The College: The Struggle for Survival and Transformation

In Neocolonial Trinidad 1997-2018

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ABSTRACT

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Trepidation and exhilaration buffet me from one moment to the next. Flashes of doubt disrupt my exuberant certainty that The College is destined for success. Nightmare-inflicting fears that The College might fail under my watch clash with the tantalizing possibilities that hover on the horizon and which tempt me with breath-taking promises of triumph.

Who is the bearer of this apprehension? It is I, the principal of The College.

This is not just any college. It is a college founded by my late husband, and one that feeds, clothes and shelters not only me, but also my adult son and daughter. It is a college that listed nearly 700 students a few years after its establishment in 1997 and yet today counts only a fraction of that number...

It is a college on the brink of collapse… or perhaps not.

Complexities and contradictions, survival and transformation, challenge and change are concepts whose juxtaposition with each other form the basis of this study. The case is of a family-run, for-profit provider of technical and vocational education. The thesis explores how this college, grounded in a neocolonial context has aspirations for a postcolonial reality of relevance and transformation. The methodology comprises a case study with an auto ethnographic turn.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This was a journey indeed, and one that I would not have attempted without the encouragement of many who wished me well.

I acknowledge the deep and abiding love and support of my children, their spouses, and my grandson who never failed to ask "How is the thesis going Grandma?" Their confidence in my work inspired me to keep going.

My supervisor Pat was the soul of patience as I lagged many times along the way. I thank her for her encouragement. Travellers at different stages along the path, brought tales of safe passage, engendering hope that success was possible. I am grateful to Debra, Nicole and Lynette for their friendship and support.

I express my sincerest thanks to my sister Debbie, for her whole-hearted commitment to my efforts and acknowledge the love and concern of all my friends and family.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late husband for whose love and support I will always be grateful.

ACRONYMS

ACTT	Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CGIL	City and Guilds Institute of London
COSTAATT	The College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CVQ	Caribbean Vocational Qualification
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EFA	Education For All
GATE	Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoRTT	Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
HCT	Human Capital Theory
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICTA	Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILM	Institute of Leadership and Management

IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MIC-IT	MIC Institute of Technology
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOOC	Massive Online Open Courses
MSTTE	Ministry of Science and Technology and Tertiary Education
MTEST	Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training
n.d.	No date
NEBOSH	National Examinations Board of Occupational Safety and Health
NEC	National Examinations Council
NESC	National Energy Skills Corporation
NIHERST	National Institute of Higher Education Research, Science and Technology
NTA	National Training Agency
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TT	Trinidad and Tobago
TTNVQ	Trinidad and Tobago National Vocational Qualification
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UCWI	University College of the West Indies
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
US	United States of America
UTT	University of Trinidad and Tobago
UWI	University of the West Indies
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YTEPP	Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF STUDY

1.1 Reflections

Participant 2016- 2018

Trepidation and exhilaration buffet me from one moment to the next. Flashes of doubt disrupt my exuberant certainty that The College is destined for success. Nightmare-inflicting fears that The College might fail under my watch clash with the tantalizing possibilities that hover on the horizon and which tempt me with breath-taking promises of triumph. Who is the bearer of this apprehension? It is I, the principal of The College.

This is not just any college. It is a college founded by my late husband, and one that feeds, clothes and shelters not only me, but also my adult son and daughter. It is a college that listed nearly 700 students a few years after its establishment in 1997 and yet today counts only a fraction of that number...

It is a college on the brink of collapse… or maybe not.

In order to save my beloved college, the current reality must be confronted. For this reason, I wrestle with the responsibility of charting a pathway of change, a pathway of growth and a pathway of transformation, in an environment replete with both opportunity and peril.

The future is uncertain.

Engaging in change tore at my soul but the soul of The College was at stake. I had to find a way to cauterize my fear and managed to achieve this feat by imprinting on my consciousness, the need to preserve my husband's legacy and my children's future. With this in mind, I set forth to tackle head-on the imperative of restructuring The College. The immediate concern to be addressed was the downscaling of the organization, with consequential impacts on personnel and space. Fewer students meant the need for fewer lecturers and administrative workers. It was heart-breaking as I had to part with staff members, many of whom had been part of the life-blood of The College for, in some cases three, five and even seven years. Nevertheless, I had to put emotion aside and place the survival of the institution first place in this endeavour.

These were not the only changes. The physical size of The College also had to be reduced. It was emotionally excruciating to confront the stark necessities of having to close the Chaguanas branch of The College located in Central Trinidad, and to halve the space at the Head Office in San Fernando.

The halving of this space, the "nerve-centre" of The College, induced in me a self-imposed internal evaluation that harried me whenever I looked in the mirror, sat to eat breakfast, lunch or dinner or prepared to go to bed. The self-interrogation assumed variations of these themes; "Was the need to both close the Chaguanas branch and to dissect the space at the Head Office, an admission of my inadequacy for the job? Am I a disappointment to my late husband? Would I be judged as a failure because I am a woman?" Such questions haunted my every move.

Then something magical seemed to have happened. After I had completed the agonising task of adjusting the human and physical components of The College to the new realities facing the institution, my attitude changed. This new and enhanced attitude equipped me with the lens to catch sight of latent possibilities for growth of The College. It was therefore with optimism and excitement that I welcomed an unlikely visitor into my office during the closing months of 2016.

My heart rate quadrupled as David, an elderly agriculturalist, enthusiastically articulated his intention to develop a cocoa estate in the rural countryside of Moruga. David was an unlikely visitor because he came from a sector, namely agriculture, with which The College had had no prior association. His visit to The College was one of last resort, his having become disenchanted by the sluggish response to his requests for agricultural training from larger public institutions. David invited us to consider training workers in the area of cocoa production for an estate which he promised would employ state of the art technology. Gripped by uncertainty (our never having focused on agricultural training before) but dazzled by the amazing opportunity which he presented, the Board of Directors of The College and I agreed to consider the possibility of establishing a cocoa academy. This institution would train the thousands of workers whom he claimed would eventually be required on the estate. David's investment plan seemed entirely credible in that it was in keeping with the strategic intention of the government to develop the cocoa industry in Trinidad and Tobago. David's ideas, David's proposal and David's vision opened our eyes to other windows of opportunity.

On account of the perilous state of the institution, we are forced to explore new avenues, and so this family-run, for-profit college intends to embark on training in areas which offer growth possibilities such as Construction, Renewable Energy, Aesthetics and Customized Training for firms. These areas offer opportunities to expand and transform the curriculum by allowing the institution to place more emphasis on educating for social and cultural relevance by creating more authentic and indigenous programmes while simultaneously sustaining itself by continuing to offer its regular standardised training.

Perhaps, just perhaps the future is not so uncertain after all.

Complexities and contradictions, survival and transformation, challenge and change are concepts whose juxtaposition with each other form the basis of this study. The thesis explores how this family-run, for-profit college, grounded in a neocolonial context, attempts to reconcile its substantive role as an organization engaged in the yearly repetition of educational programmes, with one that has aspirations for a postcolonial reality of relevance and transformation. The reflections above augment the Case Study of this college which lies at the heart of the research. Taken together, they are intended to give an overview of the study as well as of my personal perspective of the research activity through an Auto-ethnographic approach.

1.2 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to understand the place of a family-run, for-profit provider of technical and vocational education (TVET) in the society and culture of Trinidad and Tobago and to examine both its role and the issues which it faces. The institution strives to both survive and transform itself into a more socially and culturally relevant institution. In this study, I employ a qualitative approach which relies heavily on Insider Research since I am deeply embedded within it as both a researcher and a participant. The methodology employed is based on a Case Study with an Auto-Ethnographic turn. It uses the concepts of curriculum, governance and quality as a means of engaging with the interviewees and also with the documentary evidence. These data emerge from both semi-structured interviews with stakeholders of The College as well as analyses of Government and other source documents. Using a themed grounded methodology, the data will be analysed through a neocolonial lens to shed light on the issues which confront The College in its quest for survival and transformation. In addition to this

perspective, a Postcolonial theoretical frame is used in the study for two reasons. The first reason is to understand the colonial origins of higher education in Trinidad and Tobago and the second reason is to articulate the aspirations of The College as it seeks to become a transformational institution in the lives of its students and the community.

This thesis is highly personal to me because it examines an institution which is a legacy of my late husband, the source of my family's livelihood and the organisation which I have the privilege of leading. Before undertaking the study, I wrestled with the dilemma of researching The College and of subjecting it to professional and what might eventually become, public scrutiny. Nevertheless, curiosity about what I might discover forced me to continue. Honesty compels me to admit however, that I did not always feel this passionately about extending the vision of The College to promote a culturally and socially relevant agenda. However, my attendance at the Sheffield Doctoral programme provided an epiphany that prompted me to embrace this perspective. The epiphany arose from the spirited discussions among participants of the study school which revealed the transformative capacity of education, a capacity that I had not formerly considered. I locate myself in this study as a researcher and as a stakeholder. Thus, my voice is added to those of the other participants whom I interviewed through my reflections. My reflections arise from two sources; first as a participant, whether as principal, wife, mother and second, as a researcher or observer. I place my reflections in various chapters to provide some insight into my perspectives of their respective content.

This research spans the period from 1997 to 2018 when The College grew from being "a one man show" or a sole proprietorship to its current status as a private limited company. It was established by my late husband for the dual purpose of providing a living for himself and his family as well as to impart his engineering knowledge to those who had not had similar educational opportunities. During the period of its existence, The College has provided training and certification in technical and vocational programmes to thousands of students. Many of these programmes originated from qualifications' providers abroad, including the City and Guilds Institute of London (CGIL) and the National Examinations' Board of Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH). Over that period, the organization of The College changed as other family members, namely two adult children and myself, became increasingly involved. Consequently, The College is a multi-faceted entity, comprising family, business and educational components. These facets provide a triad of perspectives that contribute to the ethos of the institution.

1.3 The Importance of Curriculum, Governance, Quality and Social and Cultural Relevance to the Study

I have chosen to examine the role of The College and the issues which it faces through the concepts of: curriculum, governance, quality and social and cultural relevance. Together they provide a relatively comprehensive framework   that provides insights into the role of and the issues which face higher educational institutions.

Winter (2000) asserts that although the definition of the term "curriculum" is contested, it is useful because it refers broadly to a selection of programmes and related activities (including lecturer- student interactions) that are offered by an educational institution. Thus, the curriculum offered by The College provides an understanding about its function, its pedagogy and its stakeholder relationships; critical indicators of its role and the issues it is likely to face. Such awareness therefore allows for two main considerations. The first of these refers to the nexus between the roles of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) curriculum as a vehicle for the economic survival of The College and also for its transformation. The second is, the dialectic about whether a curriculum in a private-for-profit institution can be socially transformative, juxtaposed as it is with the profit motive.   The multifaceted nature of the concept of 'curriculum' is discussed in fuller detail in Chapters 2, 3 and 5.

With regard to governance, the term may be broadly or narrowly defined. Gayle, Tewarie and White (2003, p.1) speak generally of governance as "the structure and process of authoritative decision making across issues that are significant for external as well as internal stakeholders". Other definitions of governance of higher education institutions focus in greater detail on structures and processes which relate to recruitment of staff and students, andragogy, monitoring and assessment. The description of governance becomes even more complex in a college such as the one located in this study because of the nuances created by its two main characteristics; first being family-owned and managed and second, being profit oriented.

The term "quality" when used in higher education lacks consensus in terms of its definition. The difficulty lies in its multi-dimensional nature and the variety of stakeholder perspectives from which it may be viewed. For example, students might perceive "quality" in terms of the reputation of the institution, while   employers, might consider it from an assessment of the ability of the graduates to perform appropriately in the work place (Schindler et al., 2015). The

nature of the definition of quality chosen will have implications for the selection of the Quality Assurance system selected. Harvey and Williams (2010) cautioned that the purpose and the context of quality should always be considered.   With reference to the context of TVET for example, Morris (2015) asserts that the Quality Assurance model must be dynamic, in keeping with changing trends and that it must adhere to both internal and external standards such as those laid down by national organisations. This concept is more fully addressed in chapter 3.

 I use the term "social and cultural relevance" to refer to a dynamic, aspirational construct which propels us as Caribbean people toward perceptions and behaviours by which we interpret our existence from a Post – Colonial Caribbean perspective. This construct forms the basis of the transformational thrust of The College. Both Reviere (2002) and Nettleford (2002) found that such a perspective would locate us as at the centre of a Caribbean discourse and compel us to disrupt all other narratives that seek to define us. This concept is more fully explored in Chapter 3.

1.4 The Neocolonial Context of the College

The College under consideration celebrated its 21st anniversary in 2018. Although it faces a future that is different in some respects from the one at its inception, it still finds itself mired in an environment that is shaped by colonial and neocolonial factors. These factors, which may be overt or underlying, entrench patterns of hegemony and dependency with consequential effects for the institutions within the higher education sector. Overt factors include for example, globalisation, trade liberalization and the policies of the multilateral organisations. Other overt neocolonial influences include the continued compliance by local institutions with the terms and conditions of global educational agreements, including those associated with quality assurance, credentials and accreditation. These agreements reinforce the pre-eminence and dominance of Metropolitan perspectives.

The underlying neocolonial factors that impact higher education are those norms and values derived from the colonial era which, while more subtle in their hegemonic influence, still hold sway today. These are imparted by the media or may even be the result of what Altbach (2014, p.6) refers to as the "Neocolonialism of the willing". This latter designation occurs where former colonies implement colonial policies either by deliberate choice or in a Gramscian,

hegemonic, "taken for granted" type of way, by allowing policies of the past to continue unchanged. According to Gramsci, powerful elites exercise hegemony when they are able to secure their own objectives by persuading those without power to accept those very objectives as their own. Where such occurrences impact the curricula and governance of higher educational institutions, the result will be the entrenchment of foreign hegemony and increased structures of dependency. Both overt and underlying hegemonic factors are examined more fully in Chapters 2 and 3.

In confronting the complexities of operating in an uncertain and challenging environment, it is clear that this is a time of change and that institutional survival can no longer depend solely on the familiar business, educational and leadership models of the past. Despite its continued operation within a neocolonial context, The College is required to adopt a transcendent postcolonial vision of its role and its potential with regard to curriculum and governance. One of its challenges in doing so is to create a model that is capable of integrating its former traditional approach based on the yearly repetition of TVET programmes with one that is transformational in terms of social and cultural relevance. In clarifying the concepts and their relationships with each other, I briefly define some of terms that are used throughout the research in the section below.

1.5 Definitions

Post - Secondary Education

According to the website of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago post-secondary education refers to "all education and training programmes which are not at tertiary level but which are offered to secondary school leavers to meet their vocational or continuing education needs". (Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago [ACTT], n.d.a)

Tertiary Education

Tertiary education denotes "the teaching and learning process following the *completion of secondary education or its equivalent* and leading to the awards at the sub-baccalaureate, baccalaureate and post- baccalaureate level" (ACTT, n.d.b)

Higher Level Educational Institutions / Tertiary Level Educational Institutions

This term is used interchangeably with the Tertiary Level Educational Institutions and these may be classified as Universities, Teacher Training Institutes, Technical/Vocational Institutes, Community Colleges, Polytechnics and other organisations that offer specialized training in excess of two years per programme (Peters, 2000).

Technical and Vocational Education (TVET)

According to the *UNESCO Guidelines for TVET Policy Review* (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2010, p. 5), TVET refers to "those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills attitudes, understanding and knowledge related to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. These programmes may be taught at the post-secondary or tertiary level at technical institutes, colleges and universities. The concept of TVET is more fully explored in Chapters 2 and 3.

1.6 Rationales of the Research

Rationale 1

The first rationale is personal. It is an attempt to provide a record of my husband's legacy regarding the establishment of The College and its contribution to education. My husband was raised in a family of very modest means and he, like many other young men and women in stringent circumstances, was forced to abandon his secondary schooling in his mid-teens. Throughout his life, he nurtured a desire to establish an institution that would provide postsecondary training opportunities to all individuals, particularly those like himself who had had a difficult or truncated educational journey. He fulfilled this dream in January 1997 when he established The College.

Rationale 2

The second rationale is prompted by my passion for education, having been in the field for more than 45 years, first as a teacher and currently as a principal. This opportunity will allow me to achieve professional progression in my own career development as well as to provide

me with further insights about tertiary education, particularly those that aim to be transformational. This rationale is also prompted by my position as a participant observer, which gives me the opportunity to "learn", "unlearn", and "relearn" (thus eliminating "fixation") various perspectives of education. My overlapping roles as principal, mother, managing director, educator, researcher and employer require that I be receptive to stakeholders' critiques concerning policies and practices of The College. The same attention must be applied to their views and insights about how The College might become more socially and culturally relevant.

Rationale 3

The third rationale for this research stems from the need to highlight the importance of the College as an institution. Despite being relatively small, it is worthy of study in its own right.

The College, through its training activities has made post–secondary technical education accessible to many, thus allowing thousands to fulfil their own personal ambitions, which include employment and emigration.

Rationale 4

Finally, I wish to contribute to the body of work about the private post-secondary/tertiary technical and vocational sector in a neocolonial environment and to examine some of the complexities faced by these institutions. According to the ACTT's Compendium of Registered, Accredited and Recognised Institutions, Awarding Bodies and Programmes 2017/2018, more than 95% of the registered or accredited institutions in the sector consist of private higher educational institutions. Such private sector ownership is significant because it has the potential to affect access and equity in tertiary education.

Having explained my rationales for undertaking the study, I now examine the aims of the study itself.

1.7 Aims of the Research

The primary aim of this study is to examine higher education and training in Trinidad and Tobago, specifically the roles of and issues confronting a family owned and managed, private-

for-profit technical and vocational educational institution as it attempts to both survive and become more socially and culturally relevant.

Aim 1

The first aim of this thesis is to understand the *context* in which private, post-secondary /tertiary education (inclusive of TVET) takes place in Trinidad and Tobago. The study examines the historical context from a neocolonial perspective in order to understand how that legacy might have impacted the nature, purpose and focus of higher education. More specifically, it seeks to understand curricular preferences as well as structures and systems of governance. This context is examined more fully in chapter 2.

Aim 2

The second aim of the research is to gain both a critical understanding *of the role of The College itself and of the issues* that it faces as it struggles to survive and transform itself. This requires first, an exploration of its roles as an educational institution in a neocolonial environment and second, of the issues which affect its ability to survive. To achieve this aim, I rely on Government policy and other documents to understand how the Government perceives: the role and functions of higher education; its relationship to the private sector and also the status of TVET. Other textual materials include, official files that belong to The College. I also rely on data derived from the findings of stakeholders of The College to understand their perceptions regarding the role of The College and its issues. Concepts related to this aim are more comprehensively dealt with in Chapters 2, 3 and 5. The main research question and subsidiary questions 1 and 2 focus on this aspect of the research as well.

Aim 3

The third aim of the thesis is to understand *how The College might become more socially and culturally* relevant located as it is in a neocolonial society. The pressure to conform to the status quo in such societies can militate against efforts at transformation.

At this juncture, the section on Research Questions will follow and are categorised as the Main Research Question and Subsidiary Research Questions.

1.8 Research Questions

The purpose of my research is to understand the place of this family-run, private-for-profit provider of technical and vocational education in the society and culture of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Main Research Question

How can we understand the social and cultural context of The College?

Subsidiary Research Questions

1. What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses about its curriculum, contribute to an understanding of the role of and issues facing The College as it seeks to both sustain and transform itself into a more socially and culturally relevant institution?

2. What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses about institutional governance contribute to an understanding of the role of and issues facing The College as it seeks to both sustain and transform itself into a more socially and culturally relevant institution?

3. What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses imply about the social and cultural relevance of The College?

1.9 The Structure of the Thesis

The section below provides an overview of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 1 is the Introduction and explains the nature of the research, including the rationales for undertaking it as well as the aims of the study itself. Specifically, this chapter explains the research background as well as provides a brief overview of the history of The College from its inception in 1997 to the current period in 2018. The chapter also includes Auto-Ethnographic inserts in the form of my reflections of my role as a participant in the study. Chapter 1 provides definitions of relevant terms as well as the main and subsidiary research questions.

Chapter 2 gives an historical overview of higher education, inclusive of TVET in Trinidad and Tobago and the neocolonial factors which contextualize it. It also provides an explanation of the organization of The College with reference to its curriculum, governance and quality assurance systems.

Chapter 3 offers a review of the literature which guides the research. The chapter is divided into three levels of analysis: Macro, Meso and Micro in order to explain the scope of the analysis at each level. Macro analysis is based on both postcolonial and neocolonial theories which provide the overarching framework for theories of Dependency and Globalization. The Meso analysis concepts focus on the higher education sector by examining the literature on curriculum, TVET, governance and quality. It also references family and private-for-profit institutions (PFPs). The Micro section reviews the literature on change and transformation in educational institutions as well as that with regard to "social and cultural relevance".

Chapter 4 provides an overview of and a justification for my choices of methodology and procedures. It outlines the nature of the qualitative study, which is based on a Case Study approach with an Auto-Ethnographic turn. The chapter explains my reliance on Insider Research because in addition to my researcher status, I have access to both inside information about the institution as well as to its stakeholders. It also explains my world view, positionality, methods of data collection, data analysis as well the ethical considerations that underlie my research. This chapter also explains why I have adopted a decolonising methodology.

Chapter 5 presents the findings extracted from data about the curriculum. It employs a neocolonial perspective to analyse and discuss the roles and issues facing The College.

Chapter 6 presents the findings extracted from data about governance. It employs a neocolonial perspective to analyse and discuss the roles and issues facing The College.

Chapter 7 examines the findings extracted from the data about how The College might become more socially and culturally relevant. It employs a neocolonial perspective to analyse and discuss the findings.

Chapter 8 comprises several parts, including a summary of the findings and conclusions of the study. Further, it contains an outline of those areas that might benefit from further research as well as Auto-Ethnographic insertions of my reflections about my roles as both participant and researcher.

CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF BOTH HIGHER EDUCATION IN NEOCOLONIAL TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO 1990 -2018 and of THE COLLEGE

2.1 Introduction

The primary aims of this chapter are to examine how   higher education was influenced by the colonial and neocolonial experiences of Trinidad and Tobago and to explain the context from which current post- secondary/tertiary institutions have emerged. This chapter is important because it reveals the historical continuity of colonialist and neo- colonialist hegemony over higher education in Trinidad and Tobago as well as the persistence of patterns of dependency despite efforts by the State to assert its own independence. The chapter is divided into six sections, four of these relate to the periods: (i), before Independence; (ii), after Independence, (iii), the era of Globalisation and (iv) the current period up to 2018. The fifth section is an Auto-Ethnographic reflection and the sixth section explains the structure and nature of The College.

2.2 The Historical Context of Higher Education in Neocolonial Trinidad and Tobago 1990 -2018

2.2.1 The Pre-Independence Period

Trinidad and Tobago lies at the end of the Caribbean archipelago of islands and at its nearest point is less than seven miles from the coast of Venezuela on the South American mainland. Its early inhabitants were Amerindians from South America, who within three centuries of Columbus' arrival in 1498, had been largely exterminated. Tobago was formally amalgamated with Trinidad in 1888 therefore, I shall refer to the country as "Trinidad" when referring to the period up to 1888 and as "Trinidad and Tobago" for the period *after* 1888.

The island was sparsely inhabited until the latter part of the eighteenth century when an influx of French-Caribbean and British immigrants settled on the island and established sugar, coffee, cocoa and cotton plantations. These plantations were initially worked by slaves but after the Abolition of Slavery, were dependent on the labour of East Indian and other indentured workers (Williams, 1964). Even after the Abolition, the social, economic and political structures of the

island conformed to what one would expect of in a "Colony of Exploitation", undergirded as they were, by a philosophy that placed paramountcy on the exploitation of the human and natural resources of the colony ("the hinterland") for the benefit of the Metropole (Best & Levitt, 1968; Levitt, 2005).

Despite its having been embedded in the world economy (Bryan, 2000) from as early as the 15th century, Trinidad (and Tobago from 1889) placed little stress on tertiary education, until the middle of the twentieth century. Prior to the 1940s, higher education such as it existed, was mainly for the training of teachers and clergymen. In other words, given the nature of the society and economy, the colonial authorities considered that there was no need to focus on tertiary education.

With regard to technical and vocational education and training (TVET), the colonial authorities relied on Britain for the development of the curricula, particularly on the efforts of the City and Guilds Institute of London (CGIL). After 1922 this institution conducted the local examinations in programmes such as tailoring, typography, bookbinding, and mechanical engineering all under the auspices of the Board of Industrial Training which had been established in 1906. CGIL would be responsible for providing curricula and certification for TVET in Trinidad and Tobago for the next forty years.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the foreign owned sugar and oil multinational companies such as Texaco, relied on CGIL for the curricula and certification of their training and apprenticeship schemes. These schemes had been established to mitigate the shortages of skilled manpower that were endemic in the industry (Supersad, 2000). Eventually, the apprenticeship system gave way to a more school-based model of training that was offered at the San Fernando Technical Institute in South Trinidad from 1954 and the John Donaldson Technical Institute in North Trinidad from 1962 (Supersad, 2000; Campbell, 1997). British qualifications for technical education continued to be used until 1966 when they were replaced by those of the local National Examinations Council (NEC) (Supersad, 2000; Campbell, 1997).

