this role?

.....
.....
.....
.....

b) Has the Accreditation Council's work in recognition of granting authorization to institutions to operate in the country where this legislation/policy has been established impacted your institution in any way? If so, how? If not, why not?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

c) Who would you say has benefited most from the work of the Accreditation Council in granting authorization to institutions to operate in the country where this legislation/policy has been established?

.....
.....

d) Who would you say has benefited least from the work of the Accreditation Council in granting authorization to institutions to operate in the country where this legislation/policy has been established?

.....
.....

PART FIVE: FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS

a) (i) Are you familiar with the role of the Accreditation Council in facilitating CARICOM nationals to move for purposes of labour in the country where this legislation/policy has been established?

.....

ii) If yes, what is this role?

.....
.....
.....

b) Has the Accreditation Council's work in facilitating CARICOM nationals to move for purposes of labour in the country where this legislation/policy has been established impacted your institution in any way? If so, how? If not, why not?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

c) Who would you say has benefited most from the work of the Accreditation Council in facilitating CARICOM nationals to move for purposes of labour in the country where this legislation/policy has been established?

.....
.....

d) Who would you say has benefited least from the work of the Accreditation Council in facilitating CARICOM nationals to move for purposes of labour in the country where this legislation/policy has been established?

.....
.....

PART SIX: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Do you have any additional comments you wish to make in connection with the implementation of the policy/legislation in the country where this legislation/policy has been established?

.....
.....
.....
.....