After 1948, those scholars who wished to gain a university education, could now apply to the University College of the West Indies (UCWI) at Mona, Jamaica. A second campus which incorporated the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA), was opened in St. Augustine Trinidad in 1960. The UCWI was supervised by the University of London which oversaw both its curricula and award of degrees (Cobley, 2000). This arrangement was designed to ensure

that the graduates of the UCWI would be "intellectually and ideologically linked to Britain" (Cobley, 2000, p. 10). The purpose of a university education was to equip graduates to work in the lower echelons of the colonial civil service or in administrative capacities in the soon to be established Federal Government.

In summary then, higher education in the period prior to Independence, had a number of distinctive characteristics. First, it was elitist and inequitable, in that it was not accessible to the mass of the population. Second, higher education such as it was, relied heavily on Britain for its curricula and systems of governance and was therefore largely irrelevant to the actual realities of the country (Williams, 1946). Third, its objective, particularly in the case of TVET, was to provide skilled manpower for the mainly foreign sugar and oil companies and in the case of advanced education, to supply a cadre of skilled professionals to work in the colonial or Federal governments.

2.2.2 The Post-Independence Period: 1962 - 1982

With the collapse of the Federation, Trinidad and Tobago agitated for, and was granted Independence on August 31, 1962. This ushered in a period of sustained nationalism whereby, the new Government sought to dislodge the education system from its colonial foundations and to re-orient it to serve the requirements of the newly independent nation (Williams and Harvey, 1985; Alleyne, 1996) This objective was highlighted in both the Education Act of 1966 and in the Introduction to the Draft Education Plan, 1968 to 1983 which stated that:

Full national independence and identity will be achieved and secured only on the basis of an educational system which does not rely on foreign assumptions and references for its existence and growth. Every component of the system would require to have as the foundation of its validity, its relevance to the needs of the peoples it serves.

It is worth noting that despite the fervent denunciations of colonialism at that time, Independence did not fundamentally change the reliance of Trinidad and Tobago on British institutional models. For example, the political system of governance chosen for the newly independent country was the Westminster model with the Privy Council of England remaining as the country's highest court. The education system too, included British characteristics such as the Common Entrance examination and the practice of separating pupils into academic and

vocational streams. Nevertheless, the Draft Education Plan, 1968 to 1983 attempted to provide a more relevant curriculum which was intended to instil a sense of national pride while creating competent and productive citizens. Thus, despite its nationalist thrust, the social framework was still essentially neocolonialist.

The Education Plan mirrored this neocolonialist focus, an emphasis that was exacerbated by the influence of the multilateral institutions. The plan was financed by the World Bank and the IADB, both of which offered full support while insisting on having an input in its implementation. Second, the Plan was designed by the UNESCO Planning Mission which had been invited by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in view of the latter's lack of experience with regard to administrative planning (Alleyne, 1996). Figueroa (1971, p.154) posited three additional explanations for the invitation to UNESCO. According to him, it could have arisen due: first, to the desire of local politicians to tap into international funds, second, to their own psychological "fears and uncertainties" as colonial citizens and third to the "outward-looking" nature of West Indian culture. This dependence on foreign assistance would not be the last time that a lack of self –confidence or fear, would cause politicians to surrender their own agency and solicit the support of a multilateral organization.

The focus on nationalism during the Independence period, led to great presumptions about the role of TVET with regard to national development. TVET was not only expected to ameliorate shortages of trained labour but also to contribute significantly to the wider industrialization of the economy. To this end, the 15 Year Educational Plan envisaged an expanded post–secondary sector which would provide specialist training for between 35% and 40% of the population aged 15 years and older (Alleyne, 1996). Disappointingly, the TVET strategy failed to live up to its expectations when the plan to place it in the post-secondary sector was abandoned at the behest of the World Bank and it was re-located to the secondary education sector instead. This change led to the cancellation of a US$ 9.4 million IDB loan which had been set aside for the construction of vocational colleges (Alleyne, 1996). Placing TVET at the higher (post-secondary) level would have both accorded it a greater degree of prestige as well as made it more accessible to persons not attending secondary school. TVET continued to be placed in a binary system to which students who were considered academically incapable, were consigned. According to Alleyne (1996), the Director of Education in Trinidad and Tobago at that time, this decision was a mistake because even after Independence, TVET remained stigmatized, its curriculum undeveloped and its implementation stymied.

The highlight of the education system in the period after Independence was the massive expansion of the secondary school sector, a development which provided greater educational access and equity to the population (Alleyne, 1996).This expansion would have implications several years later with regard to the increased demand for tertiary education that it would generate. Where tertiary education was concerned, the focus was mainly on teacher training, a necessity in view of the overwhelming need for the staffing of the new secondary schools (Rosemin and Ovid, 2008). The expansion of this training caused the percentage of trained teachers to increase dramatically from 49.2% of the total number of teachers in 1965/66 to 92% by 1983 (Campbell, 1997). The size and growth of other aspects of the tertiary sector were limited for reasons of cost and inadequate provision of places; problems which the GoRTT sought to address by offering tuition subsidies and loans in areas which were aligned to national development. One such effort was the Student Revolving Loan Fund which was established in 1973 from a $3.7 million IADB loan (Rosemin and Ovid, 2008).

In summary therefore, the period after Independence was characterised by the expansion of secondary education and the relative neglect of tertiary education. The latter sector focused mainly on the construction of teacher training facilities and the disbursement of loans and grants to individuals for training in sectors that were deemed important for development.

2.2.3 The Era of Globalisation 1980-2015

From the 1980s onward, the increasing global emphasis on the production and use of knowledge as critical factors for economic growth and wealth creation, placed pressure on the higher education sector of Trinidad and Tobago. This pressure was manifested in: (i), the increased participation of the private sector, (ii), the re-structuring of the role of Government, (iii) internationalisation and (iv) the increased use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education.

(i). Increased Participation by the Private Sector

At the start of the 1990s, there were relatively few private post-secondary/tertiary institutions in Trinidad and Tobago, but within two decades the situation had changed considerably. This circumstance was in keeping with the period in which the economy as a whole was becoming more private sector oriented (World Bank, 1996). By 2010, over 95% of all post-secondary

and tertiary institutions in the country were private, catering to approximately 40%- 45% of all students (MSTTE, 2010b), a pattern which continues up to today. The incursion of private institutions into this sector was triggered by the massive increase in demand for higher education by the beneficiaries of the secondary school education expansion programme after Independence. This demand was massively financed by Government tuition subsidies (as discussed below). Together, these factors ushered in an era of academic capitalism such as Trinidad and Tobago had never before seen.

This upsurge in demand was driven by both traditional (secondary school leavers) and non-traditional students (Pragg, 2014). With regard to the latter, Pragg (ibid. p.68) cited the work of Plummer-Rognmo (2012) who observed that Caribbean under-graduate students increasingly tended to be older, married, employed and from lower-income backgrounds when compared to traditional students. Private institutions which offered flexibility in terms of scheduling, payments and programming, tended to be more responsive to the needs of non-traditional students than institutions in the public sector.

(ii). The Re-structuring of the Role of Government in Higher Education

The GoRTT adopted new quantitative and qualitative approaches to higher education from the mid -1990s onward during a period when the country was experiencing a period of economic stabilization and recovery after a long recession. The improved economic condition of the country provided the government with the financial wherewithal to increase its spending on education. Quantitatively, the GoRTT proposed to increase student participation by doubling the number of 18 to 24 year olds to 15% by 2005, while qualitatively, it sought to control the higher education sector through regulation and Quality Assurance.

The GoRTT's quantitative objective was in keeping with its commitment at the Heads of Government Conference in Montego Bay in 1997. It sought to achieve this by subsidising student tuition and by expanding the supply of places. The "Dollar for Dollar" (which started in 2001) and "GATE" (which started in 2004) programmes, which offered tuition funding of 50% and 100% respectively were phenomenally successful. According to the MOE (formerly MSTTE), the participation rate exceeded 60% of the cohort by 2015 as shown in Table 2.1 below, and benefited more than 188,023 students from its inception in 2004. The total expenditure on GATE was in excess of TT$16.7 billion dollars between 2010 and 2015 alone (approximately, US 2.5 billion dollars) (MTEST, 2015).

Table 2.1: The percentage of students between ages 18 and 30 years old enrolled in tertiary education for selected years.

Year	2001	2004	2008	2015
% of population between ages 18-30 student in tertiary education	7	15	40	>60

Source: Ministry of Education (2015, p.5)

The second quantitative approach expanded access to education through the increased supply of places in state institutions such as the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT). This was established in 2004 in a series of mergers between the San Fernando and John Donaldson Technical Institutes as well as of smaller institutes such as the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (ECIAF). Other institutions established or expanded by the Government, included the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP) in 1988, the National Energy Skills Corporation (NESC) in 1997, the MIC Institute of Technology in 1974 and The College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAAT) established in 2000 (Ministry of Education 2015). By 2010, despite the fact that the public sector was responsible for fewer than 5% of higher educational establishments, it accounted for approximately 55%-60% of all students at this level (MSTTE, 2010b).

It is noteworthy that although these policies made higher education more affordable and accessible to students, they might also have resulted in other not so desirable consequences. For example, there was a mismatch between the qualifications held by individuals and those required by the labour market, leading not surprisingly, to a waste of human resources (MTEST, 2015). Further, the policies and the subsequent mismatch of skills, are likely to have worsened the "Brain Drain", a situation which Trinidad and Tobago could ill have afforded, since it already had one of the highest rates of skilled emigration in the world. According to a report by the OAS (2009), approximately 78.4% of its skilled labour force has migrated to the OECD countries.

With regard to its Qualitative approach, Government involvement took two forms, regulation and Quality Assurance. Regulation was the responsibility of both the National Institute of Higher Education Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) and the National Training Agency (NTA). The former which was founded in 1984, was responsible for coordinating and

promoting the national thrust in science and technology at the higher educational levels. The NTA, which was established in 1999, was given the task to "coordinate, harmonize, standardize, monitor and evaluate all Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Trinidad and Tobago" (MTEST, 2015). It was given the responsibility to ensure that training was both relevant and aligned to local objectives. It was also responsible for awarding the Trinidad and Tobago National Vocational Qualification (TTNVQ) and the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ). The NTA is guided by a number of regional and international conventions such as those of the International Labour Organization, the Millennium Development Goals, the Global Compact and the ISO standards in the 9,000, 14,000 and 18,000 series. These conventions tether the NTA to global institutions and further entrench foreign hegemony.

To ensure that all institutions operating in the higher education sector met baseline standards of quality, the government established the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) in 2004. The ACTT was set up as "the principal body in Trinidad and Tobago responsible for the quality assurance of post-secondary and tertiary level institutions, programmes and awards". Further, through its affiliation with international accrediting institutions, the ACTT was mandated to recognize acceptable foreign qualifications and awarding bodies as well. Thus, the ACTT by ensuring the alignment of local institutions with international standards and credentialing systems assists in the perpetuation of foreign agendas and facilitates the entry of local institutions into the global educational framework. These arrangements, helped to entrench the hegemony of Metropolitan institutions over local institutions.

(iii). Internationalization and Higher Education

One of the most significant effects of Globalisation in Trinidad and Tobago was the internationalisation of the higher education sector. According to UNESCO (2017a), this phenomenon (which is defined more fully on page 64) refers to the intentional expansion of post-secondary education across borders. The impact of internationalization was heightened by the implementation of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) in 1995. This led to an increase in the demand for, and supply of foreign professional certification programmes particularly those from the UK in the fields of Management and Accounting (Rosemin and Ovid, 2008). In fact, the foreign educational presence was so significant, that according to the ACTT, there were roughly 400 foreign programmes and 18 recognised foreign

awarding bodies and institutions in Trinidad and Tobago by 2017. These programmes were thus determined by market forces rather than by national developmental imperatives, a preference which further entrenched dependency on the UK with regard to curricula and certification. The discussion below examines how the ability to access foreign education was further increased by the widespread use of ICT particularly in the form of Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs).

(iv). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Higher Education

Globalisation impacted tertiary education through the increased use of ICT, the momentum of which was strengthened by reforms in telecommunications policies and the expansion of the telecommunications infrastructure in Trinidad and Tobago. Significant progress was seen in the improved rankings of several indicators, including the Networked Readiness Index, internet penetration and broadband usage (Ministry of Public Administration and Communication, 2017).

More recently, neocolonial influence has been evident in the widespread application of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in Trinidad and Tobago and throughout the Caribbean. This ability to access free online content has strengthened old patterns of dependency by tying both students and local institutions of learning to foreign educational content even more closely than before. In 2014, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago formed a partnership with Coursera, one of the largest global providers of online courses, engaging it to design and supply a network of online learning materials for the UTT.

In summary therefore, by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the size and nature of the higher education sector in Trinidad and Tobago was significantly different from what had existed two decades before. Not only had the demand for tertiary education risen phenomenally, as a result of the massive expansion in secondary education decades earlier but it was also more accessible and equitable. These successful outcomes were due to the increased number of public and private institutions in the country as well as to the increased public tuition assistance to students. Unsurprisingly, these efforts led the participation rate of the population aged between 18 years and 30 years to surge above 60% by 2015. Significantly also, the sector had largely been transformed from an elitist system to one of mass education, notwithstanding the fact, that some marginalized communities, (for example those with physical disabilities) were still denied access.

There were other developments in the higher education sector, several of which contributed to the entrenchment of neocolonialism and the increased facilitation of the country into the global capitalist network. For example, the sector had become increasingly privatised and internationalized, factors which contributed to greater institutional and programme variety particularly after the onset of trade liberalisation. Further, the role of the Government was increasingly quantitative, related mainly to monitoring and enforcing accountability over the institutions in the sector. On-line and blended education modalities had also become more frequently applied with the growth of ICT in education.

2.2.4 The Current Status of Higher Education -2018

After a period of rampant growth, sustained by Government financial support, the second decade of the twenty-first century has seen dramatic reversals in the higher education sector. Several of the changes however, still reflect the influence of multi-lateral discourses with regard to the role of Government in higher education and to HCT as well as the Government's commitment to international development goals such as those championed by UNESCO and the World Bank.

The section below is divided into three parts, namely: (i), the changes in the higher education sector *(*ii), The role of the Government in Higher Education *and* (iii), the current state of TVET in Trinidad and Tobago.

(i). Changes in the Higher Education Sector

- Student Enrolment Trends : 2011-2016

An analysis of official documents highlights some of the changing enrolment trends in Trinidad and Tobago. Data provided by the NTA (NTA, 2018) and represented in Tables 2.2 and 2.3 below, show a clear pattern of declining enrolment of students in the tertiary and TVET sectors after 2012. In the tertiary sector for example, student enrolment dropped by 49% between 2012 and 2016 and by 50% for TVET in the same period. The decline in graduation numbers in the tertiary sector, (perhaps indicative of the existence of programmes of relatively longer duration), did not start until 2014, whereas those of the TVET programmes (which were mostly of shorter duration) started after 2012. The information in Table 2.2 refers to *tertiary*

institutions, some of which provide TVET as well. Table 2.3, on the other hand, provides data from a TVET institutions only. These offer training at multiple levels, ranging from Certificates of Participation to Professional and Post-Doctoral qualifications. The information from both tables paints a picture of a sector in decline after 2012.

Table 2.2: Enrolment and Graduation Data in Tertiary Institutions, 2011 to 2016

Tertiary Institutions - Enrolment data for the years 2011 to 2016					
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
44,938	47,540	46,573	46,801	43,090	24,244
Tertiary Institutions – Graduate data for the years 2011 to 2016					
10,158	10,917	11,581	12,040	11,329	10,205
Number of Tertiary Institutions which submitted data for the years 2011 to 2016					
26	29	28	27	22	15

Source: National Training Agency, 2011 - 2016 Enrolment and Graduate Output (2018).

Table 2.3 Enrolment and Graduation Data in TVET Institutions, 2011 to 2016

TVET Institutions: Enrolment Data, 2011-2016 (Total number - 96)					
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
42,790	59,757	52,139	44,933	38,790	29,873
TVET Institutions: Graduate Data, 2011-2016 (Total number - 96)					
37,593	49,524	44,742	40,987	28,800	23,363
Total Number of TVET Institutions that Submitted Data					
57	83	86	67	64	32

Source: National Training Agency, 2011 - 2016 Enrolment and Graduate Output'. (2018)

Several factors may have contributed to the decline in student enrolment discussed above. The first is the lacklustre performance of the economy as shown by the low and negative rates of

economic growth in the Table 2.4 below and the consequential rise in unemployment. Youth unemployment was particularly worrisome, rising from 44.8% to 50.6% between 2015 and 2016 (Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago [GoRTT], 2016, p. 37). This development and perhaps the ensuing uncertainty about the future, might have reduced the ability and inclination of potential students to enrol in training programmes.

Table 2.4: Economic Growth Rates (%) of Trinidad and Tobago

2012*	2013*	2014**	2015***	2016****	2017****	2018*****
1.2	1.6	1.9	0.2	-6	-2.3	1.9 (est.)

Sources: *Review of the Economy of TT 201; **Review of the Economy of TT 2014; ***Review of the Economy of TT 2015; ****Review of the Economy of TT 2017; *****Review of the Economy of TT 2018

A second factor responsible for falling enrolment might have been the fall in both recurrent and capital spending by the GoRTT. A significant portion of recurrent expenditure includes spending on student tuition subsidies and loan programmes which include GATE, the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP), Financial Assistance (Studies) Programme and the National Scholarship Programme. It is to be expected therefore that the fall in Government spending particularly after 2014/2015 and in particular, the cut in GATE from mid-2016, is likely to have negatively impacted the level of enrolment in the sector. (See Appendix 5.) The pattern of GoRTT expenditure is illustrated in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5 Government Recurrent and Capital Expenditure (2010/2011-2015/2016)

Fiscal Year	Recurrent Expenditure	Capital Expenditure
2010/2011	$2,186,314,384	$490,786,208
2011/2012	$1,493,785,381	$397,782,205
2012/2013	$2,160,259,514	$661,572,556
2013/2014	$2,294,910,858	$702,890,000
2014/2015	$2,410,259,841	$468,200,000
2015/2016	$1,962,240,230	$180,143,270
TOTAL	$12,507,770,208	$2,901,374,239

Source: Draft Education Policy Paper, 2017-2022, Page 93

(ii). The Role of the Government in Higher Education

Official policy documents published by the Ministry of Education have outlined the current position of the GoRTT with regard to tertiary education in three main areas. These are to (i) reduce its tuition contributions, (ii), make education more inclusive and (iii) seek to align training to its Developmental objectives. First, in light of its uncertain financial situation, the Government has adopted quantitative models aimed at reducing its level of student funding for tuition. These include: cost sharing, reduced funding for older students and means testing. In addition, governance and management approaches aim to increase the levels of monitoring, efficiency, and accountability to ensure improved returns on its educational investment (MTEST, 2015). In effect, the Government has adopted a more entrepreneurial approach that is consistent with those favoured by the multilateral institutions as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Second, the GoRTT intends to implement measures to make the sector more inclusive of currently underserved populations in compliance with its commitments toward fulfilling UNESCO's EFA, MDG and SDG goals.

Third, according to its *Policy on Tertiary Education Technical Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning in Trinidad and Tobago (2010)*, the GoRTT expects that institutions in the post-secondary/tertiary sector will "play a supportive role to the state by

aligning their programmes to national objectives". The most important objective is the attainment of "Developed Country" status by 2030 (ibid. p. 3). The Executive Summary of the *National Policy Framework* (MTEST, 2015) asserts that "Education is a key tenet of national development with tertiary education and skills training playing an integral role in transforming society and the economy through investing in its prime resource, human capital" (ibid, n.p.). In linking education so closely to the attainment of economic growth and development objectives, the Government shows adherence to the HCT discourse of the multilateral institutions.

(iii). The Current Status of TVET in Trinidad and Tobago

Currently, TVET is offered by a number of public and private sector institutions. According to a situational analysis outlined in *the Draft Education Policy Paper 2017-2022,* several issues plague the sector, most having to do with its organization. For example, there is much "duplication and overlap" (ibid. p. 80) with regard to programmes which have similar titles but have variations in their content, titles, duration and structure. There is also a mismatch between occupational *course* titles and the corresponding *occupational* titles. Further, there is a dire shortage of teachers in the sector as well as an absence of a clearly defined framework for monitoring and Quality Assurance. Unsurprisingly therefore, the sector continues to be stigmatized by the general public and shunned as a career option. This situation is exacerbated by the continued binary approach to education, whereby, students are classified as being either academically capable or academically incapable, with those in the latter category being shunted into TVET. Within TVET institutions also, the programmes lack balance, in that they focus either on mainly theory or mainly on practical training. Students frequently require further training when they secure employment. The Policy Paper (ibid.) cautions that without increased participation by students and drastic reorganisation, TVET will be unable to contribute meaningfully to the economic growth of Trinidad and Tobago.

2.2.5 Historical Summary

In Sections 1-4 above, I have provided an historical context of higher education in Trinidad and Tobago to show how post-secondary/ tertiary education in Trinidad and Tobago has been shaped. I have examined higher education over the colonial and post colonial periods, including the era of Globalisation up to the current period.

Prior to Independence, tertiary education was established for three purposes. The first was to train parsons and school teachers, the second, to provide skilled technical workers mainly for the sugar and energy sectors and the third to provide professionals to work in the lower echelons of the colonial civil service and the (imminent) Federal administration.   The onset of Independence, brought a surge of nationalistic fervour and attempts were made to re-orient the education system away from its heavy focus on British curricula and systems of governance toward one that was more socially and culturally relevant. In other words, education after Independence was perceived as a tool to be used for the benefit of Trinidadians and Tobagonians and not just for the profit of the "Mother Country" as had previously been the case. In keeping with this perspective for example, the TVET system was expected to provide the skilled labour to power the manufacturing sector in order to contribute to a more prosperous and diversified economy.

By the mid-1980s, the neo-liberal influence of the multi-lateral institutions and the onslaught of Globalisation had brought other changes. The phenomenal changes in technology and communication as well as the dismantling of trade barriers contributed to the increased integration of local and foreign educational systems in a process known as "Internationalization". Growth in the use of online education and greater private sector participation (both local and foreign)   were the hallmarks of this period as well. These changes further served to entrench historical patterns of dependency and foreign hegemony in education. This period was accompanied by an increase in government intervention in the tertiary sector, in terms of increased student funding particularly through the GATE programme and increased construction of post-secondary/tertiary institutions such as UTT. These policies resulted in a massive upsurge in enrolment in education at this level. Government intervention also took the form of increased monitoring and regulation, with the establishment of the NTA and the ACTT.

Today, higher education in Trinidad and Tobago faces challenges in terms of reductions in both student participation and government funding. The Draft Education Policy Paper 2017 to 2022 makes it clear that the former levels of government expenditure are unsustainable, a development that will have implications for public provision of higher education and ultimately for access and equity in the future. Notwithstanding the inability of the GoRTT to finance the sector at previous levels, however, the Policy Paper (ibid.) warns that TVET will lose its

dynamism unless the sector is reorganized and becomes capable of attracting a greater number of students.

As it stands therefore, the higher education sector still has deep colonial roots. The curricula are ontologically and epistemologically based on western paradigms with limited local relevance. The Dependency syndrome continues to determine   the choice of programmes, syllabi, textbooks and learning materials more recently supplemented by online content. As such, the sector has failed to develop indigenous educational philosophies and methods of research and continues to use external, rather than organic approaches to issues. The binary approach to education in terms of the academic and technical foci has been retained as has the reliance on external examinations (to an extent), and their related content. Organisational structures are traditional in that they remain authoritarian and hierarchical. There continues to be an increased emphasis on credits, accreditation and rankings which have further strengthened neocolonial hegemony over the system. Blair (2013) has identified other imitative practices such as the governance and qualifications structures and even the use of medieval nomenclature.

2.3 The Historical Context of The College 1997-2018

Reflections

Wife, Mother, Principal: This is my story.

The excerpt below is drawn from my own experiences and recollections as the wife of the late founder and mother of two of The College's Directors.

The establishment of The College in January 1997 was the realization of a dream for my husband. As a boy, my husband's future in education was not auspicious. He left school after Form Three because his widowed mother could no longer afford to keep him there. At that time, coming from a poor rural village in Princes Town, Trinidad, his chances for success did not look promising, but he was fortunate to be taken on as a student apprentice at Texaco Trinidad Limited not long after leaving school. It was at Texaco, that he discovered his passion for Electrical and Instrumentation Engineering and also developed a lifelong admiration for City and Guilds Institute of London. Being ambitious he recognized the need to complete his

education and did so by pursing part-time classes in Mathematics and Physics, as well as in technical programmes under the aegis of CGIL. He was eventually awarded the Full Technician Certificate from CGIL and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering at the University of the West Indies a few years later. Over the ensuing years, my husband worked as an engineer in various companies before opening his own Instrumentation Engineering Service company

My husband's educational journey taught him two lessons. First, that not everyone trod the same educational path and second, that it was necessary to provide educational opportunities for those who wished to continue their education. Ever since he had been an apprentice he had nurtured the dream of setting up an establishment, that would meet the educational needs of people "wherever they were" and make a difference in their lives. He was particularly concerned with those who lived in poor rural villages such as that from which he had come. In fact, after its establishment, students from Princes Town were warmly welcomed with a special "Princes Town Discount".

With his determination and dream still intact, my husband brought The College into existence in January 1997. At its opening, the school had only seven students and one teacher… my husband. Over the years however, The College grew and eventually provided additional employment for two our children and myself.

Today, The College is a well- established institution having graduated thousands of students over the past twenty-one years. My husband was a well-known and respected engineer and was able to put his 'stamp' on the institution, factors which helped the number of students and branches to grow rapidly. In 2009 there were more than 600 students at five branches. At that time, the GATE funding was generous and students were allowed to register for several programmes at the same time. The higher educational sector expanded with the establishment of Government institutions like, UTT, COSTAAT and NESC as well as with the entry of other private institutions attracted by the lure of Government funding. The market became more competitive, particularly with regard to the establishment of the relatively new and well-equipped government institutions such as MIC-IT and UTT. Decreasing enrolment, forced The College to close two of its branches in 2011 and a third in 2016. In fact, between 2014 and 2018, the number of students fell by 22% thus running parallel (though more slowly) to the sectoral trend discussed above.

The death of my husband in 2012 measured 7.0 on my emotional Richter Scale; it shook me to my core and rocked the institution with the aftershocks. The jolting impact of this occurrence reflects one of the weaknesses of family institutions which are transitions such as death and succession (Murray, 2002). After my husband's death, I took over the principalship of The College and with the help of my children set about steadying the organization. Two main issues had to be faced. These were first, settling the wobble in my stomach generated by overcoming the personal qualms of assuming the leadership, and second, ameliorating the negative effects of the contracting energy sector from which many of our students came.

The period from 2014 to 2018 has been challenging. Revenues have fallen and The College has been forced to further decrease its operations. This reduction, is partially due to the drop in the GATE subsidy, so much so that the GATE revenue as a percentage of the total revenue of the College has fallen from 63% in 2015 to 13% in 2018. Nevertheless, in its efforts to survive, The College has forged out in new directions by expanding its business model and offering customized training to firms. In addition, it has enlarged its curricular offerings to encompass both traditional and non-traditional programmes. Some of the latter areas of study being offered or being developed, are Renewable Energy Technologies, Hybrid Technology and also Agricultural Training.

Today, The College is on the brink of an era that promises change. As it seeks to survive, it faces the need to be financially viable as well as to be socially and culturally relevant, all the while maintaining the inclusive vision of the founder. The College has recently started to reach out to the wider community to raise awareness of issues concerning sustainable living. It recently conducted a very successful seminar on the topic "Living Sustainably". This is part of its corporate social responsibility but also part of its economic plan to meet a wider demographic which might eventually also yield business benefits. A dilemma facing The College is, "Are survival and transformation possible at the same time?"

2.4 The Structure and Organisation of the College

In this final section, I explain three significant aspects of The College. These are: first the organization and governance, second, the impact of changes in Government funding and third, the nature of hegemony in relation to the institution.

(i). The Organization and Governance of the College

An examination of the 2018 Application for Registration Approval shows that The College was legally registered as a Private Limited Company in 2007 and approved to operate as an institution of higher education by the ACTT in 2009. With regard to its internal governance, The College is overseen by a Board of Directors which is expected to provide the strategic vision and direction of the Company, review policies, procedures and reports, share their areas of expertise with the company as required and also collaborate with key stakeholder within and without the Company.

With regard to its organisation, The College comprises a Head office in San Fernando, South Trinidad and a branch campus in Curepe in North Trinidad. Its organisation includes Management/Directors, a Secretariat, Branch specific Administrative Assistants and Contracted Lecturers. The Secretariat comprises the Quality Management System (QMS) Representative and the Academic Services Administrator. The leadership and management positions of The College are held by members of the family. Functions which require specialist expertise, such as business development, Quality Assurance and accounting are outsourced to consultants. Lecturers and consultants are hired for a fee as private contractors. The number of lecturers varies between 15 and 40 and the number of students between 250 and 400.

The statements above describe much of the information that is required in the Application for Registration Approval to the ACTT. They however represent more of an overview of the formal structure of The College than its substantive reality. For example, the statements are unable to capture the complex web of inter-relationships that exists among different individuals and departments arising from the fact that directors, managers and staff perform multiple roles at multiple levels within the organization. The reality of the multidimensional system of governance comprising educational, business and family entities and the influences they each exert on the other are likewise not captured. Unsurprisingly therefore, as Harvey and Williams

(2010) contend, unless QA systems are based on context and purpose rather than on generic templates from other countries, they are unlikely to capture the reality of what is taking place in an institution. Therefore apart from providing information, it is likely that the data will be of limited use in explaining the real texture of what comprises the institution.

The Vision Statement, designed in 2009, is "The College will be a leader in vocational education and training through the excellence of its faculty and programs". The Mission states that "The College is committed to providing a quality vocational education in an environment that is characterized by highly motivated and trained lecturers, a well-rounded curriculum and facilities that promote competence as well as the intellectual, ethical and social development of our students". These statements were designed before the diversification thrust of The College. As the institution moves into new areas these statements will have to be revised.

Chart 2 below, shows the multi-faceted nature of The College, in terms of family, business and education institution. It succinctly encapsulates the complexity of The College in a manner that clarifies the distinctions among the various facets. It is interesting to note the various objectives of each facet which at times are likely to conflict .with each other. The College is a business, an educational institution and a family owned and managed entity, each facet with its own type of governance.

	Family	Business	Education
Vision	To maintain and enhance the legacy of the founder. To provide a living for family members. To provide satisfaction.	To be an efficient and profitable organisation.	To be a leader in vocational education and training through the excellence of its faculty and programmes.
Organisational Basis	Relational	Commercial	Educational
Organizational/Legal Structure	Family	Private Limited , 2007	Registered Institution with ACTT, 2009.
Leadership	Family members (3)	Managing Director Board of Directors/Managers	• Principal • Managers • Committees
Objectives	To do what is best for the family.	To be profitable. To be ethical in business. To comply with the legal and statutory regulations of the country. To provide quality programmes.	To provide an educational experience to students that is excellent, transformational and relevant to country and culture. To comply with ACTT and MOE mandates.
Compensation and Reward	Salaries and Dividends	Asset acquisition and Profit	Prestige and justified reputation.
Stakeholders	Family members in and out of the business.	• Employees (Administrative) and Contractors (Lecturers and Consultants) • Bank • Vendors • Customers • National Insurance Corporation • Board of Inland Revenue • Community	• Students • Teachers/Department Heads • ACTT • MOE • NTA • Qualification Providers • Employers

(ii) The Impact of Government Funding Changes on the College

The Government is seeking to adopt different funding models that include private sector participation so that the ratio of public spending on tertiary education to GDP, which currently stands at 2%, might fall to 1.1% as seen in OECD countries (MTEST, 2015, p. 29). This is an example of the Government's attempts to imitate practices elsewhere whether they are relevant or not.

The College has been affected by decreased Government spending on GATE with the consequential effect lower numbers of student enrolments. Not only are fewer students receiving funding, but those who do are being afforded less assistance than before due to the introduction of means testing (see Appendix 5). Table 2.6 below shows that in 2015, GATE receipts represented 63% of total revenue whereas by 2018, they had plummeted to 13%.

Potential student applicants making enquiries about registration have indicated to The College's administrative staff that the reduction in the GATE subsidy has meant that they can no longer afford to register as students.

Table 2.6: GATE Receipts as a % of Total Revenue of The College

Percentage (%) of Total Revenue (ATC) Represented by GATE Receipts			
2015	2016	2017	2018
63	34	32	13

It is noteworthy that despite the fall in importance of GATE as a source of revenue to The College, the institution is still bound by many of its strictures. As a signatory to the GATE agreement for example, The College is required to seek   permission from the Funding and Grants Office of the Ministry of Education if intends to adjust or vary modules within its programmes. Further it is required to inform the Office of changes in its *non-tuition* fees.

(iii). The Layers of Hegemony Related to the College

The College is surrounded by various levels of hegemony. With regard to external hegemony, the band immediately outside of The College itself, refers to institutions of State control,

namely, the Ministry of Education and other agencies such as the ACTT. Although it is The College that mediates the relationship between students and these institutions, the hegemonic impact of the latter is felt by the former when for example, the MOE changes its funding policies or when the ACTT decides not to approve certain programmes. This band also shows foreign control as exerted by qualifications' providers such as CGIL, who have the power to change programmes and levels of certification.

The outer bands of hegemony are related to the global capitalist, trading and educational networks which have an impact on trade, economic growth and the Government budgetary position. When these change, citizens experience the impact in terms of unemployment, inflation and reduced government services.

Significantly, The College itself exerts hegemony over its own students, employees and contracted lecturers. This occurs when it imposes its authority on students through: rules, regulations, schedules and payment plans, and on employees and lecturers with its various contractual agreements. These layers of hegemony are illustrated in figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: The Layers of Hegemony Related to the College
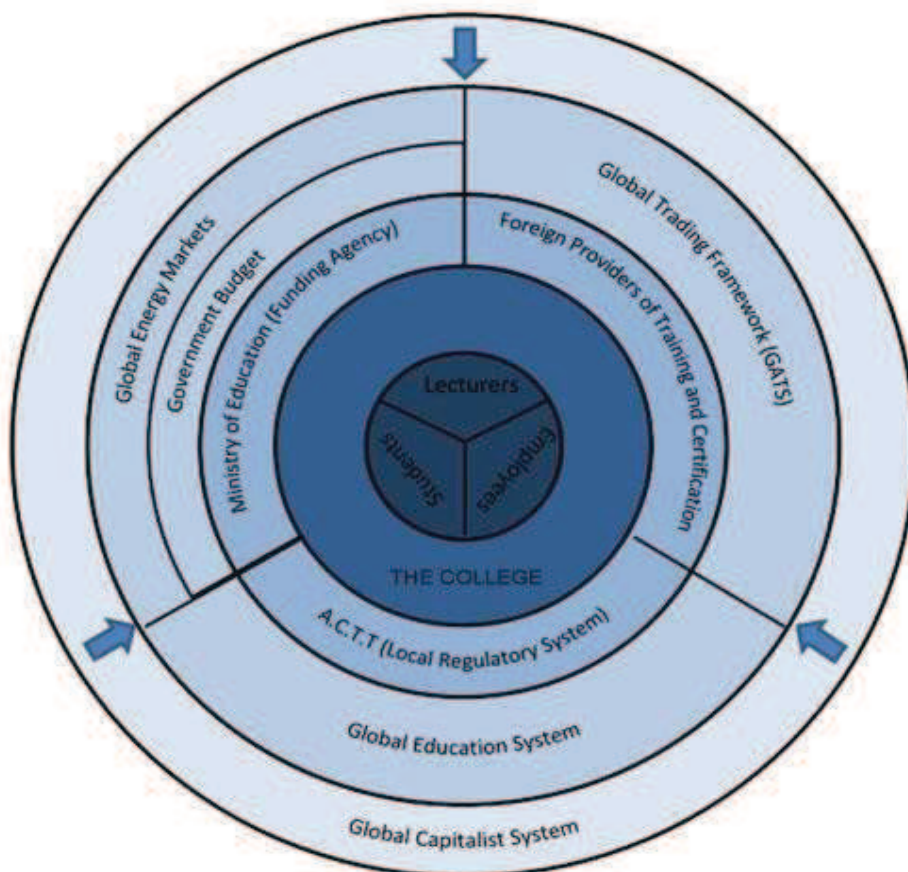
2.5 Summary

The chapter above outlined the History of Higher education in Trinidad and Tobago from the inception of European settlement until 2018. It also provided an overview of the historical context of TVET. This overview was intended to demonstrate the retention of colonial and neo-colonial bonds over the education system over the period. Finally, I shared my own remembrances about the start of The College and completed the chapter with a description of the nature and organisation of the institution.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 1, the objective of this research is to use a neocolonial lens to examine the struggle for survival and transformation of The College. In this chapter, I examine an eclectic array of theories and related literature to frame my research and to provide a background against which findings can be elucidated. In the interest of clarity, I have organized Chapter 3 into three broad sections: Macro, Meso and Micro with each one focusing on the relevant concepts under review, and their relationship with Higher Education. It must be noted however, that in reality, all concepts are interrelated.

The Macro section reviews the literature of postcolonialism and neocolonialism, both of which provide the backdrop for the higher education sector of Trinidad and Tobago. Using a postcolonial perspective, the Macro section offers a critique of post-secondary/tertiary education during the colonial period. Next, recognising that the original complexities and contradictions of the colonial encounter continued after Independence, I explore their new incarnations under the broad theme of "Neocolonialism". Using literature pertaining to Dependency theories, multilateral institutions and Globalisation, I attempt to show how developed nations have continued to impose western paradigms on the structures and systems of higher education in developing countries, with particular reference to Trinidad and Tobago.

Following the Macro is the Meso section that uses a neocolonial perspective to explore the literature on curriculum and governance. These concepts are central to the thesis since they provide insight into the roles and the challenges that face higher educational institutions, in particular, this College. Finally, the Micro section examines the literature about concepts related to educational transformation and examines the postcolonial aspirations of The College to become a more socially and culturally relevant institution. Like the Macro section, the literature of the Meso and Micro sections will assist me in understanding the current and perhaps potential role of The College and its relevant issues in a neocolonial context.

3.2 The Macro Section

3.2.1 Postcolonial Theory and Higher Education

An examination of postcolonial literature in this chapter is apposite to the study because it provides a framework to better understand the history, structure and nature of higher education in the Caribbean. It offers both a critique of the colonial educational system as well as an aspirational construct for a self–determined future where education might be authentic and relevant to Caribbean society. With regard to The College itself, the insights gained from this examination can explain how the forces of the colonial past have shaped the institution, its curriculum and governance structure. Further, the postcolonial concepts discussed in this chapter are used to clarify some of the issues faced by The College including the metropolitan bias of the education system, the veneration of foreign credentials and the complexities of the relationship between The College and the foreign qualifications' provider.

For the purpose of this research, I perceive "colonial" as anything oppressive or dominating. While this refers mostly to foreign or alien domination, I also accept Dei's (2006) interpretation that such oppression need not be external. In other words, oppression or hegemony need not be foreign. With regard to further clarification, "post–colonial" perspectives are not based on an historical period pertaining to the end of colonisation but rather are articulations of the reactions and resistance to colonialism by colonised peoples. According to Shohat (1992, p.101), articulations represent "a new designation for critical discourses… discourses which balance the colonial narratives and asymmetric depictions of non-European societies with [their own] counter discourses of heterogeneity and difference". Postcolonial critics such as Said (1978), Spivak (1999), Bhabha (1985) and Hall (2008) who emerged mainly from South Asia, Africa and the Caribbean focused on the social, cultural and political complexities and contradictions that emerged after colonisation formally ended (Angod, 2006). Such critique was particularly pertinent with respect to education.

The Colonial Structure and Outlook of Caribbean Higher Learning Institutions in the Postcolonial Period.

According to Ashcroft et al. (2008, p. 371), education "was a massive cannon in the artillery of empire…perhaps the most insidious and in some ways the most cryptic of colonialist survivals, older systems now passing, sometimes imperceptibly into neocolonialist configurations". The

terminology used here by Ashcroft et al. (2008) is interesting because it suggests that colonial education was an obvious and overwhelming force capable of openly promoting the imperialist cause yet, at the same time was subtle, hidden and pervasive, adept at adjusting itself to new realities. Lavia (2012, p.14) argues that the real intention of colonial education was to "provide the infrastructure for power and control, in which the legitimacy of metropolitan rule would be established and maintained" by colonising the minds of the colonial subjects. The outcome of colonial education would therefore result in the colonisers' values and interests becoming accepted by the colonised as their own (Thiong'o, 1986). The factors contributing to the success of this strategy are discussed below.

- Universalism and Ethnocentrism

Two concepts which help to explain the nature and Metropolitan bias of the curriculum used by institutions in Higher Education in Trinidad and Tobago (including The College) are "Universalism" and "Ethnocentrism". These twin concepts were part of an Enlightenment tradition which tended to universalise human experience regardless of time and place and which privileged the European experience in doing so (Chibber, 2013). Andreotti, (2011, p. 2) asserted that this ethnocentric privileging of the western point of view was hegemonic in its efforts to establish it as the "universal form of reasoning and of dialectical thought". The viewpoint of the colonial authorities with regard to higher education in the colonies meshed neatly with that of the Universalist perspective and its underlying modernist epistemology. Unsurprisingly therefore, British West Indian curricula, structures of educational governance, traditions and practices bear a striking resemblance to those of higher educational institutions in Britain despite their very obvious contextual differences (Blair, 2013; Cobley, 2000). The resemblance between these systems is still evident today many decades after the end of colonialism.

- The Pervasiveness of the Universalist/Eurocentric Model of Education after Independence

I posit two explanations for the retention of the Eurocentric model in the post-Independence period. The first one draws on a Gramscian interpretation of hegemony while the second refers to what Brathwaite (1973) calls the "plantation within". According to Gramsci (1971), as cited by Ashcroft et al. (2008), hegemony can operate through the willing consent of the dominated.

Such "domination by consent" occurs in the former colonies when the elites who control political or economic power are able to persuade those without power that they share similar cultural values and norms. Unlike direct colonial domination, where there was no choice, the previously colonised societies willingly continued to use the former educational systems, practices and credentials as being in their best interest (Altbach, 2008; London, 2008). Attempts to make the curriculum more relevant were generally limited to tinkering with the content while making little effort to change the pedagogy or the milieu in which it was located (Blair, 2013). The second reason for retaining colonial educational structures comes from Brathwaite's (1973, p. 6) metaphor of the "inner plantation". This perspective holds that formerly colonised peoples experience an epistemic dislocation or entrapment in the way they perceive the world because their intellectual thinking has been corrupted by internalising external assumptions, external categories and external concepts. In other words, formerly colonised peoples are psychologically enthralled by the colonial experience, an experience which is ultimately damaging to them as victims (Lavia, 2012; Henry, 2000). Nevertheless, their colonial mind-set is such that they appear compelled to perpetuate colonial traditions.

- The Veneration of Foreign Credentials: The Shaping of Cultural Identity, Mimicry

Brathwaite's (1973) position as described above, can assist in explaining the deep-seated feelings of inferiority that contribute to the identity of formerly colonised people. The colonial enterprise was determined to humanise, civilise and Christianise its subjects (Serequeberhan, 2008) through the use of education, language, the law and the media. These forces permeated the consciousness of the colonised individual with the notion of his inferiority and of the corresponding superiority of the European (Fanon, 1952). As Hall (2008, p. 435) asserts, "… cultural identities come from somewhere… [and] have histories". Using Said's (1978) analysis of "Orientalism" as his frame of reference for describing the black Caribbean experience, he posited that the fatal "couplet", "power/knowledge" as proposed by Foucault (1980), allowed the colonial authorities to construct knowledge in such a way that defined black people as "exotic", "different" and as "The Other" (Hall, 2008, p. 436).

Hall's conclusions (2008) are substantiated by the work of both Fanon (1952) and Bhabha (2008) with respect to the concepts of "Mimicry" and "Identity". Using psychoanalytic tools, Fanon (1952) showed how the damage inflicted on black self-perception led to the deformation of black identity. The conformation and veneration of the culture of the Mother Country, as well as the concomitant negative depiction of black culture, contributed to a divided self-

perception and an internalisation of "Otherness". Fanon extended his argument by asserting that a negative self-perception created an inferiority complex in the individual with a corresponding desire to assume the culture of the coloniser. Bhabha (2008) found this was done through imitation and mimicry where the colonised might acquire the characteristics (mimic) of the superior coloniser.

Mimicry, according to Bhabha (2008) can be used as a force for colonisation, for the coloniser recognises that power differentials or hegemonic structures could be retained by encouraging imitation on the part of the colonised. The failure to imitate successfully was inevitable because of the inescapable reality that there would always be a difference between the "authentic" entity and the copy (Bhabha, 1994). On the other hand, Bhabha (2008) also recognized that "mimicry" (Ashcroft et al. 2008 p. 11) was capable of being subverted for the purpose of personal benefit. Such an observation is apt when Trinidadians and Tobagonians seek to acquire foreign qualifications for reasons such as securing jobs in foreign multinational companies or to facilitate their efforts to migrate. This example possibly explains the constant demand for the international programmes and qualifications which form the basis of the curriculum offered by The College. This is in fact one of the main appeals of The College to potential students. Postcolonial explanations about self-perception and mimicry thus provide some insight as to why foreign qualifications are so highly venerated.

- Hybridity and Ambivalence

How do the postcolonial concepts of "hybridity" and "ambivalence" explain the dynamics of the encounter between The College, a family based, for–profit provider of technical and vocational education in the Caribbean and the foreign providers of training and certification? The concept of hybridity is particularly resonant in Trinidad and Tobago, as multiple ethnicities from Africa, Asia, Europe and South America, as well as a minute population of indigenous persons co-exist to create different spectra of hybridity. Like Bhabha (2008), Hoogvelt (1997) sees hybridity (as cited by Meredith, 1998, p. 2) as; "a kind of superior cultural intelligence" owing to the advantage of "in-betweeness" or the straddling of two cultures and the consequent ability to negotiate the difference. Pertinent to this discussion is the concept of the "liminal space" as a site of contestation or negotiation (Ashcroft et al., 2008). This concept may be applied to the interaction between The College and the foreign qualifications' provider.

Meredith (1998, p.3) maintains that a liminal encounter allows for the translation, negotiation and mediation of affinity and difference within a "dynamic of exchange and inclusion". From my own past experience, this is not necessarily a comfortable space, since it is open to ambiguities, ambivalence and contradictions. It is in this space of difference or "slippage" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 85) that mimicry takes place where the colonised react or cope with the "imperial presence" (Ashcroft et al., 2008, p. 11) through imitation or through subversion. Being critically conscious, I recognise the contradiction of privileging foreign qualifications over similar local ones and also of my own ambivalence in privileging business considerations over ideological ones. The College, in deliberately choosing to open a relationship with foreign providers, has recreated the pattern of dependency on the Metropole, and is thus complicit in facilitating educational imperialism, reflecting what Ashcroft et al. (2008) notes is the difficulty of escaping linkages with the colonial past (Altbach, 2008; Asante, 2006).

A Critique of Postcolonial Theory

Although postcolonial theory does offer insights into the nature and structure of institutions of Higher Education in the Caribbean, it has its own limitations. Within this context, it refers to the recognition that colonial relationships still exist under the guise of neocolonialism and globalisation, which will be discussed later in this chapter (Ashcroft et al., 2008; McClintock 1992; Kempf, 2006; Shohat, 1992). A second critique resides in the breadth of the term, which tends to homogenise the experience of all ex-colonies by failing to recognize the heterogeneity that exists within ex-colonies. Insufficient attention is paid to concepts of difference, forced assimilation, hegemony, globalisation, trans-nationalism and diasporisation (Simmonds & Dei, 2012; Moore-Gilbert et al., 2013; Shohat, 1992). A third critique following from the discussion above, accepts Spivak's (1999) caution against creating "essentialist fictions", as cited by Ashcroft et al. (2008, p. 10) by asking who can truly speak for subjects of oppression if it is assumed that colonial experiences are heterogeneous. Fourth, the nature of postcolonial discourses has been critiqued for being too far removed from the sites of actual struggle, with their focus on language and theory, as well as their co-option of western modes of scholarship (Ashcroft et al., 2008; Dei, 2006).

In the section above, I examined perspectives of postcolonial writers, who in their efforts to reframe the discourse about colonialism, have provided a framework for better understanding the nature of higher education in Trinidad and the Anglophone Caribbean. Concepts like "Universalism" and "Ethnocentricity" help to explain the confidence with which institutions

embodying all the traditions and trappings of the Metropole were planted in the very different context of the West Indies. Based on this conceptual undergirding, these institutions were elitist, with systems and structures that were at variance with the cultures and societies within which they were located (Crossley & Tikly, 2004). Other concepts, including "Domination by Consent", "Ambivalence" and "Hybridity" clarify how, despite national Independence, colonial viewpoints and systems are maintained and venerated. The discussion below considers new iterations of colonial domination in the forms of neocolonialism, neoliberalism and Globalisation.

3.2.2 Neocolonialism and Higher Education

An examination of the concept of "Neocolonialism" is pertinent to an understanding of the role of The College in the post-Independence period in Trinidad and Tobago. According to Nkrumah (1965, p. ix), "the essence of Neocolonialism is that the state that is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality however, its economic system and thus its political reality is directed from outside". Theories of Dependency and Modernisation help to explain the relationship between the former colonies and the Metropoles to which they were tethered, and also to provide the philosophical justifications for the focus of education. Discussions about the role of multilateral agencies and globalisation explain how educational policies have been shaped by hegemonic Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) for example, as well as by internationalisation and trade liberalisation. These neocolonial concepts assist in clarifying the role of The College as a transmitter of colonial curricula underpinned by foreign value systems that facilitate the entry of Trinidad and Tobago into the global capitalist system. Further, they help to explain issues which emerged from the neocolonial context. These issues which are discussed more fully below, relate to: the reduced role of the State - often as a result of SAPs, the limitations of the curriculum in keeping with the perception of education as an investment in human capital, as well as the need to conform to global standards regarding credentials and quality assurance.

Dependency and Modernisation Theories

- Dependency Theories and Education

World Systems and Plantation Economy schools contend that the nature and structure of the education systems in former colonies have been used to uphold a global hierarchy based on uneven power relations between countries (Altbach and Kelly, 1978; Carnoy, 1974). Wallerstein (1976) considered that the nature of a country's insertion into the global economic system was a significant determinant of its development. According to him, the insertions were inherently inequitable in their generation of wealth particularly with respect to poor countries which had emerged from colonial exploitation and slavery (Robertson et al. 2007).

His World Systems Theory (1976) classified countries as Core (high incomes and highly industrialised), Semi-Peripheral (moderate incomes and moderately industrialised) and Peripheral (low incomes and predominantly agrarian) at the lowest end of the scale. Trinidad and Tobago with its relatively high per capita income is likely to be classified as semi-peripheral, that is, located between Core and Periphery countries.

These conclusions about external exploitation are supported by the proponents of the Plantation models as well (Weedmark, 2013; Best & Levitt, 1968; Beckford, 1972). The latter argued that the organisation of Caribbean economies had not fundamentally changed since the 17th century, insisting that even at present, the Caribbean islands are simply marginalised hinterlands in thrall to the Metropole. With regard to education, Dependency theories held that the relative power and influence of core countries like the U.S.A., the European Union and Japan increased when they became involved in the educational structures and systems of periphery nations. Such involvement took the form of educational assistance, scholarships for teachers to study abroad, and donations of textbooks and other study materials. The insidious manner in which educational assistance was disseminated contributed to its seemingly neutral stance and disguised its inherent hegemony. The apparent generosity in the granting of educational aid resulted in what Altbach (2014, p. 6) referred to as the "Neocolonialism of the Willing". Although such aid might appear to be neutral on the surface, it becomes consequential when it is accompanied by educational epistemologies that are underpinned by Universalist knowledge claims and standards (Anwaruddin, 2014).

The uncritical acceptance of western educational concepts, methodologies, theories of teaching and learning have stymied local initiative and created an insatiable appetite for western educational structures and systems. Neocolonialism in yet another guise, is evident in the widespread accessibility of Massive Open On-line Courses (MOOCs), created by providers such as Coursera, Udemy and others. These programmes, with their own ontological and

epistemological perspectives, were created in developed countries and gratefully consumed by many countries including those on the periphery. This development will be further discussed in the section on Internationalisation later on in this chapter.

In summary, Dependency theories provided a deterministic economic and historical perspective as to why educational systems and structures in peripheral countries were so dependent on those in the Metropole. The bleak conclusion is that, as long as countries on the Periphery continue to align themselves to countries at the Core, they will forever rely on the Metropolitan countries for direction and sustenance (Altbach, 2008; Weedmark, 2013; Blair, 2013).

- Modernisation Theories and Education

Like the Dependency theories, Modernisation theories are also doctrinaire and deterministic. They formed the basis of the policies promoted by the multilateral institutions with their prescriptions which were supposed to put low income countries on the same path to development as that used by developed countries. Two fundamental pillars of the Modernisation approach are the Human Capital Theory (HCT) and Rostows's (1960) Stages of Economic Growth Theory. HCT rested on three basic assumptions. First, it hypothesised that education was an investment in human capital and that it was the key to transform poor countries into wealthy ones (Robertson et al., 2007). Second, it postulated that development was a linear process and third, that Rate of Return analysis could determine the most effective type of educational spending. Schultz (1961), one of the proponents of HCT asserted that rich countries were wealthy because of the scope of their knowledge and skills' bases and that the poor nations could become wealthy also if they invested in a manner that increased their own knowledge and skills bases. This investment would increase labour productivity and ultimately, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (ibid.). The perception of education as an investment in human capital was bolstered by the use of Rate of Return analysis which became widely applied in the 1980s and which compared the public costs and benefits of education at various levels with its private costs and benefits (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985). The other mainstay of the Modernisation approach was the Stages of Economic Growth theory developed by Rostow (1960). This theory posited that development was a linear, relatively homogeneous process and that each country's trajectory for growth passed through five stages. These milestones included the (1) Traditional (2) Preconditions to Take Off (3) Take Off (4) Drive to Maturity and (5) Period of Mass Consumption (Rostow, 1960). Both theories rely on

quantitative reasoning which links investment in higher education to economic growth. The apparent clarity and logic of these approaches were attractive to the neoliberal institutions and formed the basis of their interventions in various countries.

Wallerstein (1976) critiqued the deterministic, quantitative and Eurocentric biases of Modernisation theories. He condemned as well as their failure to consider the impact of external factors on the economic development of poor countries.

With regard to its assumptions, Modernisation theories can also be accused of making ambitious claims about the positive link between education and economic growth. Evidence shows that HCT does not materially benefit developing countries, even when it is re-configured as a screening device to identify capable workers (Robertson et al., 2007). Additionally, the analysis is purely economic and ignores other factors that contribute to labour productivity. It fails to consider the humanity of the people whom its implementation is supposed to benefit, by reducing humans to mere economic resources, shorn of cultural, creative and citizenship facets. It also "equated education with human resource development" (Ramchand, 2000, p. 519). Finally, the HCT model suffers from methodological difficulties, including the difficulty of disentangling the contributions of labour and capital, and of accurately calculating the optimal level of educational expenditure (Yussof, 2001; Baptiste, 2001; Bowles and Gintis, 1975).

Hegemony

Following from both the Dependency and Modernisation theories which attempt to explain the dominance of western educational paradigms in developing countries is the concept of "hegemony". "Hegemony" is the bedrock of Caribbean colonial and postcolonial history. Roper (2005), as cited by Gregory and Halff (2013, p. 418), defines hegemony as "domination without physical coercion through the widespread acceptance of particular ideologies and consent to the practices associated with those ideologies". Foreign external hegemony is practised by multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (assisted by the United States Treasury and the European Union), UNESCO and the World Trade Organisation (Robertson et al. 2007) when they impose conditionalities on countries which require aid or other assistance (Khor 2000; Watson 2000). Gramsci's analysis explains that hegemony can also be applied locally or internally by the state and its agencies. Such

hegemony occurs when dominant elites (foreign and local) are able to persuade others in a mundane, common sense type of way to accept their world views or impositions.

Multilateral Institutions and Educational Policies

Multilateral institutions, influenced by a neoliberal philosophy enforce their hegemony by compelling governments to comply with policies that emphasise the supremacy of the market and the necessity of a reduced role for government. Institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were conceived in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference with the aims of rebuilding the devastated post-war economy and promoting international economic cooperation. The mission of the World Bank was to foster long term economic development by granting its members both financial and technical assistance while the IMF sought to promote international monetary cooperation by offering advice and technical assistance to its members in balance of payments distress. A third multilateral organisation, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the related General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) was established in 1995 to replace the former General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that had been set up at the end of World War II. Its purpose was to dismantle trade barriers to services, including tertiary education in the interest of global competitiveness (Rizvi & Lingard, 2006).

From the 1980s onward, the World Bank adopted a quantitative approach to educational spending (Heyneman & Lee, 2016). Education was perceived in stark economic terms as an investment in human capital, underpinned by a Rate of Return analysis. This analysis asserted that the best returns on education could be secured by increased public funding of primary education and decreased funding for tertiary education. In fact, the World Bank recommended that the latter should be self-funded because the Rate of Return analysis revealed that while there was a net *public* benefit from primary education, the net benefit from tertiary education was *private* (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985). In the 1990s, the World Bank shifted its spending from "hardware" (civil works and equipment fell from almost 100% in the 1960s to 45% in the late 1990s) to "software" such as training, technical assistance, books and system reforms (World Bank, 1996; World Bank, 1999, p. viii). The World Bank has invested almost U.S $50 billion in education in developing countries since 2000 (World Bank 2018).

The policies imposed by the multilateral institutions were based on a "one size fits all" package of neo-liberal reforms which were referred to as the Washington Consensus (Watson, 2000; Ferguson, 2000; Levitt, 2005; Davies, 2000; Singh, 2002). These Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) - also called conditionalities - proposed that market forces be the main adjudicators of society's decisions with a corresponding reduction in the role of the government (Stromquist &Monkman, 2014). Policies arising from these reforms included: the adoption of policies such as privatisation, deregulation, trade liberalisation and marketisation. In other circumstances, persuasion was used to encourage former colonies to borrow or accept aid in the form of soft loans, or technical expertise in return for accepting educational prescriptions based on western educational policies and practices. Toward the end of the 20th century, the World Bank policy became more focused on basic and general vocational education supported by systems of accountability which stressed measurement and assessment (Bonal, 2002).

Despite recognising that their previous policies had failed to achieve their objectives, the multilateral agencies prescribed in 1989 a policy, known as the "Post-Washington Consensus", that was even more austere than previous policies. This called for governments to increase their oversight functions over tertiary institutions and to restructure their funding models by putting greater emphasis on self- funding by students. The Bank also reduced its focus on TVET (Robertson et al. 2007).

During the period between mid-1990 to 2005, the World Bank and the other multilateral agencies found common ideological ground with regard to the eradication of global poverty and the role of primary education. For instance, UNESCO, one of the multilateral partners, had been attempting to set a global agenda of "Education for All" through its sponsorships of the World Education Conferences at Jomtien, Thailand and Dakar, Senegal in 1990 and 2000 respectively. In 1990, United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and (later) United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) launched the World Conference on Education For All (EFA) in Jomtien, Thailand with a campaign proposed to satisfy the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015 (World Bank, 1999). From 2000 onward, the World Bank's policies placed more emphasis on tertiary education as a means of creating knowledge-driven economic growth strategies which are themselves problematic as will be discussed later in this chapter (World Bank, 2002). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) campaigns continued to prioritise basic and teacher education (among other objectives) in their efforts to eradicate poverty and promote environmental sustainability by 2030 (UNESCO, 2017a).

The apparently laudable goals of these multilateral institutions masked their hegemonic and neocolonial intent with regard to: the nature of their decision-making, their underlying philosophical and ideological biases, and their educational policy implementation. Decision making was superficial and undemocratic (Anwaruddin, 2014) with the World Bank acting as the arbiter of what worked or what did not work. Countries were only able to secure funding for projects which had the imprimatur of the Bank itself (Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). Anwaruddin's (2014) observations about the undemocratic nature of the decision-making process were confirmed by Baptiste and Conrad (2013) who documented the interaction between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the World Bank in 1995 when the former controversially sought a loan from the Bank to finance a programme in teacher professionalism.

Despite having a suite of comprehensive and relevant proposals by the National Task force in the Education Policy Paper 1993 to 2003, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago accepted, with some trepidation, the recommendations of the World Bank (World Bank, 1995). [1] This would not be the first time that the State would choose to accede to the advice of a multilateral institution where it might have used its own credible option instead. Nevertheless, at the end of the loan period, the tax revenue of the government had increased sufficiently for the Government to implement the original recommendations of the National Task Force while simultaneously refusing to accept the other World Bank proposals. These latter proposals would have seen the privatisation of secondary and tertiary education with their consequential effects for access and equity. In this circumstance, Trinidad and Tobago was able to circumvent the more extreme aspects of the World Bank's neoliberal agenda in the 1980s and 1990s.

A Critique of the Education Policies of the Multilateral Institutions

The occurrence described above is an example of what Anwaruddin (2014, p. 143) referred to as a "discourse of incapacity" arising from the neocolonial perception that countries seeking assistance were ignorant of what was best for them in their own circumstances. Buchert and

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[1] This decision to go to the World Bank was controversial due to the suspicions aroused by an encounter with another multilateral organization, the IMF. It was alleged by Dr Davidson Budhoo (1988), who was an economist with the IMF, that the IMF had falsified the statistics related to Trinidad and Tobago to present a worst case scenario and force the energy-rich country to accept Structural Adjustment.

Ndoye (1997) suggested that such policies were deliberate and hegemonic strategies to keep developing countries in the thrall of the western world as cited by Bonal (2002). Anwaruddin (2014) supported by Steiner-Khamsi (2012) critiqued the veneer of neutrality over the World Bank's decision-making processes, contending instead that they were ideologically driven with a bias toward capitalism. A similar criticism was voiced by Schultz (2015) with regard to UNESCO. Other criticisms of the multilateral institutions pertained to their neoliberal and other ideological biases, in particular, those educational policies which were market-driven. Such policies contradicted the underlying assumption of the "Education for All" initiative (Klees, 2012).

These perspectives rested on the Bank's modernist philosophy whereby Universalist assumptions of education meant that there was little consideration of cultural differences, or of the need for customised context in its recommendations (Nguyen et al., 2009). The quantitative focus of the World Bank with its emphasis on accountability and measurement prevented it from asking more fundamental questions about social justice and wealth disparities. With regard to policy implementation, multilateral institutions were critiqued for their "one-size fits-all" approach which failed to address the heterogeneity of the recipients of the aid (De Lisle, 2012; Asiedu & Nandwa, 2007). This criticism was particularly applicable to the focus on basic education which, critics argued, would lead to the stagnation of the higher education sector as well as stymie research with its potential for promoting sustainable development.

Based on a review of its strategies over three decades, the World Bank has recognised the need for a new approach to tertiary education as a means of eradicating poverty, namely the construction of knowledge-based economies. It has argued that knowledge application will promote innovation and build professional capacity (World Bank, 2002).

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has chosen to create a "Knowledge Economy" as it strives to integrate itself into the global capitalist economy. A "Knowledge Economy" is one in which the production of goods and services is significantly based on a reliance on intellectual capabilities rather than on physical resource inputs (Powell & Snellman, 2004). Like HCT, the concept is based on the assumption that workers are "human capital", and that spending on education will bring about tangible benefits in economic growth (Nyberg & Wright, 2015; Eriksson & Forslund, 2014; Brinkley, Fauth, Mahdon & Theodoropoulou, 2006). However, this premise is questionable because many of the jobs being created are in the personal services sector and do not require ever increasing levels of education. A second source of disquiet is

that the approach fails to recognise that automation will eventually make a number of jobs obsolete, particularly those in which creativity and critical thought are not required (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2006).

A third criticism is that even relatively high levels of education do not guarantee sustainable employment. In Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Education (MTEST, 2015) has indicated that a significant percentage of university graduates are not working in the fields in which they were trained. Trinidad and Tobago suffers one of the highest levels of "Brain Drain" in the world. In 2000, the percentage of the labour force with a tertiary education that had migrated to OECD countries was 78.4%, increasing to 79% four years later (Wenner, 2016). An OECD report in 2005 noted that over 75% of tertiary graduates of Trinidad and Tobago live overseas. In other words, the expansion of higher education did not necessarily contribute to the development of the country to the extent that would have been expected. Lastly, the epistemological thrust of the education promoted for this purpose, does not engender the types of skills which promote innovation, reflection and critical thinking (Giroux, 2014).

The tendency to judge the benefits of tertiary education through a predominantly quantitative lens fails, to consider broader based more qualitative perspectives of development such as the people-centred models proposed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 1990) or Sen (1999). The latter model, for example, stresses the expansion of human capabilities and the manner in which education can contribute to individual autonomy and personal choice. Multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, UNESCO and the WTO have had a significant influence on the educational structures and systems of higher education in developing countries like Trinidad and Tobago. These forms of influence included their promotion of neoliberal doctrines, as well as their insistence that countries focus on basic education in keeping with their commitments to the EFA, MDGs and SDGs. Hegemony is exercised by the multilateral institutions that position themselves as arbiters of what is required in terms of the programmes that are chosen and the manner in which they are implemented.

Globalisation

As someone living in Trinidad and Tobago today, I find it difficult to argue that Globalisation is a new phenomenon. First, if it represents the *objective* outcome of transfers of trade, of people and of finance from different corners of the earth, then Trinidad and Tobago has been

globalised for more than 500 years. Second, if Globalisation means knowing the *subjective* dichotomy of oneself as both a citizen of the nation/state of Trinidad and Tobago, and simultaneously as someone with a connection to the wider world, then citizens of Trinidad and Tobago have had the phenomenological experience of Globalisation. Last, if Globalisation is undergirded by an *ideology* which marginalises countries, whether through the colonial doctrines of the past or the neocolonialism and neoliberal ones of today, then like Connell (2009), I see Globalisation as the continuation of a process that has been going on for hundreds of years (Murshed, 2003; Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2004; Scholte, 2005; Olssen, 2006). While there is no undisputed definition of Globalisation, Held and his colleagues (2006), as cited in Lauder, Brown, Dillabough and Halsey (2006, p. 30) define the concept as "a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions - assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity, and impact generating transcontinental or inter-regional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power". The basis of this hyper-globalist or transformational perspective of Globalisation lies in the unprecedented technological changes that have impacted finance, communications and transport (Olssen, 2006), often to the detriment of countries on the periphery. While Lauder et al. (2006) recognise that the definition used by Held and his colleagues (1999) might be largely true with reference to the western economies, Tikly (2008) cautions that due to the heterogeneity of countries, definitions cannot be universally applied. Many countries on the periphery lack the necessary technological infrastructure. Further, as Marginson & Van der Wende (2007, p. 5) observed, "Not every national system [is] engaged with every other to the same extent or intensity". Globalisation has remodelled the relationship between Core and Periphery countries from one that was based on the extraction of primary products to one that is based on the lowest wages (Hoogvelt, 1997).

The cautions identified above by Tikly (2008) and others are timely because Globalisation is sometimes defined in ways that lack nuance. Economists such as Friedman as cited by Ritzvi & Langard (2006) saw Globalisation as an apparently unstoppable economic phenomenon, whereas Bourdieu (2003) viewed it as a deliberate policy to expand the power of developed countries through trade liberalisation and trade deregulation. The technological and market-driven perspective of Globalisation addresses a phenomenon that is modernist and colonial in orientation and which is imposed on nations "from above". A post-modern definitional approach, namely "Globalisation from below" focuses instead on the bonds that connect global peoples, their ideas and their concerns about human rights and social justice (Rhoads & Torres,

2006; Rizvi & Lingard, 2006). Other issues which are considered from a global rather than a national perspective in contemporary times include culture, organised crime, internationalised education and the spread of infectious diseases.

Traditional definitions of Globalisation are often based on discourses of binary models based on "Core" and "Periphery", a perspective which Appadurai (1990) rejects. He proposes a multidimensional model of five global flows or scapes to explain the pervasiveness of the phenomenon. First, Ethnoscapes refer to the migration of peoples across borders. Second and third are Mediascapes and Technoscapes respectively, where cultural influences are transmitted through the media and through technology. Fourth are Financescapes which reference the often uncontrolled movement of loans, speculative funds, investments and money transfers between nations. The fifth dimension, Ideoscapes, refers to the transmission of ideologies across countries. Appadurai (1990) is at pains to point out that these 'scapes' are not objectively situated but rather depend on the perspectives or locations of those involved. His multidimensional model provides an interesting lens through which it is possible to view the impact of Globalisation on higher education by demonstrating how educational systems can become integrated in a global network (Lauder et al., 2006; Marginson, 2007). Two interrelated processes of globalisation drive this integration, namely Liberalisation and Internationalisation.

Liberalisation

Liberalisation is the removal of trade barriers, as occurred when the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) was implemented in 1995 (Rizvi & Lingard, 2006). This effectively opened up the tertiary education sector to foreign competition making it possible for higher educational services to be bought and sold across national boundaries like any other product. According to Hosein, Chen & Singh (2004) in their report for the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), trade could be conducted using four modes: 1) Mode 1 - Cross Border Trade; 2) Mode 2 - Movement of student consumers to overseas institutions; 3) Mode 3 - Commercial presence and 4) Mode 4 - Movement of trained persons to other countries. The report identified several implications of this new regime for tertiary level education in the Caribbean, but its overriding concern lay in the increased vulnerability that might result from the incursions of well - established foreign providers. These implications concerned first, the likely inability of local institutions to compete with the relatively better

resourced foreign institutions under the conditions espoused by the WTO. The second implication related to the possible "crowding out" of programmes that were necessary for national development by other foreign oriented ones with a high market demand. The third implication concerned a worsening of the "Brain Drain in keeping with Mode 4 of the GATS Treaty which allows for the free movement of persons.

Liberalisation is not a uni-directional process and Trinidad and Tobago also attracts inflows of foreign students from the region as well as internationally as is shown in the Table 3.1 below. Regionally, the largest numbers come from CARICOM countries while internationally; the majority come from the USA.

Table 3.1 Foreign Nationals in the Post-Secondary and Tertiary Education Sectors in Trinidad and Tobago (2008-2010)

Foreign Nationals in the Post-Secondary and Tertiary Education Sectors of Trinidad and Tobago for the Academic Years 2008 to 2009 & 2009 to 2010		
Academic Year	Number of foreign students	Percentage (%) of Total enrolment
2008-2009	1,675	3.08
2009-2010	1,705	3.24

Source: Statistical Digest on Post-Secondary and Tertiary Education

On the other hand, thousands of Trinidadian and Tobagonian students go abroad to study every year. For example in 2013, 3,164 students went abroad to study, with the USA and the UK being the main destinations (United Nations, DESA-Population Division and UNICEF 2014).

Internationalisation

Another concept that links Globalisation and higher education is that of "Internationalisation" which according to Knights (2015), is an assimilation of the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education into a format that both reflects and integrates the influence of global culture. According to UNESCO (2017a, p iv), it is "an intentional expansion of the spatiality of post-secondary education through cross-border mobilities and connections among institutions, students, scholars, knowledge, programs and delivery (systems and providers)".

Examples of Internationalisation thus include on-line or distance education, sending students to study abroad or setting up branch campuses overseas, often by engaging in some type of inter-institutional partnership. Internationalisation has expanded phenomenally due to the revolutionary improvements in ICT. The development of educational communications, transport and finance have increased access to higher education in terms of entry to institutions as well as to disseminated knowledge from MOOC providers, like those by Coursera and Udemy.

As a driver of global influence, Internationalisation further integrates the educational system into the worldwide educational network through its reliance on standardised systems of credits, credentials, professional qualifications and global rankings. These practices are neocolonial and hegemonic in their efforts to dominate the shape and structure of education in the former colonies by hamstringing them to foreign standards. Annisette (2000), citing studies by Johnson, 1982), argued that the development and expansion of the British professional qualifications such as those in Accountancy, were an integral part of British imperialist policy.

The "Neocolonialism of the Willing"

 Neocolonialist policies and programmes in education are not only imposed by external agencies but, in a form of Gramscian hegemony, are perpetrated by national governments and their local agencies. Reasons for this include: the possession of a colonial mind set which prefers western educational philosophies and practices over those that are indigenous (Nguyen, Elliott, Terlouw, & Pilota, 2009; Altbach, 2014), compliance with the terms and conditions of multilateral agreements or simple expediency by allowing past colonial practices to continue in the absence of other existing policies. With regard to the colonial mind-set, it is likely that local policy makers were schooled in the colonial tradition and possess a Universalist perspective that is insensitive to the dangers of inappropriately transferring western theories and practices to local educational conditions (Nguyen et al., 2009; Altbach, 2014). Nguyen et al. (ibid.), in a study which examined the impact of "cross cultural cloning" (p.124) of western educational paradigms that did not consider indigenous norms and values, argued that such transfers resulted in a mismatch that led to academic ineffectiveness, neglect of cultural traditions and the perpetuation of a culture of dependency. Furthermore, the Eurocentric bias undergirding the western educational paradigms entrenched mental colonialism and ignored

the need to create authentic and relevant indigenous institutions (Kwek, 2003). According to Nguyen et al. (ibid), emancipation from this bondage could only come from resistance and a determination to create indigenous or culturally relevant structures and systems. In the words of Sardar (1999, p. x): "the non-west has to create a whole new body of knowledge, rediscover its lost and suppressed intellectual heritage, and shape a host of new disciplines".

Another factor that could also contribute to the perpetuation of the colonial legacies is the external pressure imposed on local governments by the multilateral agencies that shaped educational agendas. When these are coupled with western-influenced internal forces calling for modernisation, it becomes difficult for former colonies to resist the temptation to apply western-inspired educational systems. Implementation of western systems also occurs when colonial practices are allowed to continue unchanged because of expediency.

3.2.3 Summary of the Macro Section

The literature reviewed in the Macro section, has   explored the concepts of postcolonialism, neocolonialism, hegemony and Globalisation as they apply to higher education. This exploration was important to understand the background of the subject of this study which is a family-owned and managed, private, for-profit TVET provider, and to show how colonial and neocolonial factors have influenced its role and the issues which it faces. The postcolonial critique of colonial education examined how its Universalist and ethnocentric perspectives led to the imposition of western educational paradigms on diverse countries with consequential implications for educational content and pedagogy. Theories of Dependency and Modernisation sought to explain how colonial dominance was able to continue even after Independence through historical and structural forces. After 1995, the implementation of GATS further entrenched the dependence of higher educational institutions of Trinidad and Tobago on UK curricula and certification. Thus, the dominance of the western nations was further entrenched by the onslaught of Globalisation, accompanied as it was by trade liberalisation and the process of Internationalisation, which gave foreign institutions and programmes a larger role in the local higher educational sector.

The connection between The College, which forms the basis of this study, and City and Guilds Institute of London (CGIL), its main Qualifications' Provider, is particularly interesting because it represents a re-creation of colonial history in which the College acts as an agent of

neocolonialism. CGIL's relationship with Trinidad and Tobago, which started in 1922 when the colonial authorities relied on it for curricula and certification for TVET programmes, was previously discussed in Chapter 2.

The hegemony of the multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO was reflected in their imposition of the Structural Adjustment and other policies in Trinidad and Tobago. The outcomes of these policies were reflected in the reduced role of the Government and the increased importance of the private sector in higher education, as well as in the ideological perspectives which viewed educational spending as an investment in human capital. It is not surprising therefore that the curricula offered at the higher educational level are heavily weighted toward the economy through a focus on work related programmes. The Meso section which follows, offers a neocolonial perspective of the literature on curriculum, governance and quality, with particular reference to higher education. These concepts represent the means by which I engage with both the interviewees and the documentary evidence to elicit insights about the role of The College and the issues that it faces.

3.3 The Meso Section

The previous section explored the literature from a macro-theoretical perspective to understand how colonial and neocolonial forces shaped higher education in Trinidad and Tobago, and by extension, influenced the institutions within the sector. The section below examines the literature related to the concepts of curriculum, governance and quality assurance. These concepts are central to the study as they are the means by which I interact with the interviewees and other sources of information to gain insights into both the role of, and the issues, that face The College. These concepts are also important in terms of their roles in the survival and transformation of The College.

The Meso section examines the literature on: curriculum as it relates to higher education with special reference to TVET; governance also in reference to higher education and to quality assurance. I review the literature to better understand the role of The College and the issues which it faces within a neocolonial context. As noted earlier, all sections, macro, meso and micro are interrelated.

3.3.1 Curriculum

The term 'curriculum' is a contested one (Winter, 2000) but it broadly refers to a selection of programmes and related activities (including lecturer-student interactions) that are offered by an educational institution. A curriculum may be classified as being explicit or implicit. An explicit curriculum is a statement of specific objectives that involve teaching and learning which are planned and organized. Alternatively, Kelly (2004) states that an implicit curriculum comprises those things which pupils learn but which were not overtly planned [or] might not even have been in the consciousness of those responsible for the planning process. Central to any curriculum are the answers to two questions: "Education for whom?" and "Education for what?" Historically, as discussed in Chapter 2, colonial education was designed to entrench British hegemony, an objective which Trinidadian and Tobagonian nationalists sought to upend with the coming of Independence in 1962.

The decades which followed saw these efforts compromised by the forces of Globalisation and the policies of the multilateral organisations. A curriculum does not exist in isolation, neither is it neutral. It will therefore be affected when governments comply with the neoliberal policies or SAPs imposed by the multilateral institutions. Curricula which were meant to encourage participation in a democratic society became increasingly dependent on quantitative indicators and focused on the training of "human capital". The ultimate objective of education thus appeared to be the integration of the country into the global capitalist economy. Globalisation can also have an impact on the curriculum through the processes of internationalisation, deregulation and commodification of education. A curriculum may be chosen based on the objectives of the institution. For example, a curriculum which aims to be transformational is likely to be different from one which is market led and which prioritises the financial sustainability of the institution.

A curriculum may be approached in several ways. First, it can be viewed as a body of knowledge; second, as a product; third, as a process and fourth, as praxis, each approach having its own implications for pedagogy and interrelationships among stakeholders. Where the curriculum is content-oriented, teachers transmit explicit standardised deposits of knowledge to receptive students who are expected to regurgitate it on request, usually during examinations.

This approach is referred to as the "banking concept" of teaching (Freire, 1968). Similarly, the curriculum product approach expected students to achieve competence in a series of activities

to a measurable standard with the aid of teacher experts. This approach has been associated with Tyler (1949) who recommended the use of a systematic approach to prepare students to fulfil those specific activities required for a successful life.

The content and product approaches discussed above were the staples of explicit British colonial curricula which, at all levels, were bolstered by the use of colonial syllabi, textbooks and assessments (Cobley, 2000; Blair, 2013) for the implicit purpose of controlling the minds of colonial subjects (Lavia, 2012; Thiong'o, 1986; Williams, 1946). Using the plantation as a metaphor to represent the classroom and its related pedagogy, Bristol (2012) asserts that "plantation pedagogy" is a method of teaching which enforces virtual slave-like conditions in its oppression of students. Both the content and product approaches are problematic for creative teaching and learning because of their absolutist epistemology and hegemonic approach. In instances where the content and product approaches are dominant, the curricula become related to what Bowles and Gintis (2002) refer to as the Correspondence Principle. This principle contends that educational environments replicate the work place and implicitly teach students how to be a pliant and obedient labour force for employers. Furthermore, such curricula ignore the humanity of learners and teachers alike, and encourage the perception of persons as "human capital" and their education as an "investment". Such curricula are anti-liberatory in intent and fail to promote both students' awareness of their own oppression and their desire to become active agents in their own liberation.

The third and fourth types of curricula, the process and praxis models respectively, are interactive, dialogic and appropriate for adult learners. According to Knowles and associates (1986), adults value relevance, problem solving, group work and experiential approaches to learning. The praxis model of curriculum allows for a transformative teaching style and aims to improve human well-being and human emancipation. This model is espoused by Mezirow (1991) and stresses practices like reflection and the sharing of experiences through discourse by both teachers and students. Bristol (2012) also asserts the necessity of reflection, in this case to resist the traditional hegemonic organisation of the Caribbean classroom. Moreover, she argues that this will achieve both critical consciousness and critical praxis, leading to a greater understanding of the oppression that resides in the educational environment. Ramchand (2000, p.518) takes this general perspective further, by envisioning its practical application to a relevant curriculum that would take into account "our particular means and needs and make[s]

use of all the legacies available to us". This he asserts would help us "to develop a lifestyle in closer relationship to the physical environment and the products of this environment".

The Multinationalisation of the Curriculum

Altbach (1999, p.10) refers to "Multinationalisation" as the actual entry of foreign training providers into local higher educational markets. These profit motivated incursions have had consequential effects on indigenous institutions as well as on curricular content, pedagogy, norms and values. They have also encouraged the adoption of systems of credits and international rankings (Howe, 2005) further entrenching overseas hegemony over the local sector. Noting the massive expansion of the foreign presence in the Caribbean, the Vice-Chancellor of The UWI, Hilary Beckles (2005, p. 3) observed that since the mid-1990s, "the tertiary education landscape has changed dramatically" and that this was a cause for concern. The main concern arising from the internationalisation and multinationalisation of the sector is a reduction in   curricular diversity. According to Slaughter and Leslie (1997) as cited by Morrow and Torres, (2000) and Van Vught, (2008), this can occur when indigenous institutions try to homogenise their curricula by emulating elite global institutions in an effort to gain prestige and improve their international ranking. The desire to attain the latter goal was obvious when Vice-Chancellor Beckles stated that; "radically enhancing the international reputation and status of the UWI is our ultimate target. To this end, we have embarked on an aggressive global strategy" (UWI Campus News, 2018). He was responding to the news that The UWI had been ranked among the top 500 universities in the world in 2018 according to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. The pursuit of global accreditation, rankings and other quantitative credentials by institutions, might be at the expense of maintaining contextual qualitative differences.

The Curriculum in a Market-Oriented Education Sector

As Van Vught (2008) notes, Globalisation not only increases curricular homogeneity as indigenous institutions attempt to integrate into the global educational network; it also intensifies the market orientation of the higher educational sector. Unsurprisingly therefore, private, for-profit institutions are dominant in several countries including the Philippines, South Korea, Japan, Brazil, Poland and Indonesia (Douglas, 2012; Quddus & Rashid, 2000; Altbach, 1999; ACTT, n.d.). Likewise in Trinidad and Tobago, this trend is evident. According to the Statistical Digest on Post-Secondary and Tertiary Education (MSTTE, 2010b), the private

sector represents more than 95% of institutions at this level. This market orientation leads to the commodification of education which is the process by which a product or service (in this case, post-secondary/tertiary education and, by extension, the curriculum) becomes a marketable commodity, influenced by the profit motive. This commodification process, replaces the education context by one of business (Tierney and Hentschke, 2007) in terms of organisation, delivery, and language. It is noteworthy that the commodification of higher education, although based on commercial objectives, is not limited to private sector institutions.

The increasing market orientation of the higher education sector has resonance for The College as a private, for-profit institution and one in which market forces play a significant role, particularly with regard to the determination of programme selection. Naidoo and Jamieson (2006) posited that in such circumstances, the curriculum would be more inclined toward a greater economic and workplace orientation, at the expense of other more academic and research-based programmes. Hoare (2007), in referencing university education in Belize, also noted the importance of consumer demand in determining curricula and programme selection in the face of decreased government funding. She observed that survival required that institutions select curricula that would generate income.

 With regard to Trinidad and Tobago, Rosemin and Ovid (2008) also asserted that programmes which were frequently requested, such as those in Business Management and Accountancy, were prioritised over others which might have been more critical to development, but which were less profitable. The increased privatisation of higher education also emphasised teaching modalities which were time-saving and "efficient". Modularisation and the packaging of programmes modelled the processes of the fast food industry, in that they were predictable, calculable, efficient and controlled. Ritzer (1993) referred to this type of organization as "Mcdonaldisation". Both content and product focussed curricula which were modernist in their ontological and epistemological underpinnings, were well suited to these modalities. Modularisation was also appropriate for ICT curricula such as those used in MOOCs and thus facilitated the spread of hegemonic western perspectives.

The Curriculum and TVET

In the following section, I discuss the nature of TVET, its curricula and implications for pedagogy, access and equity. The term "TVET" resists reification because it has multiple meanings which span from the teaching and learning of predominantly manual skills, on one hand, to the acquisition of mainly cognitive skills in technology education on the other. Terms such as "technical", "technological" or "vocational education", "technical" or "vocational training", "technology education' and the like, provide overlapping meanings that are not always clearly distinguishable from each other. The following discussion attempts to clarify some of these distinctions by considering their theoretical, philosophical and practical emphases. For example, curricula which stress "technological education" focus on technological literacy and awareness of the social, ethical, and economic implications of technological choices. On the contrary, curricula based on Technical Vocational aspects are more skills oriented (Prime 1992). "Technology Education" provides more opportunity for critical thinking and creativity than the more practical "Technical and Vocational" curricular product approach (ibid.). Compton (2009) as cited by Dixon (2013), also noted that "Technology Education" promoted democracy by allowing students to understand their role in the world.

From a neoclassical perspective, TVET was viewed as being primarily utilitarian with a focus on the preparation of skilled manpower toward developing competencies for productive employment or self-employment. UNESCO, however, defined it more widely by including a general education component as well as an emphasis on appropriate attitudes, as reflected in the definition accepted at the Second International Congress on TVET in the Republic of Korea in 1999. According to this definition, TVET comprises "those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic life."

The curricula which emerge from the definitions above, reflect a content and product orientation, grounded in Universalist notions of knowledge with pedagogies that are based on Freire's "banking" concept of education. Tikly (2013) on the other hand, takes a more nuanced, and less mechanistic approach to the concept of a TVET curriculum. He relates it to notions of human development and human capabilities as elucidated by the UNDP (1990) and Sen (1999). According to Tikly (2013), TVET is contextual and is a vehicle for supporting the development

of a range of capabilities that allow individuals to contribute to their communities and their society. In similar vein, Subran (2013) critiqued the rigid, modernist and class based nature of TVET programmes in the Caribbean. He asserted that unless these were radically reformed, they would be ineffective in preparing students to cope with a post-modern world. Citing Jin and Li (2011), he (ibid.) was concerned that first, the curriculum did not integrate the academic and practical aspects of TVET into a cogent whole and second, that the students who were shunted into TVET, were the least able to cope with the rigours of the programme. His dominant argument was that TVET in a post-modern environment required a strong academic focus in addition to a practical orientation. Further, and most importantly, it required an orientation that would attract capable and motivated students. Like Subran (2013), Hutton and Dixon (2016) emphasized the need for TVET to be integrated into general education at the post-secondary/tertiary level.

Colonial education was based on a binary system which differentiated between academic and practical/technical education; a practice which Bagnall (2000), as cited by Griffith (2013) noted was in keeping with the traditions of higher learning institutions in Britain. Emerging from this division was the occupational classification which conferred high social standing and privilege to those with an academic education on one hand, and disdain and social stigma to those with a practical or technical education on the other hand.

The MSTTE (2010a) categorised TVET as training which equipped students to fit into Levels 1, 2 and 3 as outlined in the "Categories and Levels of Technical Vocational Education and Training" identified in the Table below.

Table 3.2: Categories and Levels of Technical Vocational Education and Training (1-3)

Level 5	Chartered and Advanced Professional (e.g. Chartered Engineers, Accountants)
Level 4	Professional (e.g. Degree)
Level 3	Technician (e.g. Air Conditioning and Refrigeration, Mechanical Engineering) Technicians
Level 2	Skilled (e.g. Electrical Installation Craft, Plumbing Craft)
Level 1	Semi-skilled (e.g. Masonry, Carpentry, Welding)

Source: Categories and Levels of Technical Vocational Education and Training

(MSTTE, 2010a p. 22)

At the time of Independence, TVET was expected to assist in the diversification and transformation of the economy. Those plans, long aborted, have now been revived but with no certainty of success that TVET will now fully develop its potential. It continues to suffer from a lack of public support and "buy in" from key stakeholders (MSTTE, 2010a; MTEST, 2015; Draft Education Policy Paper 2017-2022). The Draft Education Policy Paper 2017-2022 (2017) outlined several other issues and challenges facing the TVET sector in Trinidad and Tobago. These included the need for rationalisation, standardisation and harmonisation of programmes due to the diversity, duplication and confusion of classifications that currently exist. Other issues included: the shortage of trained teachers; the absence of consistent quality assurance or monitoring framework, the lop-sidedness of programmes, the absence of labour market studies and the stigmatisation of TVET (ibid). The purpose of the section on curriculum below is to examine the literature on the factors which impacted curriculum and their implications for curriculum, pedagogy and democracy.

The Nexus between the TVET Curriculum, Democracy and Pedagogy

Subran's concerns about equity and social justice are echoed by Chisolm (2009) who asserts that the TVET curriculum has implications for democracy in that it can be either a tool for upholding the status quo or an instrument for promoting social justice and equity. Observing that persons from the lower social and economic classes were disproportionately involved in TVET, Subran argued that both the explicit and implicit TVET curricula appeared to be primarily concerned with entrenching the status quo.

The impact of the hidden curriculum is manifested in the way that most TVET classes replicate the social and workplace hierarchy. They promote passivity and compliance with rules and values, which Bowles and Gintis (1975) stressed were meant to prepare students for their future positions in the work environment. Chisolm (2009) further argued that little attention was paid to processes that emphasised critical thinking or those that required creativity and individuality, arguments with which Subran (2013) concurred. Kincheloe (1995) as cited by Chisolm (2009) questioned the neutral and value–free veneer of TVET institutions, arguing instead that they promoted the status quo by indoctrinating students in corporate values and attitudes which would be pleasing to employers.

With regard to the nexus between the TVET curriculum and democracy therefore, Molnar (2011) suggests the use of more inclusive pedagogies which would provide opportunities for

students with regard to curriculum selection and community involvement. Chisolm (2009) and Subran (2013) recommend a more democratic approach to learning by giving students the opportunity for critical thinking and significantly, the moral incentive to transform the society. Subran argues that such approaches would eliminate the colonial distinctions between "mental" and "manual" work, and simultaneously promote social justice.

3.3.2 Governance

In this section, I use a Neocolonial lens to critique the literature on the subject of educational governance at the post-secondary/tertiary level. Both internal and external governance systems have implications for: hegemony, funding, efficiency, stakeholder relationships, access and equity.

External Governance in Higher Education

External governance is concerned with structures relating to rules and regulations, having to do with the State and its agencies, international organisations and also qualifications' providers. It may be concerned with matters such as external funding, regulatory arrangements, curricula decision-making and quality assurance over which it may exert varying degrees of hegemony. Some of the external stakeholders which interact with institutions in Trinidad and Tobago include the World Bank, the Ministry of Education, the National Training Agency and the ACTT.

Neocolonialism impacts the higher education sector of Trinidad and Tobago when the Ministry of Education and its various agencies accept the policies, recommendations or philosophies of the multilateral organisations. For example, the ACTT and the NTA are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that local systems of governance match up to those of similar institutions abroad. Through its international affiliations, the ACTT has established linkages between local and foreign accrediting institutions, using systems of credits, rankings and common standards. Thus, the efforts by countries to integrate the global educational network are facilitated by the structures of external governance which operate within their countries. These efforts are facilitated by the revolutionary advances in transport and ICT. According to

an editorial by Harvey and Williams (2010), there is a remarkable similarity in the Quality Assurance systems of developing countries with those of north-western Europe, despite their diverse environments. This section examined some of the hegemonic impacts of foreign influence on the external governance of the higher education sector in Trinidad and Tobago.

State hegemony operates through the NTA which is the umbrella body responsible for planning, control and administration in the TVET sector. Its objective is to establish and maintain national occupational standards and Quality Assurance mechanisms for TVET. It is also responsible for adopting a Qualifications Framework and coordinating the Trinidad and Tobago Vocational Qualifications Award system. The ACTT conducts audits and advises on the recognition of programmes, institutions and awards for institutions at the tertiary level (MTEST, 2015) in the interest of maintaining standards. In other words, the ACTT determines which tertiary institutions are allowed to operate and which programmes may be offered in the country. Another way by which the State exercises governance or hegemony is by determining who has access to education through its funding mechanisms. For instance, the GATE programme once gave adult citizens of Trinidad and Tobago the opportunity to access free tuition in approved subjects at registered institutions. However, from 2016 this access was reduced when citizens were subjected to means testing, or exclusion (if they were over 50 years of age). In addition, students pursuing foreign non-TVET programmes were refused GATE funding. That is to say, GATE is mainly available only to students who register for locally accredited programmes (see Appendix 5).

Foreign hegemony and neocolonial undertones are also manifested through Government policies which comply with the SAP directives of the World Bank and UNESCO's EFA, MDGs and SDGs. Although there are several laudable objectives in these programmes they might nevertheless exert some detrimental influence on higher level education. The GoRTT's adherence to the neoliberal discourses of these institutions is evident in their policy statements about higher education and "Knowledge Economies". They also appear to be edging toward market-based financing solutions for higher education such as having students fund their own education.

From a macro perspective as well, Trinidad and Tobago's global economic positioning means that its dominant energy sector is significantly affected by the variability of world economic trends. Global price changes in energy products, the outcomes of tax negotiations and changes in production volumes significantly affect the tax revenue earned by Government of Trinidad

and Tobago. Reduced profits from multinational energy companies also have consequential effects on its ability to finance expenditure. For example, in 2015 the Government's energy taxation revenue fell from TT$18.7 billion in 2014 to TT$6.6 billion while its expenditure rose from TT$59.9 billion to TT$52.2 billion (ECLAC 2017).

Internal Governance in Higher Education

- Definitions

Governance is broadly defined by Gayle, Tewarie and White (2003, p. 1) as "the structure and process of authoritative decision-making across issues that are significant for external as well as internal stakeholders" in keeping with that institution's strategic vision, norms and values. More specifically, definitions of governance invariably include a description of the relationships between the company's Board, management, and both its financial and nonfinancial stakeholders. Governance, in addition, provides the structures, the methods and control mechanisms for achieving and implementing objectives all within an institutional, regulatory legal and ethical context. Modernist approaches to governance stress efficiency in the delivery of educational services, with critical focus on monitoring, accountability, standards and incentives (Lewis & Pettersson, 2009).

Internal educational governance relates to structures and relationships within the institution itself with reference to the recruitment of staff and students, andragogy, monitoring and assessment. Educational management, on the other hand, has a more technical focus, in that it is concerned with the implementation of policy to achieve predetermined goals. Internal Governance models span a spectrum which range from managerial type organisations reflecting the corporate business structures of the private sector to models which are mostly controlled by the state through directives. Governance in higher education has become increasingly complex with recent changes, in terms of the: reduced role of government, increased role of the private sector, increased use of ICT, massification, and commodification of education internationalisation, and the increased implementation of managerial systems.

- *TVET Institutions: Internal Governance*

Parry (2013) offers an interesting perspective on the internal governance of TVET colleges and similar institutions. He recognises that the governance of such institutions differs from that of traditional colleges mainly by the fact that they have multiple missions unlike the traditional colleges which focus on teaching, service and research. TVET colleges on the other hand, offer core areas of training, customized training as well as workforce development. Parry speaks about the challenges that such a multiplicity of missions can impose on governance, including: demands on management, accountability pressures and reputational risks. He cautions that excessive breadth and diversity of mission can dilute the strength of an institution.

Corporate Influence on Internal Governance

This section concerns the influence of Globalisation on internal systems of governance, particularly in the private, for-profit institutions which are influenced by market forces. Unlike traditional institutions whose main aims are to advance and disseminate knowledge, McMurtry (1991, p. 211) claims that the overriding purpose of the PFPs is "to maximize private money profits". They have also been accused of predatory and unethical marketing strategies, as well as of poor quality service and of misrepresenting their programmes and services (Beaver, 2012). On the other hand, it is claimed that PFPs have a number of advantages over more traditional colleges in terms of being less bureaucratic, more innovative and more focused on satisfying student/consumer needs (Hillyard, 2011; Douglas, 2012; Olufunke, 2015). In the face of reduced grants from government, even traditional institutions have adopted some of the entrepreneurial practices of the private, for-profit institutions in an effort to increase their own funding.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, two consequences of Globalisation on higher education, have been the reduction in the role of government and the corresponding expansion in the importance of the private sector. These changes have had implications for the governance and curriculum of individual institutions. Hoare (2007), in a Case Study of University governance in Belize found that due to reduced government funding, higher educational institutions were forced to develop alternative budgetary mechanisms to counter their financial difficulties. For this reason, institutions marketised their curricular offerings by developing programmes which were popular and for which the public was required to pay. Levin (1999) as cited by Hoare (2007) examined the effects of marketisation on the curriculum and governance of Community

Colleges in Canada. He concluded that marketisation led to: one, the establishment of institutional or governance structures to generate funds; two, an emphasis on efficiency and new modalities of training such as Distance Education; three, a reduction in curricular emphasis on remedial and similar types of training and four, a shift in training focus from programmes related to education to those related to employment. In other words, as institutions subjected themselves to market forces, the consequences included changes in the systems of governance in terms of the adoption of more corporate styles of management and a reorganisation of the curriculum. The need to pay for education had negative effects on access and equity (McMurtry, 1991).

Another effect of the increased market orientation of higher education has been a greater emphasis on management structure, accountability and measurement (Hoare, 2007). This approach stresses the importance of professional managers and hierarchical organisational structures. In market focused educational institutions, decision-making between the faculty and university administrators becomes less participative, less collegial and more centralised. Curricular choices are increasingly aligned to both consumer demand and labour market requirements and away from strictly academic criteria. Perceptions of stakeholders change also; students become customers, institutions become training providers and lecturers become simply human resources (McMurtry, 1991; Hoare, 2007). In short, educational governance even in traditional institutions has become less focused on teaching/learning, research and service and more concerned with market-oriented features like innovativeness, delivery, culture and profit (Tierney and Hentschke, 2007). In short, Globalisation has wrought a fundamental shift in the basic assumptions of higher education.

As the private sector becomes more competitive, students/customers will have more choice regarding whether to leave or to stay in an educational institution when an issue arises. To avoid students/customers from exiting the institution Hirschman (1970) as cited by Levin & Belfield (2006) recommends that institutions provide mechanisms which allow the voice of the students/customers to be heard and by which feedback might be obtained on possibly resolving the situation. Such actions might help in preventing the loss of students/customers.

Family-Owned Institutions and Internal Governance

Institutional governance is also affected by family ownership and management. Family firms are often driven by their own dynamics and have nuances which distinguish them from non-family firms. I define 'family firms' for the purpose of this study as being institutions which are private, family-owned and managed (Chua, Chrisman & Sharma, 1999). Family governance requires that family interests be integrated into the formal business model in a way that reflects the occupational, family and shareholding roles of the family members themselves. Each family business model is unique and constantly evolving in response to changes in its various components. Unlike non-family businesses, special structures of governance must be created to ensure the sustainability of the family firm, in the light of the stark statistics that fewer than 5% of family firms make it to the 4th generation (IFC, 2011).

With regard to governance, family firms possess unique bundles and combinations of human, and human–relational resources, or 'familiness', which when managed purposefully, result in superior performance over non-family firms (Habbershon, Williams & MacMillan, 2003). 2003). Sirmon and Hitt (2003) assert that governance of family firms is enhanced by the strategic manner in which families invest: their unique learned knowledge and skills, loyalty, long-term vision, motivation and family-commerce connections in their business institutions. Interestingly, a Case Study research by Irava and Moores (2010), showed mixed results. While it supported the value adding potential of "familiness", it also demonstrated that it was possible for family members to abuse their entrenched position and negatively affect the well-being of the firm. Notwithstanding their advantages, Carr and Hmieleski (2015) posit that governance in family firms might become vulnerable to conflicts which arise from the difficulty of reconciling family and firm roles as cited by Steier, Chrisman and Chua (2015).

Below, I explore the historical models of governance which existed in the colonial and postcolonial periods in Trinidad and Tobago.

Educational Governance in the Colonial Period

As discussed in Chapter 2, colonial models of educational governance in the Caribbean were directly imported from Britain. These models of governance were implemented in the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA) in Trinidad and Tobago and in the University College of the West Indies (UCWI) in Mona, Jamaica (Cobley, 2000). There were several implications of the colonial governance model on higher education in the British West Indies with regard to access, equity and curricular relevance. Programmes conformed closely to British curricula in

an effort to ensure equivalence in programmes. In addition, in its early years, the matriculation standards for the UCWI were excessively stringent in that they denied access to most students even when they met the entry requirements (Howe 2000).

Educational Governance in the Postcolonial Period

In the postcolonial period, educational models of governance reflected the influence of the State, academia and the market. With regard to the State-Centred model, the State is largely responsible for appointing the Boards of management, for funding and for institutional direction. In Trinidad and Tobago, although the State is responsible for both a substantial portion of the funding and the appointment of the Board of Directors/Governors, the latter is responsible for the strategic direction of these institution (MTEST, 2015). State-owned educational institutions, such as the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), COSTAATT and MIC-IT, have been incorporated as non-profit institutions to fulfil the national objective of expanding tertiary education.

A second model is the Self-Rule Model in which the institution has administrative autonomy to conduct its own academic affairs. This model is the basis of governance in traditional institutions, which are free to operate without political or business interference (Hanna, 2000) and which have control over their own curriculum. Thus, these institutions do not necessarily have to align their programmes to national goals and policies. However, where State funding is required, this freedom may be restricted by legislative and funding directives, as well as by some form of State supervision. This governance model is similar to that practised by UWI and by Church-aligned institutions, such as the University of the Southern Caribbean. Such models of traditional governance are however coming under siege when faced with the onslaught of institutions that follow the third model of governance. This is the Market-Oriented model which responds to the 'invisible hand' of market forces. Leslie and Slaughter (1999) as cited by Naidoo, Shankar and Ekant (2011, p. 3-4) contend that the rise of market-oriented higher education "is part of a global trend away from the discourses, based on the "social compact", which evolved between higher education, the state and society over the last century". These changing discourses hold that the public higher education systems have become too large and complex for governments to fund on their own and that market competition within and between universities will create more efficient and effective institutions. The third assumption asserts that management principles derived from the private sector, in terms of monitoring and measurement, will enhance higher education functioning. In Trinidad and Tobago. While the

PFPs operate on the Market-Oriented model, some of its features are being adopted by publicly supported institutions as well.

3.3.3 Quality and Quality Assurance in Higher Education

In this section, I examine the nature of "Quality" and "Quality Assurance" at the tertiary level inclusive of s reference to TVET institutions. The concept of "Quality" in higher education is a challenging one which lacks a consensus in terms of its definition. The difficulty lies in its multidimensional nature and the variety of stakeholder perspectives from which it may be viewed. Stakeholders may include training providers and funding agencies, users of the service (students), users of the output of the institutions (employers) and lastly, employees of the institutions (academics and lecturers). Perceptions of the quality of an organisation might vary. For example, from the students' viewpoint, it might be based on the reputation of the institution while from the employers' perspective, it might rest on the ability of the graduates to perform appropriately in the work place (Schindler et al., 2015).

Given the variety of possible stakeholder views on quality as described above, it is apposite that the concept be interrogated with respect to its relationship to The College. In its efforts to survive, the perceptions of students whom it wishes to attract are important. Similarly, from the perspective of the qualifications' providers as well as from the regulatory agencies, The College must meet certain quality standards if it wishes to be allowed to remain in business.

Finally and perhaps most significantly, potential employers as users of the students' skills must be convinced of the institution's quality. The concept of Quality may be broadly or narrowly defined, or expressed in a static or dynamic fashion. The nature of the definition of quality chosen will have implications for the Quality Assurance system selected. Harvey and Williams (2010) cautioned that the purpose and the context of quality should always be considered. They asserted that in some countries where Quality Assurance systems were being newly implemented, both the interpretation of quality and the system itself, had simply been transferred from other countries, particularly from those of North-Western Europe. The editorial not surprisingly noted that very little variation existed among the Quality Assurance systems of many countries with vastly different contexts.

Using the definition of the European University Association, Perkins (2015, p. 1) refers to Quality Assurance as a "set of procedures adopted by higher education institutions, national education systems and international agencies through which quality is maintained and enhanced". Whereas Perkins' definition focuses on prescriptive and functional aspects, Morris (2015) sees Quality Assurance simply as a guarantee of high standards to stakeholders without explaining how such a conclusion might be determined. To be effective, Quality Assurance systems need to be relevant, accountable, transparent and accessible (Harvey and Williams, 2010). Morris (2015) sees Quality Assurance as indispensable in the provision of quality education, and in particular, to TVET which, according to Navaratnam and O'Connor (1993), is receiving increased public scrutiny because of the recognition of its potential for generating sustainable development. He further argues that Quality Assurance is necessary to facilitate transfers of students between institutions, as well as to provide information to funding organizations which might wish to justify their expenditure. Morris asserts that the Quality Assurance model for TVET must be dynamic, in keeping with the changing trends, and that it must adhere to both internal and external standards such as those laid down by national organisations.

Dunn-Pierre (2015) shares a similar perspective as she refers to Quality in TVET as maintaining standards of best practice which are determined by "quality assurance experts, educators and industry practitioners" (p. 134). These standards might apply at different levels: 1) national and Caribbean vocational levels; 2) occupational standards or 3) the standards of trading institutions and training providers. According to Dunn-Pierre (ibid.) however, adherence to standards is not sufficient to ensure continuous improvement. Self-evaluations, planning for development and most significantly, being part of a robust Quality Assurance system led by CANTA are necessary. She sees a direct link between improvements in Quality, the perceptions of TVET and its contribution to national development. Therefore, Quality Assurance is a potent tool to improve both the effectiveness and the image of TVET (Dunn-Pierre, 2015).

3.4 The Micro Section

The following section examines: the concept of change, the assumptions upon which it is based and the contexts in which it can be successful. Its multidimensional nature requires a thorough understanding of the dynamics of the environment in which it is to occur.

3.4.1 The Concept of Change

Connolly and Seymour (2015, p. 2) define Change Theory as a "predictive assumption about the relationship between desired changes and the actions that may produce these changes". This definition is problematic because it fails to consider the importance of context and the bases of assumptions which might be unrealistic, vague and narrow. Such assumptions can reduce the credibility of the predictions in terms of their sequencing, scalability or presumptive relationships among actions, processes and outcomes (Weiss, 1995). Change can be affected by: one, the appropriateness of the agent initiating change; two, the context within which the change is situated and three, the complexity of the change itself.

Change is likely to be transitory or unsuccessful where the action to initiate change is not appropriate to the circumstances or where contextual assumptions are false. Neo –colonialist hegemony has for example, resulted in the imposition of western theories and paradigms on education systems   in developing countries. Given the differences in *context,* it cannot be assumed that these will work successfully when applied to non-western postcolonial societies (Sardar, 1999; Fullan, 2006). Further, attempts by the multilateral institutions, or even by the governments of developing countries, to change or reform education by imposing western style policies may be problematic because of *perceptions* that they are superficial, disrespectful or undemocratic. Such perceptions might occur because of the power imbalance between the dominant foreign institutions and the developing countries (Steiner-Khamsi, 2012).

Change may fail when it is based on faulty assumptions or when there is resistance because the change is not desired or well understood (Fullan, 1994). It is noteworthy for example, that former colonies often choose to continue certain colonial educational practices instead of changing to indigenous alternatives. This might occur where local educational elites exert a type of Gramscian hegemony and choose to entrench colonial systems of curricula and certification.

Change might also fail because it presents a threat to an entrenched power base or to those with core competencies and skills. Fullan (1994) goes further by highlighting other factors that can cause resistance, such as discouragement of stakeholders based on the lengthy duration of the process (a factor which might irritate those pressing for "quick fixes"). Alternatively, failure can occur if it is felt that the change is too fast (Hargreaves, 2005). Finally, resistance might occur where a significant cultural adjustment is required (Fullan, 2006).

Apart from resistance, other factors can stymie change. According to James (2010), these might include a lack of power or motivation by those responsible for making the change, particularly when they reside outside of the institution. These problems are compounded by additional factors as well such as a lack of information about the changes, or even shortcomings of the leadership which might itself lack clarity regarding the true nature of the change (Fullan, 2006).

Conditions for Successful Change

An understanding of the context within which the change is taking place is also critical to the achievement of successful outcomes. A deep knowledge of the dynamics of the organisation (Fullan 2006), as for example the micropolitics, within the governance structures, can affect the outcome of the change (Hargreaves, 2005). The dynamics of the micropolitics become activated where individuals and groups overtly or subtly use their influence and power to achieve their goals and particularly during periods of transition, these can have a fundamental effect on change outcomes (Blasé, 2005).

According to Hargreaves (2005), the context of educational change can be complex and beset by dilemmas. For example, it might be characterised by forces pushing for change and others pressing for the continuation of past practices. Darling-Hammond (2005) speaks of the need for balance in these circumstances and for a consideration of the current realities. These include the recognition that: educational success is increasingly important to individuals, knowledge has expanded exponentially and there is the need to cater to an increasingly diverse population.

The actual outcomes of change do not always reflect those that were envisaged by the *designers* of the policy because policy *implementers* reinvent the policy at every level according to their knowledge, beliefs, values and motivations. In such circumstances, Darling Hammond (2005) asserts the need for a transformative curriculum, one which seeks to *develop capacity* rather than to *design controls*. This shift from one mode to another is a recognition of the gap between policy making and policy implementation and what she (ibid. p. 367) refers to (citing Richard Elmore (1983)) as "the power of the bottom over the top". According to her, successful educational transformation requires the following: total overall commitment and widespread engagement by all stakeholders, coherence in policy changes and an external balance between external authority and institutional autonomy. These requirements for successful change broadly reflect those suggested by Fullan (2006) who, in addition, suggested that stakeholders engage in reflexive thinking and practise flexible persistence (Fullan, 2006).

The Nexus between Change and Leadership

Wiggins and McTighe (2007) identify leadership and feedback as critical factors for sustainable change, particularly when underpinned by clear, inspiring and actionable objectives. They (ibid.) view the nexus between leadership and change from a functionalist perspective, whereby leadership displays six main competencies including collaboration, influence, delivery of results, commercial awareness, and the anticipation and evaluation of long-term trends. Other perspectives are more people-oriented and pertain to concepts that relate to: values, caring, vision, systemic understanding and inclusiveness. Other perspectives focus on the willingness to innovate. With reference to the classroom, Bristol (2012) asserts the need for reflection on the legacies of the plantation in order to eliminate hegemonic patterns of leadership. Using the classifications of Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999), Ramsdale (2000) adds another dimension of leadership by underscoring the importance of style. She (ibid.) lists some of these styles as: transformational, moral and instructional.

In summary therefore, change is a complex, multidimensional concept which requires a thorough understanding of the dynamics of the environment in which it is to occur. This is necessary in order to ensure congruence between its context and its objectives. Successful sustainable change requires the application of appropriate models which are based on relevant historical, social and cultural contexts (Weiss, 1995). In other words, change is more than the application of appropriate leadership styles; it is also about a strategic interrogation of the environment and the *willingness* to innovate and adopt culturally appropriate models. Change also demands a clarity of vision, a fundamental understanding of context and a willingness to both innovate and collaborate. Finally, leadership for sustainable and transformational change in postcolonial contexts, requires reflection on the legacies of the plantation system and a commitment to implement socially and culturally relevant structures and systems.

Community change can lie along a spectrum of transformation, from Freire's (1968) radical social change or "conscientization" on one hand, to one with simpler objectives such as the reduction of neighbourhood crime by community groups. Freire (ibid.) envisioned a process of change by which participants in learning/ teaching environments would develop a critical understanding of their own oppression, through processes of reflection and dialogue.

3.4.2 The Concept of Social and Cultural Relevance

For the purpose of this study, I define "social and cultural relevance" as a dynamic, aspirational construct which propels us as Caribbean people toward perceptions and behaviours in which we interpret our existence from a postcolonial Caribbean perspective. Such a perspective locates us at the centre of Caribbean discourse (Reviere, 2002; Nettleford, 2002) and compels us to disrupt all other narratives that seek to define and identify us. It therefore rejects any ontological or epistemic orientation that attempts to "other" or marginalise us. I therefore take "relevance" to mean any experience that applies to us or any context in which we find ourselves.

The concept of "Cultural Relevance" has been associated since the early 1990s with Ladson-Billings (2014, p. 75) whose pedagogical approach to teaching stressed the acquisition of academic and cultural competence as well as of critical consciousness. As a cultural anthropologist, she views culture, as "an amalgamation of human activity, production, thought, and belief systems". She cautions against using cultural devices in a superficial or voyeuristic way as a veneer with which to attract attention from students or others. Instead, she recommends a more authentic engagement with culture to prevent falling back into the old "hegemonic hierarchical structures" (ibid. p. 82).

In 1997 at a meeting of the Heads of Government for CARICOM, the notion of the **"Ideal Caribbean Person"** was formally broached with implicit expectations about what Caribbean education systems at all levels should aim to achieve. According to this notion, the role of education was to create citizens who would be productive, well-rounded and in possession of the values needed for living harmoniously in a civil and democratic society. Such qualities, it was implied would assist "the Ideal Caribbean Person" to integrate in the new global environment while simultaneously maintaining their Caribbean identity. However, does this notion of the "Ideal Caribbean Person" sufficiently underpin an education that is *socially and culturally relevant?* This question is further examined below.

The core of the definition of "social and cultural relevance" as used above, is self –identification and self-determination. It follows therefore, that any educational system which attempts to be socially and culturally relevant would have to be undergirded by an anti-colonial and decolonising orientation.

Eric Williams used public lectures at the 'University of Woodford Square' to awaken his listeners to the possibility of a new democratic society that could emerge from a radical educational system based on an understanding of the national, regional and global realities (Lavia, 2012). Dei (2006, p. 2) defines the term "anti-colonial" to mean "an approach to theorizing colonial and re-colonial relations and the implications of imperial structures on the processes of knowledge production and validation, the understanding of indigeneity and the pursuit of agency, resistance and subjective politics". While the concept of "anti-colonialism" has some overlap with "postcolonialism", Dei's emphasis on "agency" and the implicit sense of continuing resistance distinguishes the former concept from the latter. It is in this sense therefore that the concept of "anti-colonialism" resonates with that of "social and cultural relevance".

How might higher education in Trinidad and Tobago foster relevant structures and systems? Relevance arises from the social and cultural context and may thus be related to the concept of "Indigenisation". Smith's (2007) approach to indigenising research can usefully be applied to making education more relevant. She asserts that there are two dimensions to the process of indigenisation; the first being the "centring of landscapes, images, languages, themes, metaphors and stories in the indigenous world ….and the second, the prioritizing of the rights, the value codes and the bodies of knowledge of indigenous peoples to counter the negative connotations associated with their culture" (ibid. p. 146). The colonial legacies of education have imbued learning with Eurocentric imagery and philosophies and elevated them at the expense of that which is indigenous. Thus, Smith's approach attempts to redress this distortion and restore an authenticity to the research process.

Reviere (2002) offers another approach to relevance, that of "Afrocentrism". This approach relies on the philosophy of Molefi Asante (1990) and despite the prefix of "Afro", the term is one of inclusivity and general applicability. Afrocentrism "includes principles of inclusivity, culture specificity, critical awareness, committedness and political awareness" (ibid. p. 71). This approach holds that all individuals and groups have a centre from which they operate and which they themselves must define. Reviere states that self-definition requires reflection as well as the excavation of individual, group values and assumptions that have been deeply buried by the European colonial experience. Such activities she maintains, will allow for a broad-based set of Caribbean-centred values which will influence the ontological and epistemological approach of Caribbean people to education. The principles upon which Reviere's work is

based, thus overlap with those of Ladson-Billings whose approach also focuses on inclusion, equity and diversity (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

An educational system designed to instil the attributes of the "Ideal Caribbean Person", as outlined above, needs to be grounded in both an anti-colonial focus that will allow for a confrontation of colonial legacies and a system which allows for the inculcation of attitudes, values and competencies that place the Caribbean people at the centre of any discourse. The work of both Smith (2007) and Reviere (2002) offer useful approaches toward instilling relevance in educational structures. Nonetheless, perhaps the most significant impediment regarding the successful implementation of these approaches is a hostile neocolonial environment that is encumbered on one hand, by the agendas of multilateral agencies and on the other, by the colonial mind-sets of local governing elites.

3.4.3 Summary

The discussion above, is related to the concept of social and cultural relevance. Using the work of Smith (2007), Ladson-Billings (2014) and Reviere (2002), I explained two approaches toward achieving relevance, namely through processes of 'indigenisation' and "Afrocentrism". Further, I expressed the need for an anti-colonial grounding of the concept of social and cultural relevance because it is   embedded with a sense of agency and also of continuing resistance.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Reflections

Researcher 2019

On my use of Auto-ethnography:

Of all the chapters I have engaged with, this was the chapter which affected me the most. It cause me to"go brave". Having always been a very private person, I resisted using this Methodology, for fear of exposing my feelings to public scrutiny or of being accused of self-indulgence or narcissism. Nevertheless,   Ellis and Bochner (2000) gave me a different perspective. Their reference to the genre's "multiple layers of consciousness" which had the ability to connect "the personal to the cultural" made me recognize the wider relevance of my own multi-layered levels of involvement in the study. It also made me understand that perhaps by being in this position I might be able to provide insights that could be of use to someone else.

So… I took the plunge.

Below, I share a few excerpts of my journey:

Five years after I had started my dissertation, (having neatly packed away my research notes, textbooks and flash drive in a drawer marked 'To do'), I returned to my studies. This return was traumatic, accompanied as it was by feelings of being overwhelmed at having to start all over again and by feelings of panic, given the looming deadline. I had feelings of ambivalence, in wanting to complete what I had started some years before but at the same time, yearning to get my life back on track. I realized that completing this dissertation would send a loud signal to my psyche that I had emerged from this transition a stronger and more resilient person. At the same time, I experienced a niggling discontent with the focus of my research after so many years, but could not quite identify the reason. This uncertainty caused me to make several changes to my topic, which at that time, focussed on stakeholders' views of particular aspects of The College. After a period of reflection, it also dawned on me that I had not included my voice or my experiences in the study as it was then structured, hence my decision to include an autoethnographic aspect.

Reflections

Researcher 2017

On my Use of a Decolonizing Methodology

I muse at the irony of my attempt at employing a Decolonising Agenda, when I am myself caught in a critical contradiction, wherein as principal of an institution that seeks to be socially and culturally relevant, I simultaneously perpetuate closer ties with our former colonial masters through the promotion of foreign training and certification at The College. This practice   entrenches a system of social reproduction and colonial hegemony by prolonging foreign influence and control over domestic institutions.

4.2 Introduction

Principal, Employer, Mother, Managing Director and Researcher. I am inextricably embedded in my research project.

I am a participant observer with multiple and sometimes conflicting identities, a position which, while fecund with possibility, is also fraught with danger. As an Insider, I have privileged access, an access that has both positive and negative implications. Such access is positive because I can acquire information relatively easily, but negative also because of its potential to cause harm both to the respondents and to myself. This research is based on a qualitative approach, and uses a Case Study with an Autoethnographic turn, in a combined methodology that will allow me to present a multiplicity of viewpoints including my own. I also rely on documentary sources from the Ministry of Education as well as from The College itself. Using an interpretivist paradigm, I will attempt to elicit social meanings from the accounts of the lived experiences of stakeholders, who include faculty, students, family members of the founder, business consultants and a potential business associate.

 Chapter 4 is divided into a further 5 after the Introduction.

- Definitions and Philosophical Underpinnings of the Research
- Positionality
- Decolonizing Agenda, Insider Research and Reflexivity

- Justification for Choice of Case Study and Auto-ethnographic turn.
- Data Collection, Data Analysis and Ethical Concerns.

4.2.1 Definitions and Philosophical Underpinnings of the Research

Definition of Methodology

I use the following definition of "Methodology", because its multifaceted nature, encompasses much of the discussion that follows. Research methodology refers "to the theory of getting knowledge, to the consideration of the best ways, methods or procedures, by which data that will provide the evidence basis for the construction of knowledge about whatever it is that is being researched, is obtained" (Opie, Sikes, Hyatt, Scaife, Bathmaker and Pomerantz, 2004, n.p.)

The Philosophical Underpinnings of the Research

Acknowledging that research is neither neutral nor value free (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Greenbank, 2003; Ferrero, 2005; Rizvi, 2009), I recognise the need to examine my own underlying "philosophical plumbing" as Watson (2005, n.p.) advises researchers to do. My research is subjective. It is based on an ontological position that sees knowledge as personal and experiential, and is impacted by both my reflexive practice and by my positionality. In other words, like Seale (1999, p. 25) as cited by Watson (2005, n.p), I see research as a "craft skill" that is attached to a philosophical basis.

The Constructivist Paradigm

According to Guba (1990) as cited by Denzin and Lincoln (2005, page 22), a paradigm is a "basic set of beliefs that guides action". It therefore reflects the researcher's perceptions of: (i), the nature of "reality"; (ii) the way the reality is accessed and (iii), the way that the reality is interpreted and communicated. I have chosen to use a constructivist paradigm for three reasons.

First, the ontological position of Constructivism dovetails neatly into my study because it sees knowledge as arising from the subjective understanding of individuals in a personal, experiential and phenomenological way. Similarly, my study also relies on the perceptions of

the experiences of stakeholders of this family owned and managed, private-for-profit technical institute. These experiences take place within a natural rather than a hypothetical setting and generate in-depth data in formats that are written and spoken rather than numerical. Such a format allows for greater insight into nuances that colour and contextualize the participants' words.

Second, constructivism is appropriate for my study because its interpretivist epistemological stance allows for a setting, where Smyth and Holian (2008, p.35) find that "different constructions are brought into juxtaposition in a dialectical context", and where meaning is negotiated. In other words, "reality" is the outcome of the dialogic interaction of both researcher and participant, an interaction which blurs the lines between ontology and epistemology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Third, constructivist researchers can choose from a variety of methodologies and I have chosen to combine both an Auto-ethnography and a Case Study. Axiologically, ethics are intrinsic to Constructivist research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Sikes, 2004) because the values of both the researcher and the respondent/s are integral to the success of the process. The intimacy of the relationship, requires transparency and trust, hence researchers are expected to be reflexive and to be open about their own biases. In Section 2 below, I attempt to lay bare my own biases through a statement of my own Positionality.

4.3 Positionality

 In this section I outline the values, both personal and political, that I bring to the research and the ethical considerations upon which the study is based. First, from a personal perspective I am an Afro-Caribbean woman from a middle-class background who grew up in the 1950s and 1960s in a home and school environment that revered everything that was English. My outlook was considerably shaken when I attended university during the period known as, the "Black Power Revolution" and where I was exposed to anti- colonial sentiment for the first time. The ideas discussed then, have stayed with me and have made me more culturally aware and appreciative of my West Indian background.

Second, as the widow of the founder, the mother of directors, principal, managing director and shareholder of The College, my first instinct is to protect my family and the institution from any potential embarrassment or other harm. Nevertheless, in my role as a researcher with "multiple identities", I am mindful of Drake and Heath's (2008, p. 140), caution about "multiple integrities" and the conflicts of loyalty which these beget.

Third, I have to admit to moments of ambivalence in my own transition from a positivist position (after more than three decades of teaching Positive Economics to sixth formers), to a more normative and post-structuralist stance, arising from my exposure to this latter philosophy during the Doctorate of Education programme of Sheffield University.

The three aspects of positionality outlined above, are based on a personal perspective, while the fourth aspect of positionality, and is political. In this regard, I see the lopsided power relations inherent in my multiple and sometimes conflicting roles in both The College and the research process as a political issue. Acknowledging this reality requires that I pay particular attention toward ensuring that my interactions allow participants to feel "safe" to express themselves authentically. This is why I have chosen to employ a "Decolonizing" approach to this work. Giving voice to the perspectives of research participants can lead to a reduction of the power gap between researcher and participant.

4.4 Decolonizing Agenda, Insider Research and Reflexivity

Definition of a Decolonising Agenda

Decolonising research is not simply about challenging traditional assumptions about research, it is rather the adoption of a purposeful research agenda that transforms the deep underlying structures and taken-for-granted ways of organizing, conducting and disseminating research (Smith, 2005, p. 88).

I define a Decolonizing Agenda as a mode of enquiry that can be used to expose and challenge entrenched and oppressive social relationships wherever and whenever they are found. I apply Dei's (2006, p. 7) interpretation of "colonizing" in Decolonizing Agenda as any relationship that is "dominating and imposing" and not simply as "foreign and alien." Further, I extrapolate from this to add that "dominating and imposing" relationships are not always overt, but may in

fact be subtle, hidden or taken for granted. Hales (2006) cites Memmi (1969) and Fine (1994) to underscore her contention that all social relationships, including the one between the researcher and the informants in a research project, can be oppressive. This relationship between the researcher and the informants, she emphasises, is made worse when the research is conducted among groups that are less economically, socially or politically powerful than that of the researcher. Such an observation is applicable in my research relationships.

A Decolonizing Agenda is based on the following principles. First, it is non-exploitative which requires me to be both reflective and reflexive in my research practice to avoid my being abusive to participants. Second, it is liberatory in the sense that it provides an opportunity for the marginalized to have a voice. Third, as Smith (2005) asserts, it seeks to disrupt practices of oppression. Further, such research practice seeks to be: culturally sensitive and appropriate, culturally relevant, ethical, and significantly, characterized by mutual respect and reciprocity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Bishop, 2005; Smith, 2007).

Insider Research

Justification of Choice of Insider Research

Brannick and Coghlan (2007, p. 59) contend that "Insider Research" is undertaken by "complete members of organizational systems in and on their own organizations". In undertaking to study an organization of which I am so much a part as principal, employer, mother, managing director, researcher and business woman, I was warned at the outset that my research enquiry was likely to be "messy". Nevertheless, Insider Research made sense to me because I had access, pre - understandings and pre - knowledge of The College. Below, Smyth and Holian (2008, p. 37) quote Robson's (1993) outline of the benefits of Insider Research:

You don't have to travel far. Generally you will have an intimate knowledge of the context of the study, not only as it is at present, but in a historical or developmental perspective. You should know the politics of the institution, not only of the formal hierarchy but also how it "really works" (or at least an unexamined common sense view of this). You will know how best to approach people. You should have "street credibility" as someone who will understand what the job entails, and what its stresses and strains are. In general, you will already have in your head a great deal of information which it takes an outsider a long time to acquire.

Problems of Insider Research

Insider Research has a number of disadvantages which relate primarily to issues surrounding working relationships, confidentiality, and having to live with the consequences of one's mistakes (Robson, 1993). In my Insider role, I am aware of the asymmetry of power relations, often in my favour, (but not totally so), which while giving me access to personnel and documentation, also preclude my entry into other more informal networks of communication. In other words, access to the research site might not necessarily yield the expected information, because as Sikes and Potts (2008, p. 7) note, with reference to Adler's (2004) observation, researchers "are always insiders in some contexts and outsiders in other situations".

A second concern of my "Insiderness" arises from my role duality. Participants might be apprehensive about being truthful with me their employer, if their information might be sensitive or cause damage to themselves or others. It can also engender emotions of fear, love, mistrust and suspicion which can colour participants' responses (Portelli, 2008). Other tensions might also occur if I unearthed sensitive or unpalatable information, or questioned long standing arrangements (Smyth and Holian, 2008).Third, even the advantages expressed by Robson (1993) above might themselves come with problematic consequences. Citing Brannick and Coghlan (2007), Smyth and Holian (2008) contend that one such problem is being too close to the research. Having some pre-knowledge of the phenomenon for example, could lead to preconceptions and premature conclusions being reached before the completion of the research project. (Smyth and Holian, 2008; Drake and Heath, 2008).

Finally, it must be recognized, that Insider Researchers who have multiple identities, can jeopardize the research outcomes.   Drake and Heath (2008, p.140) express concern that "multiple identities" can generate "multiple integrities" in the form of conflicting loyalties to the research project as well as to the sites of the other "identities." It is therefore important to be transparent and open to avoid the appearance of deceit about the real motivation behind the research (Sikes, 2008).

Researcher Reflexivity

As an Insider Researcher with multiple roles, it is incumbent upon me to reflect on how I inhabit each role and how each of these is related to the other, whether in comity or in conflict. I realize that I myself can have a distorting effect on my data collection efforts as for example in conducting interviews or in my data interpretation. These concerns occur because the nature of

qualitative research is such that there is no deliberate separation between the researcher and who or what is being researched (Yates, 2005). In the paragraphs below I discuss how a reflexive stance can moderate the subjectivity of the research as well as expand the discussion by noting that reflexivity is possible for both researcher and respondent.

Subjectivity, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) is an inherent aspect of qualitative research, a reality which prompts Tang (2000, p.110) to recommend that researcher credibility be established and reinforced by reviewing fieldwork, against issues related to what she refers to as the "human –as –instrument". While conducting interviews for example, I was at pains to put my respondents at ease, because I was always conscious of the power disparity in our relationship. Such reflection and reflexion also shed light on how those factors might impact or shape his or her interpretations and attributions of meaning to the data (Cresswell, 2009; Tang, 2000; Dickson, 2008). An awareness of the need for continuous reflexion was ever present in my mind, prompting me to review all steps of my research frequently to ensure that I was intimately familiar with it at all stages as well as with my own reactions. Notwithstanding this, reflexion goes beyond my being aware of my potential for influence, it also requires me to discern underlying assumptions which I might hold. Babbie (2004) extends the concept of reflexivity to participants as well as to the researcher, stressing that factors such as the research setting, might affect both parties to the encounter

4.5 Choice of Methodology

In selecting an appropriate methodology for my area of research, I considered what was both practical and achievable and these two criteria helped me to narrow my choice to a Case Study with an Auto-ethnographic turn. Adding the latter I felt would enrich the study by allowing my voice as both a researcher and a participant to be heard.

Autoethnography

Reed-Danahay (1997), defines Auto-ethnography "as a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context" whereas, Ellis and Bochner (2000) offer a more textured definition of the methodology as *"an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural".* Sikes (2009, p. 176) offers yet a third definition which describes the activities involved in the methodology as

"focussing on and studying aspects of one's own experience… an activity which can teach us about society, through the reflexive examination of our own life experiences".

The *significant* characteristic of this genre then, is that it reflects a deeply personal experience that can be related to a wider social context. As a participant observer, I have chosen to use Auto-ethnographic insertions in the form of "*Reflections"* throughout my study to explain my perceptions and perspectives of incidents, circumstances and conditions at various times, I confess to being ambivalent about sharing deeply emotional experiences; an ambivalence that is related to my apprehension about public scrutiny and the resultant feelings of vulnerability. I am also mindful of the criticisms of this genre, namely that Autoethnography might be criticised as being "self-indulgent, solipsistic and narcissistic" (Etherington, 2004, p. 141**).**

Case Study

Stake (2005, p. 443) contends that a "Case Study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied". I have an intrinsic interest in this case for personal reasons, as I have explained in my Rationales in Chapter 1. As Stake (2005) asserts, such motivations attract researchers seeking to understand what is important about the case and its context. Case Studies are holistic and can provide rich, vivid data about the entity in authentic settings. I have chosen a qualitative approach to this Case Study for three reasons. First, because such approaches stress the importance of context, second, they capture complexity by allowing for a multiplicity of viewpoints relating to the study (Neuman, 2006) and third, they allow for an interpretivist epistemology and a constructivist ontology (Bryman, 2008).

Definitions and Characteristics of a Case Study

In the section below, I identify some of the characteristics associated with Case Studies, by referring to Bassey (1999) and others.

According to Bassey (1999), an educational Case Study is defined as an empirical enquiry that has several characteristics. Significantly, it relates to education and is *bound* by space and time (i.e. a singularity) and also takes place mainly in a natural setting. It is useful in that it allows for significant exploration of the case while permitting the creation of both plausible explanations and an audit trail to allow for transparency.

Yin (2003), Stake (2005) and Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) also emphasize the importance of *boundedness*. According to Stake (2005), Case Study methodology is suitable for research that is "organic, systemic, and heavy with purpose and self" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Both Stake (2005) and Yin (2003) concur that the case should be of topical concern and contemporary.

In determining the applicability of a Case Study format for my research, I compared it to the criteria set out by Bassey (1999), Yin (2003) and Stake (2005) above and concluded that it was a good fit for three main reasons. First, it is *bounded* by space or location in that the study is focused on The College, an educational institution, and its struggles in Trinidad and Tobago. Second, it is *bounded* by time, namely the period between the years between 1997 and 2018. Third, the topic is significant because it shines a light on the private post-secondary/tertiary level educational sector of Trinidad and Tobago, of which relatively little is known. Although I used the criteria above to assess the applicability of a Case Study approach for my research, I accept the caution given by Rizvi (2009) about accepting and applying research concepts as if they have universally accepted meanings

4.6 Data Collection, Data Analysis and Ethical Concerns.

Data Collection

Yin (2003) recommends that Case Study data should come from multiple sources for purposes of triangulation. This study uses two forms of complementary data, documentary evidence and interviews of stakeholders of The College.

Documentary Evidence and Analysis

"Document Analysis" refers to a process by which documents are systematically reviewed and evaluated (Bowen, 2009). This analysis is often used for purposes of triangulation, to support other sources of data thus increasing its credibility. Its usefulness lies in its ability to offer background information and historical insight as well as to verify other information. It thus allows for the tracking of changes and developments. I have used it to present a context to the institution under study. Its other advantages are that it saves time, is cost effective and is readily available. Further, it is unobtrusive and non- reactive to the researcher's presence.

I have chosen to use documentary evidence to triangulate the evidence by supporting the findings from stakeholder interviews where necessary, and offering a framework to contextualize The College and its organizational structures and systems. The three official policy documents which I have selected indicate the GoRTT's overarching policies for the higher education sector. These policies have implications for the curriculum and governance of The College. I refer to the Government documents in Chapters 2 and 3 and describe them more fully in Chapter 5.

To analyse the documentary data, I loosely applied the tools of Grounded Theory. I first skimmed the documents to get a general idea of what they offered as well as to understand their purposes. Charmaz (2006) cautions against accepting documents as being neutral or accurate and recommends that their social and historical contexts be recognized. Following, Bowen's (2009.) recommendation, I re-read the text in a more focussed way and selected relevant passages which I placed into broad categories. These categories were further broken down according to their relevance thus allowing me to better understand particular circumstances. Interestingly this last process also allowed me to identify significant omissions in the data. For example, although the documents studied, related to the higher education sector in Trinidad and Tobago, (apart from a few references), relatively little mention was made of private institutions which comprise more than 95% of the institutions in the sector.

Interviews and Respondents

According to Fontana and Frey (2005, p. 696) "interviewing is not merely the neutral exchange of asking questions and getting answers", instead it is an observation that recognizes the "active" nature of the process, a process that requires preparation. Below I outline the steps which I used in preparation for my interviews.

I conducted two sets of interviews, the first included all eighteen respondents while the second comprised nine respondents and was conducted two and a half years after the first set. The second set of interviews was considered necessary as I wished to probe the responses of a small cross section of respondents more deeply in a few areas. This was important since the original focus of the research had changed over time, from an emphasis on curriculum and governance to one concerned with the roles of and issues facing The College.

- The Respondents

Respondents were drawn from the 5 main groups of stakeholders of The College and numbered 18 in total. They comprised the following groups: lecturers (5), students (5), and employees (2), consultants (3), family members (2) and a potential business associate (1).The stakeholders/respondents were purposively sampled for their knowledgeability and communication skills. Except for the students, I first contacted each respondent either by telephone or by face-to-face encounter. After explaining my reason for the research, I asked for their assistance in meeting with me for the purpose of an interview.

I used purposive sampling to select my student respondents because I required students from a variety of programmes who had been in The College for at least 1 year and who were deemed to be articulate. The condition of being in The College for at least one year meant that the students would have had a greater understanding and sense of the operations of the institution than those who would have entered only 3 to 6 months before. Five students were selected by the administrative staff on this basis. One student was female, as was one teacher. The list of informants may be found in Chapter 5.

Although this purposive method of selection was convenient and time-saving, I recognize that it might also have caused me to miss valuable insights and perceptions from other students who had not been selected, either because they were considered to be inarticulate or because they had been in The College for less than a year.

Interviews (First Set)

- Schedule

The following steps describe the interview schedule used in this study:

1) Informants were invited to participate in interviews as described above, approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to the interview.
2) Approximately 1 week before the start of the interviews, informants were sent an Interview Guide by e-mail, with a list of the types of questions that would be asked in the interview. This was done in order to make the best use of the limited time that would be available to us during the interview. I was aware however, that I ran the risk of not getting valuable extra information.
3) A Participant Consent Form was also sent at the same time as the Interview Guide. Respondents were once again reminded of the reason for the interview, its approximate

length of time as well were given the assurance that they could change their minds about participating with no consequential problems. Everyone was informed that they would receive typed copies of the Interview Questionnaire as well as of the Participant Consent Form at the interview itself.

4) The actual Interview took place for students and for one teacher after classes on Saturday afternoons. Interviews with other respondents occurred during the week at a time that was mutually convenient.

5) At the end of each interview, respondents were thanked and reminded that they could withdraw even at that or any time should they wish to do so.

6) Every respondent was thanked by e-mail over the following week.

- Setting

Aware as I was of the power differential between myself and the students, lecturers and employees, I felt it necessary to change the location of the interviews from The College to a more neutral location that would make the differences in power less marked. The majority of interviews with students, lecturers and employees took place at the nearby public library, although one interview with a teacher took place after hours at a nearby school playground when the library was unavailable. From my observation of the body language of my informants, especially lecturers, students and employees, this was a good idea because informants appeared to be more relaxed in these outside settings than if the interviews been conducted at The College. The other interviews with family members, consultants and the potential business associate, where I perceived the power differential to be less influenced by the setting of The College took place at my office. These interviews were face-to-face in a relaxed arrangement, rather than separated by my desk.

- Conduct

The interviews were tape-recorded and lasted approximately between 45 minutes to one hour and fifteen minutes. I met with each informant only once. The interviews were based on a semi-structured, open-ended format, which gave the interaction a sense of coherence while giving the informants a chance to express themselves in their own words. The questionnaire for family members, consultants and the potential business associate, while following the basic format of the others, included a few questions that were different but which I thought were more relevant to their stakeholder roles.

During the interviews, I listened carefully to what was being said, and at times, needed to probe further for a more complete meaning when I thought that ideas seemed incomplete. In one of the early interviews with a student, I succumbed to what Sikes (2008) warned about regarding losing my researcher identity, by donning my principal's identity, and explaining the reason behind a particular school policy. I became aware of my actions and was on the alert after that to prevent a reoccurrence of that behaviour in subsequent interviews.

Interviews (Second set)

- Schedule

Informants were invited to participate in a telephone interview a few days prior to the actual event. I spoke to each interviewee personally and set the date and time for the interview. I also explained my purpose and outlined a pre-interview guide of the basic nature of the open ended interview. Further, I thanked them for consenting and reminded them that they were free to withdraw at any time.

Every respondent was thanked again at the end of the interview.

- Setting

These interviews were conducted by telephone.

- Conduct

Each interview lasted approximately ten minutes. Given the nature of the open-ended semi-structured format of the interview, I tried to adopt what Converse and Schuman (1974) as cited by Fontana and Frey (2005, p. 702) refer to as "interested listening" and probed for more depth where answers appeared to be lacking specifics. This medium, lacked the completeness of face to face interactions where it would have been possible to use other cues such as body language to get information. I therefore needed to compensate for this, by listening keenly and asking participants to repeat their answers at times.

Data Analysis

Interviews: (First set)

The interviews were transcribed from the tape recorder by a paid transcriber as I felt that I did not have the time to perform the transcriptions myself. I recognize that this might have meant a loss of intimacy in terms of connecting the voices on the tape recorder to paper. Nevertheless, I read the transcripts many times over.

Interviews: (Second set)

In these interviews I made hand-written notes of what was spoken, asking where necessary that respondents repeat their comments. While participants did get animated at times particularly with regard to the discussion on recommendations, by and large, they tended to stay focused on the questions which I had very briefly indicated would be asked.

Having elicited copious data from interviews 1 and 2, I now loosely applied the tools of Grounded Theory to make sense of the data. A hallmark of Grounded Theory is that the researcher derives the analytical categories from the data itself and not from hypotheses or preconceived concepts (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 507-535).

I have divided the process of Data Analysis, into "three concurrent flows" Miles and Huberman (1994, pp. 10-12) of activity: first, data reduction, second, data display and third, conclusion drawing /verification. These processes formed the basis of my analysis. The concurrent nature of the flows meant that the analysis had a loop-like pattern as I had to go back and forth between the data and the question in a useful process that allowed me to discern different facets and levels of meaning.

With regard to the first "flow", data reduction, I made attempts to make the data more manageable so that it might be applied appropriately to the Research Questions. This meant that I had to read and re-read the entire scripts of the respondents frequently to discern broad themes and categories which to my mind fit the Research Questions. Themes are rarely precise and emerge, before, during and after data collection (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). Bryman (2008) contends that the process of breaking down, matching, grouping and contrasting themes allows for a general rather than a hard and fast understanding of what the informants mean. Such an approach allows for varying interpretations of the data and allows for the gathering of "rich data", thick with detailed accounts, narratives or observations of respondents' data (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 10-12).

The second "flow" is related to data display, which Miles & Huberman (1994, pp. 10-12) define as "an organized compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing". I categorized my findings in a chart which allowed me to get a visual understanding of the similarities and differences among the responses and allowed for constant comparison.

The third "flow", "conclusion drawing and verification", allowed me to step back and gaze critically at the analysed data and assess their implications for the research questions. Miles and Huberman (1994) stress the importance of validity with respect to the conclusions arrived at from analysis. To be valid, such conclusions should be: credible, defensible and believable and not mistaken for "flights of fancy" (ibid. pp. 10-12).

Ethical Considerations

This research is highly personal to both The College and me. It therefore behoves me to do all in my power to ensure that I protect it, my research and myself from any negative consequences of the research activity. Every study is different in terms of the ethical issues and situations which it generates, and requires its own unique solutions (Sikes and Potts, 2008) I discuss two possible areas below from which ethical conflicts might arise in this study The first situation lies with the circumstances surrounding the recruitment of respondents. For example, to what extent did the respondents feel coerced to participate in this study? In addressing this problem, I was at pains to adopt a casual manner and to explain why I needed their assistance in my study.

A second concern is based on Drake and Heath's (2008) caution about multiple and conflicting loyalties on the part of researchers with multiple roles. I have at least four loyalties to consider: my family members, who are dear to me; the business, which provides me with my living; the educational institute, in which resides my husband's legacy and fourth my loyalty to my research, which I want to conduct with integrity. A serious ethical consideration could therefore arise from conflict between any of those entities and adverse research findings. Resolving such an issue would require much soul searching.

In the preceding sections, I outlined some of my ethical concerns. To address these, I put in place four steps to ensure that this research project was ethically correct in both form and substance. First, I sought and received ethical clearance from the authorities at Sheffield University before embarking on this research. This clearance is included in Appendix 1. Second, full disclosure about the nature and purpose of the research was provided to all

informants who each signed a consent form attesting to having read and understood the nature of the research activity and their willingness to participate in the same. Third, prior to the start of each interview, I once again reviewed the purpose and proposed conduct of the research as well as reminded the respondents of the opportunity to withdraw should they want to do so. Finally, I used pseudonyms to protect the identities of the respondents of the study.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter I have explained my choice of both a qualitative methodology and a constructivist paradigm, and explained why these are apposite to the nature and form of my research. I also explained why I chose to undertake a Case Study with an Auto-ethnographic turn as methodological approaches capable of treating with the complexity of the case. The latter approach allowed me to include my own voice with those of the other stakeholders. The asymmetric nature of the power relationship in this Insider Research required that I outline first, my own Positionality, second, the necessity of adopting both a reflective and reflexive stance and third, my need to adopt a Decolonising Agenda. Finally, I described my data collection and data analysis strategies as well as the ethical considerations related to the study and my efforts to address these.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS - CURRICULUM

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 is divided into four parts. The first part is the Introduction which outlines the purpose of Chapters 5, 6 and 7. It includes the Research questions and introduces the sources of data from which the findings are extracted. These sources include a list and description of the official policy documents as well as a table showing the respondents and their profiles. The second part is concerned with the *Role* of The College while the third part pertains to the *Issues* which it faces. The fourth part is the Conclusion which ties the various aspects of the chapter together.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 bring me to the heart of my thesis for it is in these chapters that participants are given the opportunity to voice their perceptions and it is here that I as researcher/ participant am allowed to interact with these findings in a process of analysis and discussion. The concepts of: "curriculum", "governance", "quality" and "social and cultural relevance in higher education", are some of the means by which I interacted with stakeholders and various other sources in these chapters.

These three chapters attempt to answer the research questions which are posed below.

Chapter 5 relates to Question 1, Chapter 6 to Question 2 and Chapter 7 to Question 3.

5.2 Research Questions

The Main Research Question

How can we understand the social and cultural context of The College?

Subsidiary Research Questions

 What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses about its curriculum, contribute to an understanding of the role of and issues facing The College as it seeks to both sustain and transform itself into a more socially and culturally relevant institution?

1) What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses about institutional governance contribute to an understanding of the role of and issues facing The College as it seeks to both sustain and transform itself into a more socially and culturally relevant institution?

2) What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses imply about the social and cultural relevance of The College?

3) The evidence used in these chapters is extracted from both, the responses of stakeholders who participated in semi-structured, open ended interviews as well as from official policy documents. The documents used are indicated immediately below:

5.3 The Sources of Data

5.3.1 Documentary Data

1) *Official documents of the Ministry of Education*

- The Future of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, 2015-2025: A National Policy Framework (henceforth referred to as **MTEST, 2015)**
- Policy on Tertiary Education Technical Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning in Trinidad and Tobago (henceforth referred to as **MSTTE, 2010a**) and
- Draft Education Policy Paper: 2017-2022 (henceforth referred to as **MOE, n.d.**)

2) *Official documents of The College*

- Application to ACTT for Registration by The College, 2018 ☐ Miscellaneous letters and emails

5.3.2 Stakeholders' Responses

- These comprise responses of: students, lecturers, administrative staff and consultants as well as those of a potential partner and my personal recollections.

Official Documents of the Ministry of Education

According to Bell and Stevenson (2006), a policy may be conceptualized as a finished product or outcome, for example, in the form of a programme of action or as a set of guidelines to be used in the appropriate circumstances. Citing Taylor et al. (1997), Bell and Stevenson (2006) posit that a policy may also be perceived as a complex goal oriented process. Citing Kogan (1975), Bell and Stevenson (2006, p. 15) posit that a policy represents "operational statements of values – the authoritative allocation of values". Implicit in Kogan's assertion is the notion that policy is not neutral and that values lie at the heart of policies. Educational policies are no different and must therefore be interrogated with regard to the values which underlie policy statements about how education is perceived and who it is supposed to serve.

Document 1

The Future of Tertiary Education and Skills Training 2015-2025: A National Policy

Framework (MTEST, 2015)

This document was prepared by the Ministry of Education (formerly known as the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, MTEST) of Trinidad and Tobago in 2015 and fits into the context of the National Development Strategy 2016 to 2030 (Vision 2030). Its purpose is to "develop and further pave the way for the continuous growth and improvement of the higher educational sector" (MTEST, 2015, p. 2). It proposes to "guide the sector over the next 10 years to make it more cost efficient, driven by labour market needs, and geared towards linking higher education with industry through research and innovation" (ibid). According to the document, its contents are the outcomes of: national consultations, meetings with administrators from both private and public institutions as well as meetings with representatives of industry. The Framework provides a road map that is an overarching agenda of the intentions of the GoRTT with regard to the various steps necessary for the higher educational sector to contribute toward the attainment of "Developed Country" status by 2030.

Document 2

Policy on Tertiary Education Technical Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning in Trinidad and Tobago (MSTTE, 2010a)

This policy document lays out a number of initiatives which the MOE considers to be necessary for the higher education sector to contribute toward sustainable social and economic development. The document explains how these goals are to be achieved within an inclusive, equitable and quality focused structure. The development strategy rests on seven interconnected pillars, one of which concerns the creation of "*A More Diversified, Knowledge Intensive Economy Building on the Native Genius of Our People*" (MTEST, 2015, p. 2). Specifically, this document is focused on the management, governance and the operations of post-secondary/tertiary education, inclusive of TVET and lifelong learning. The policy document is highly descriptive and provides detailed explanations of how these objectives are to be achieved.

The document was published in 2010 and emerged from the cumulative efforts of professional educators and Ministry of Education officials.

Document 3

Draft Education Policy Paper: 2017-2022

The Ministry of Education has created the *Draft Education Policy Paper 2017-2022* as a five year guide to assist it in the development of education in Trinidad and Tobago. Its objective is to build the human resource base of the country in order to contribute to the goal of sustainable national development. It serves as a guide to the Ministry of Education with regard to implementing new methods of delivery in a changing educational and economic environment. TVET is given special consideration in view of the issues and challenges which are associated with that sector. The document is the outcome of national consultations, brainstorming and internal meetings with officials of the MOE and also external consultations.

Document 4

The Application for Registration Approval by The College to the ACTT 2018

Every tertiary institution is required to submit an application for registration approval to the ACTT whenever the period of its previous approval expires. The document used in this study therefore represents the Application for Approval by The College for the period 2018/2019 – 2020/2021. All post-secondary /tertiary institutions must be registered in accordance with Chapter 39:06 of the Laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Such registration provides

the assurance that the institution has met or exceeded the minimum standards of quality necessary for the provision of higher level education and training. Registration approval may be denied, extended or granted for durations ranging from between one and three years. The College has been granted three year approval periods on each of its four previous applications. Institutions are expected to provide narratives that explain their legal, organisational and governance structures pertaining to Quality Assurance, Grievance Procedures, Human and other Resources policies as well as those which concern Education and Monitoring. The narratives of the College were prepared by members of management with the assistance of the administrative staff. They provide data which contribute to an understanding of the role of and the issues which face The College.

Stakeholders' Responses and Personal Recollections

Stakeholders' responses represent the data that emerged from semi-structured interviews with a variety of stakeholders who included, students, lecturers, administrative staff, consultants and a potential business partner. This section also includes my personal recollections of interactions and observations based on my multiple roles of principal, employer, mother and director. The respondents and their roles are tabled below.

Chart 5.1   Profiles of the Respondents

RESPONDENT	BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Peter	Senior Lecturer - Contractor Has taught with the college for many years.
Ray	Senior Lecturer - Contractor Has taught with the college for many years.
Stanley	Senior Lecturer - Contractor Has taught with the college for many years.
William	Senior Lecturer –Contractor Has taught with the college for many years.
Tracey	Senior Lecturer - Contractor Has taught with the college for many years.
Fred	Consultant
Jake	Consultant
Wilma	Consultant
Christopher	Student
Nigel	Student
Marcus	Student
Cheryl	Student
Thomas	Student
Margaret	Senior Employee
Debbie	Senior Employee
Kathleen	Manager/Family member
Harry	Manager/Family member
David	Potential Business Associate
The Researcher	Principal, Employer, Mother, Director

5.4 Findings, Analysis and Discussion- Curriculum

Part 2: Question 1

What Do Official Policy Documents and Interviewees' Responses about Its Curriculum, Contribute to an Understanding of The Role of and Issues Facing The College as It Seeks

to Both Sustain and Transform Itself into a More Socially and Culturally Relevant Institution?

Part 2, which comprises findings, analysis and discussion is focussed on the role/s of The College.

5.4.1 Findings: The Role of The College

The College is a complex organisation, comprising education, corporate and family facets and is located in the post-secondary/tertiary educational sector of Trinidad and Tobago. It is currently facing a number of challenges as it attempts to sustain itself. The Section below is based on interviewees' responses and on official policy documents related to the curriculum. The findings and subsequent analysis and discussion about the *role* of The College rely on this data.

(i). Training Provider of Technical and Vocational Education

According to my analysis of interviewees' responses, participants in all categories, that is: students; lecturers, employees, family members, consultants and the potential business partner, perceived The College to be an educational institution. From the responses given also, an "educational institution" appeared to be an organization that provided training and certification. All respondents also noted that TVET was the curricular focus of The College. The majority of the programmes offered by the institution are provided by qualifications' providers such as CGIL, ILM and NEBOSH in the UK. Following is a summary of the findings regarding The College in its educational role.

According to the findings, all of the student respondents had enrolled at The College for educational reasons but with different objectives. Lecturers, students and employees were the most likely of all of the respondents, to indicate that such training provided individuals with the opportunity to gain employment or promotion particularly in the industrial sector of Trinidad and Tobago. In fact, several of the students indicated that this was the reason why they had enrolled at The College in the first place. According to Peter, who had lectured at The College for several years, *"it is about being qualified to make money"*, an observation that

one of Ray's students had expressed to him when he had said, *"Sir when we working in this field of engineering we are going to make a lot of money and I want to buy a big car and a big house and what not"*. Technician training is a career choice that is actively supported by parents of students registered in the institution, who according to William, a senior lecturer in Electrical Engineering, *"encourage especially the male students because that is where the money is, the oil industry"*.

According to the data, The College as an educational institution provided TVET programmes to students to satisfy a variety of their educational needs. For example, Cheryl who held several advanced qualifications in management and finance, wanted to add balance to her resume, while Wendell wished to prepare himself for further study. Christopher and Nigel, both students, alluded to their desire to improve their grasp of technical concepts to assist them in their occupational areas. According to Nigel, as a Project Supervisor in a technology company, *"I need to understand the plant operation; pumps, valves, temperature and pressure and controls because everything works with temperature and pressure…the topics that we are doing, I am using this every day at my job so it is relevant for me"*.

Interestingly, according to Marilyn, a senior administrative assistant who was responsible for student registrations, some of the students who enrolled at The College had indicated that they had done so at the behest of their employers. She stated that students needed to be certified so that the firms at which they were employed, might comply with the STOW (Safe to Work). Regulations. Without such compliance, firms stood to lose contracts and trade opportunities.

(ii). Contributor to the Industrial and National Development of Trinidad and Tobago

According to consultants Jake and Fred, the curriculum of The College was such, that the latter was capable of making a contribution to the industrial and national development of Trinidad and Tobago. Jake noted that the programmes were "relevant for our society" a position with which Tracey, a senior lecturer at The College and a former employee at a large Energy company concurred.

(iii). Provider of Certification

Another educational role of the firm was perceived to be its provision of certification, particularly foreign certification. Such qualifications were seen as prestigious and likely to give persons holding them an "edge" with regard to gaining employment in locally based

multinational corporations or other companies abroad. According to Kathleen, a manager who designed marketing strategies for The College, foreign qualifications have *"[an] international brand name [that] currently our local ones do not have, and many people consider that desirable"*. Fred, a consultant, commented that MNCs preferred employees who possessed foreign qualifications. He referenced a Scottish firm, which specifically demanded that its local employees hold CGIL qualifications, and which in fact had enrolled several cohorts of their employees at The College. Fred went on to further denounce the local CVQ *(Caribbean*

Vocational Qualification), which according to him, "is a big failure; you can't go to Canada or anywhere in the Commonwealth and get a job with CVQ. They will ask you to requalify".

With regard to the perceived advantages of foreign qualifications for potential migrants, Harry, a Manager and lecturer at The College, spoke of the desire of a significant percentage of the student body to migrate, adding that *"many people would prefer to go away rather than stay in Trinidad"*. Tracey, a senior lecturer concurred with this perspective and claimed that as many as 25% of her students had indicated as much to her. She further noted that many of her students had specifically told her that it was the opportunity to earn a foreign qualification which had motivated them to choose The College as their preferred training provider.

(iv). Potential Supporter of Government Policy Objectives

The policy documents of the MOE, outline the overarching vision and intentions of the GoRTT for the entire tertiary education sector, but with special emphasis on those institutions which offer TVET. These policies have implications for the role to be played by all institutions including private ones such as The College. According to the documents, the GoRTT expects institutions in the sector to be supportive of its policies and objectives. Specifically, according to the *Policy on Tertiary Education Technical Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning In Trinidad and Tobago* (MSTTE, 2010a), institutions in the post-secondary/tertiary sector are expected to align their programmes to national objectives, one of the most important of these being the attainment of "Developed Country" status by 2030 (MSTTE, 2010a, p. 3). The subsequently published policy document, *The Future of Tertiary Education and Skills Training 2015-2025: A National Policy Framework (MTEST, 2015***)** similarly highlighted the importance of these institutions in the developmental process. According to this document, "education is a key tenet of national development with tertiary education and skills training playing an integral role in transforming society and the economy through investing in its prime

resource, human capital" (ibid., n.p.). In order to fulfil this commitment the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has expended over TT$16.7 billion dollars (approximately US $2.5 billion dollars) in the five year period, 2010/2011 to 2014/2015 on tertiary education and skills training (MTEST, 2015, p. 4).

In keeping with these developmental goals, *The Future of Tertiary Education and Skills Training 2015-2025: A National Policy Framework (MTEST, 2015*) advises post-

secondary/tertiary institutions to re-orient their curricula by focusing on areas of "Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) and TVET" (ibid., p. 37) in support of the Government's efforts to establish a knowledge-based and diversified economy. Clearly then, institutions such as The College with its TVET orientation are expected to play a key role in the development process. With regard to its goals, the GoRTT has identified seven inter-connected Pillars of which Pillar 5 has direct implications for the education sector. This Pillar relates to the creation of "a more diversified, knowledge intensive economy" (MTEST, 2015, p. 4). As such,   institutions are expected to arrange their curricula to meet the training needs of the potential labour force that will be employed in the seven strategic sectors which have been prioritized. These sectors include the Energy, Tourism, Food, ICT, Creativity, Maritime and Finance sectors which were selected because of their potential to create economic growth, employment and innovation (MTEST, 2015, p. 37). The College continues to develop programmes in Energy, as well as in Food (agriculture).

5.4.2 Analysis and Discussion: The Role of The College

In this Section I intend to use a neocolonial lens to analyse and discuss the findings presented above, using concepts such as Universalism, Dependency, and Human Capital Theory which were discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. The discussion below refers to the explicit and implicit roles of College.

(i). Facilitator of Neocolonial Interests

The fundamental assumption of the following discussion is that the higher educational system of Trinidad and Tobago, is bound within a neocolonial edifice which is itself part of a global structure of governance. Wallerstein (1976) and other Dependency theorists such as Frank

(1967), posited that the structures of colonialism and imperialism remained intact in developing countries even after the formal end of colonialism. They asserted that the social and economic systems of these countries were designed to serve western interests and that their educational systems prioritized what knowledge was important for those interests, including the epistemologies that should accompany it. The College has implicitly played a supportive role of the status quo. As described in Chapter 2, it was the foreign multinationals, like TEXACO that took the initiative to do wide scale training in TVET (with the assistance of CGIL), in Trinidad and Tobago to satisfy their manpower needs. Given the lop-sided nature of the economy with its dependence on energy, it meant that the training needs of other sectors of the economy were largely ignored. There is some truth therefore, in Best and Levitt's (1968) contention that the structure of the economy has remained basically the same since the seventeenth century as well as in Lewis' (1954) observation that the economy remains dualistic in nature. This dualism manifests itself in an economic structure comprising a highly developed usually foreign owned sector and an underdeveloped locally owned sector.

Following from the above discussion, it is clear that Trinidad and Tobago's insertion into the global economy as a petroleum based energy economy, resulted in the provision of training programmes in areas like TVET that were related to that type of industry. Such an industry was itself bound to the international economic system. It is noteworthy, that despite the country's generous endowment of solar resources, there has never been any significant development of TVET in that area.

(ii). Training Provider to the Labour Force

The College with its focus on TVET, explicitly prepares labour for employment in the largely foreign-owned industrial/energy sector. The link between education and employment in this sector is clearly evident in the responses of the interviewees outlined above, particularly those by teachers, Peter and William and by Ray's student. According to the data, stakeholders value TVET mainly for the economic benefits which its credentials confer. Such a perspective is in keeping with the Human Capital Theory.

This perspective views workers as "human capital" and posits that increased spending on their education will result in increased productivity and ultimately in increased national income (Nyberg & Wright, 2015; Powell & Snellman, 2004; Ramsaroop, 2001). In presenting the TVET curriculum in an instrumental way, devoid of opportunities for reflection and the

acquisition of critical consciousness, The College is conforming to the philosophical underpinnings of the HCT theory.

It is likely that students who focused on TVET's economic benefits applied an HCT approach to their own circumstances, by comparing their spending on education against the remuneration that they might receive upon graduation. Their own rudimentary Rate of Return analysis would suggest that to students, TVET was a worthwhile investment of their own funds. Such a conclusion would bolster Miller's (2007, p. 4) claims (which he based on World Bank estimates), that the economic return on such training, was equal to 36.1% as compared to that of a Bachelor's degree of 19.5%.

The College as a TVET provider prepares the labour force for a role in the development of Trinidad and Tobago as outlined in the *1968 Education Plan*. The potential of TVET has long been recognized in this respect, but its successful implementation has been stymied by continued stigma and inconsistent official policy application. The current *Draft Education Policy Paper 2017-2022* (MOE, n.d.), has outlined a number of proposals to remove the stigma from TVET and to once again raise its profile and possible role in the industrial development of Trinidad and Tobago. Details of these plans are outlined in official policy documents, including the, *Future of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, 2015-2025: A National Policy Framework* (MTEST, 2015**)** and the *Policy on Tertiary Education Technical Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning in Trinidad and Tobago* (MSTTE, 2010a).

It is interesting to note that responses of the interviewees about their personal perceptions of TVET, belied the conclusions of official documents and much of the prevailing literature (Morris & Powell, 2013; Subran, 2013). All of the respondents perceived TVET positively although they were aware that their views were at variance with societal perceptions. Wilma summarised that perception as follows:

Trinidadians hold the traditional academic courses in higher esteem than the technical/vocational courses… it was considered that those who took such programmes were people who could not achieve in the traditional line like going to UWI…

 (iii). *Perpetuator of Colonial Values*

In its role as a TVET provider, The College implicitly perpetuates colonial values through its dependence on UK qualifications' providers like CGIL, ILM and NEBOSH for curricula,

certification, textbooks and other learning materials. This perpetuates the Dependency Syndrome which was discussed in Chapter 3. Related to this is the ethnocentric presumption that programmes designed and developed for UK students could be universalised and applied even in diverse non-Western contexts. As Chibber (2013) and Andreotti (2011) noted, such a presumption was hegemonic in its intent. There is an interesting twist however with regard to the nexus between TVET and the universalistic approach to the curriculum. The interviewees' responses indicated that from their perspective, the origin of the curriculum was insignificant or even irrelevant in the case of TVET. According to consultant Fred, *"a skill is a skill"*, a viewpoint which found agreement with all of the lecturers. Despite the apparent transferability of the technical programmes however, their total applicability in all situations should not be taken for granted. As Ray, a lecturer in the Electrical Installation programme noted, differences do exist between the British and Trinidad and Tobagonian electrical standards and codes.

Some of the vestiges of the colonial approach to TVET still persist in postcolonial Trinidad and Tobago. These are for example, with regard to the binary approach to education whereby academic and technical programmes are separated from each other, and students are likewise divided into academic and non-academic streams. Bagnall (2000) as cited by Griffith (2013) asserts that this binary approach to education was typical of traditional higher learning institutions in Britain. According to the *Draft Education Policy Paper 2017-2022* (MOE, n.d.), TVET continues to suffer in this respect and is not considered as a first choice career option. Subran (2013) has called for a more integrated pedagogical approach to the teaching of TVET and an end to the shunting of students deemed to be academically incapable, into those programmes.

(iv). *Provider of Certification*

Another one of the explicit roles of The College as an educational institution, is to provide certification. The College provides training from British institutions such as CGIL and NEBOSH and therefore the certification earned by successful students is also British. Neocolonialism is thus reinforced by the complicity of local institutions which market these programmes to the public with the implicit message that "foreign is better" than those qualifications that are offered locally. The continuation of foreign programmes in the post-Independence era is partly the result of indifference as well as partly the perpetuation of a Gramscian hegemonic system which make it acceptable for the continued use of foreign educational programmes (London, 2008). In keeping with this latter interpretation, Kathleen

in her senior marketing position, backed as she is by the authority of the College, might for example, be seen as a *validating elite* who could be influential in persuading potential students to accept the foreign qualifications through her marketing outreach strategies.

As noted by Tracey, the desire for foreign qualifications is strong and pervasive. Some students perceive that the foreign qualification is inherently better, even with little interrogation of this belief. This quest for foreign certification may be interpreted as a form of imitation or what Bhabha (2008) refers to as "mimicry". Fanon's (1952) explanations about the conformation by the colonized (or formerly colonized) to the colonizer's culture, also sheds light on the desire for foreign qualifications. Nevertheless, despite the belief by some students that "foreign is better", such a viewpoint was not universal. Cheryl, a past student, disagreed with that perception seeing it instead as a "colonial mind-set". According to her, it is a "mind thing". Bhabha (2008) also notes that mimicry can be subverted, and that what appears to be mimicry might simply be a desire to use the colonizer's culture for personal gain. For example, individuals, seeking their own self-interest, might wish to acquire such qualifications to enable them to secure employment with foreign multinationals or for the purpose of migration. The acquisition of foreign credentials has had a massive impact on emigration from Trinidad and Tobago, with the country suffering from a "Brain Drain" of epic proportions. More than 75% of its skilled labour force has migrated to OECD countries (Wenner, 2016).

(v). *Potential Supporter of Government Policy*

According to the Policy *on Tertiary Education Technical Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning In Trinidad And Tobago (MSTTE, 2010a)* the Government explicitly expects institutions in the post-secondary/tertiary sector to "play a supportive role to the state by aligning their programmes to national objectives, The most important of these goals is the attainment of "Developed Country" status, by 2030 (ibid. Page 3). The importance of the higher level educational institutions in the developmental process was similarly highlighted in the Executive Summary of the National Policy Framework in 2015. (MTEST, 2015). Here it was asserted that "Education is a key tenet of national development with tertiary education and skills training playing an integral role in transforming society and the economy through investing in its prime resource, human capital" (ibid n.p.). As such the institutions are expected to prioritize Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics (STEAM), so that students will be prepared to assist the Government in its economic diversification efforts.

Given that the curriculum of The College is related to the developmental objectives of the Government, it is a potential supporter of the latter's policies.

With regard to quality, the oft-stated goal of the MOE is to establish world class institutions bolstered by robust systems of quality assurance, an objective which will facilitate integration into the global capitalist economy. The relationship of The College with CGIL contributes toward the attainment of this goal.

In summary then, while the explicit role of The College is to educate students in TVET, it also performs other implicit roles. These include: the facilitation of neo-colonial interests and the perpetuation of colonial values. It does so by: entrenching the perceptions that education is an activity that comes from *out there*, that it is *universal* in its ontology and epistemology and also that "foreign is better". These viewpoints may encourage emigration of skilled persons from Trinidad and Tobago thus worsening the "Brain Drain". The State also expects The College and other institutions to play potentially supportive roles by aligning themselves to its national development objectives.

Part 3

What Do Official Policy Documents and Interviewees' Responses About Its Curriculum, Contribute to an Understanding of the Role of and Issues Facing The College as It Seeks to Both Sustain and Transform Itself Into a More Socially And Culturally Relevant Institution?

Part 3, which comprises findings, analysis and discussion is focussed on issues which face The College.

5.4.3 Findings: The Issues that Face The College (1)

Issue 1: The Delivery of TVET

The findings presented below highlight the curricular and pedagogical issues which face The College in its role as an educational institution. The responses concern the delivery of TVET with regard to the balance between theory and practical competencies and the manner of

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presentation in terms of: teaching style, focus, scheduling and context. Teachers and administrative staff members also shared their viewpoints about the nature and outcomes of TVET delivery. These are discussed below.

- The Theoretical Bias of TVET

With reference to The College, students Nigel and Wendell, and teachers Ray and William, indicated that the programmes were too heavily weighted toward theory with insufficient integration of the theoretical and practical aspects of the course. The majority of respondents expressed a preference for a more integrated and practically oriented programme. Fred, a consultant, explains below:

"*We need to do more 'practicals' … in other words the practical and the theory should match one another, not just a theory base.*".

Fred went on to suggest that students would benefit from more integration between the theoretical and practical elements of the programme, a suggestion that was widely supported by both lecturers and students. Peter, with concurrence from William, felt that the programmes would have been richer had they included areas outside of but related to the syllabus. He recommended that the mechanical engineering programme for example, should include:

"*things like maintenance and fixing valves from the practical side of …operating the valves*".

Peter, incorporated constructivist approaches and transformational teaching strategies in his classes, asserting that such methods allowed students to build their own knowledge through experience and reflection. Pertaining to his practical classes for example, he stated that:

"*I help my students fix starters because they are learning to drive now so I am teaching them to fix starters, alternators and small electrical things in the vehicle. *".

Both Peter and Ray concur that the aspects of the syllabus which relate to the acquisition of competencies give students a greater opportunity to interact among themselves and share experiences. According to Ray:

"*You see when you give the students to do the actual work themselves it actually teaches them and trains them for the work experience and to not rely on someone else to get a task done*".

- The Logistics of Programming and Scheduling

With regard to the issue of scheduling for both tuition and examinations, Kathleen, a manager who assists in timetabling programmes asserted that a lack of time is the issue. As she ruefully acknowledged, "time is limited and we do the best we can". Kathleen explained that students attend the programmes on a part-time basis, many of them after working long shifts in industry. In the past, those students in the CGIL programmes did all of their examinations/ assessments at the same time, after one year of study. However, students found this burdensome and proposed instead, that tuition be arranged such that, they might be prepared for the two theoretical examinations at different times; one in December and the other in June.

She attempted to clarify the situation by describing how the teaching and examination schedules were organized. She noted that in an effort to complete the syllabus in a timely manner, programmes were timetabled to ensure that the students covered a sufficient amount of the syllabus to be able to sit the theoretical examinations which were corrected in the UK. Students enter the institution at particular times of the year and the teaching period is calculated from that time of entry until the date for the examinations. Since the programme is taught on a part-time basis, there is insufficient time, to incorporate the practical competencies with the theory. Practical training and assessments are then scheduled after the theoretical examinations have been completed.

- Administrative Staff and Lecturer Perceptions

Other viewpoints about the delivery of the curriculum emerged from an administrative assistant, a lecturer and a student and referred to the perceived attitudes of students toward their studies. Debbie an administrative assistant who looked after student affairs, and Stanley a senior teacher, both complained that students did not come to classes prepared to learn. According to Debbie, "It is not always our fault when students don't learn….some of them have a slack mind- set". Stanley opined, that with the cut in GATE funding, "I expect that they will value education now that they have to pay for it". His view was similar to that of Christopher, a student, who asserted that "when you pay for your own courses, you will work much harder, because it is your own money paying for it".

5.4.4 Analysis and Discussion: The Issues that Face The College (1)

Issue 1: The Delivery of TVET

With regard to the teaching and learning activities of The College, pedagogical issues alluded to by the data, included: teaching style, teacher competence, the nature of the curriculum, student motivation as well as the power dynamics within the classroom. The discussion below thus focusses on the perpetuation of colonial teaching models and the influence of the market on the nature and delivery of programmes.

Pedagogical Issues

According to the data that emerged from stakeholder interviews, the delivery of the TVET curriculum was problematic. As is noted in the Literature Review, perceptions of the meaning of TVET span a spectrum ranging from training in practical competencies only, to programmes which are significantly theoretical in their orientation. Subran (2013) is concerned about the unbalanced manner in which TVET programmes tend to be delivered and references the work of Jin and Li (2011) to bolster his contention that there is a need for more integration of the academic and practical sides of the programme. As Kathleen explained however, it was necessary for the management of The College to focus on logistical solutions in a way that did not always permit the delivery of an integrated programme.

The data also showed that the TVET programmes, packaged as they were by The College, into discrete bodies of fixed information which the students were expected to learn, were syllabus-*centric* and exam focussed. Further, the manner of teaching the theoretical components of the syllabus relate to what Freire (1968) calls the "banking concept" of education which was discussed in Chapter 3. In an effort to complete the syllabus in a timely manner, Kathleen explains that The College has had to modularise some of its programmes.

According to the findings, it would appear that the modes of teaching are transmissive and transactional and rely on content and product based curricula that are underpinned by a positivist ontology and epistemology. Positivistic approaches to teaching which necessitated regurgitated answers often resulted in high examination success rates. In an interesting aside,

these examination success rates when advertised, boosted the reputation of The College as a quality institution, and encouraged potential students to enrol at The College.

Ontologically, syllabus requirements are positivist in orientation and often content based, with little need for critical thinking or reflection. This is particularly true of programmes below Level 3. Clearly therefore, conclusions about quality of education need to be interrogated when they are based on quantitative indicators such as high examination success rates. The syllabi for the programmes at Level 3 and above however, required some reflection and analysis. Nevertheless, Stanley maintained that even at this level, many of his students came to classes tired and frustrated and appeared interested only in getting their diplomas. William lamented that when it came to homework his students went into "hiding and not coming to class the next time when they have to hand up". These problems are likely reflective of inappropriate andragogical approaches to education, in terms of their failure to address the problem solving, group work and experiential approaches to learning which adults value (Knowles and associates, 1986).

While constructivist and student centred approaches to teaching were often employed by lecturers, my own observations lead me to conclude that the majority of lecturers still use transmissive modes of teaching. I have noticed also that despite having resumes that reflect teaching experience, most lecturers have never been exposed to teacher training programmes in adult education. Where teacher training is inadequate it may be difficult to arouse the interest of students who are tired or apathetic. Teachers also complain about the limited time available and the unwillingness of students to do extra work as referenced by William above.

The nature of the teaching/learning experience also has to be addressed. According to Subran (2013) and Chisolm (2009), TVET students need to engage in processes that emphasise critical thinking as well as creativity and individuality. Subran (2013) also recommends that the nature of TVET programmes be amended to employ a more democratic curriculum and thus promote social justice. The College classrooms are set up in the traditional style with the lecturer in front and the students seated in rows that face the lecturer. Using Bristol's (2012) analogy, it is likely that the power dynamic between lecturers and students in the educational context, is similar to that of the sugar plantation between the planters and the slaves. She recommends the need for teaching/learning transformation through reflection and dialogue of these "plantation" contexts. She posits that the adoption of a praxis model of curriculum would enhance well-being and promote both reflection (Mezirow, 1991) and self-liberation. These

transformational options described here, are difficult to reconcile with the constraints which The College encounters (as described above by Kathleen) in its delivery of TVET.

The Marketization of the Curriculum

In an educational environment that has become increasingly marketised, with educational programmes becoming commodified products, the modalities of delivering the curriculum have become increasingly "*McDonaldised*". In other words, their processes of delivery are akin to those processes of production in the fast food industry. In essence, a certain body of knowledge has to be *learnt* for examination, and it has to be packaged and delivered in a manner that suits the needs of its customers.

With regard to issue 1, it is clear that some areas of the TVET curriculum are problematic. For example, students have no input with regard to its development, since it is designed and assessed overseas. Further, the logistics of scheduling and delivery allow little time for discussion and critical thinking except perhaps in the practical aspects of the programme. An integrated approach which combined both theory and practical competencies would have enriched the curriculum and enhanced learning. However the part time nature of the course and the heavy work schedules of many of the students make it difficult to implement such schedules.

The findings also indicate that The College, in its efforts to sustain itself, has adopted a curriculum that is more market oriented and consumer focused. For example, it has opted to commodify some of its programmes by shaping them into modules for convenient consumption, with explicit curricular that are content and product based. The modes of teaching tend to be transmissive or transactional and their ontological and epistemological underpinnings are positivistic. The consumers of these modules, usually firms or individuals seeking to improve their resumes, require that programmes be offered over a relatively short period of time. In view of the importance of business survival, there is therefore little curricular focus on educational areas like critical thinking and reflection. These changes are in keeping with Jamieson and Naidoo's (2006) position that curricula will adopt   an economic and workplace orientation, as education becomes more marketised. This strategy was in keeping with what was to be expected in a highly privatised tertiary sector in which more than 95% of the educational institutions were private (MSTTE, 2010).

The College has therefore to decide if given the present circumstances, it can adopt a transformative praxis -focused curriculum or if instead it has to continue to employ methods of teaching based on the "banking concept" with its positivistic underpinnings. It is likely that to sustain itself, it will be forced to continue with the latter market –focussed option. Herein lies its dilemma, business survival or transformation.

Issue 2

5.4.5. Findings: <u>The Issues that Face The College (2)</u>

The Relationship between The College and (i). CGIL and (ii). The State Regulatory Agencies

The findings in this section, are based on data elicited mainly from Harry and Kathleen. They were purposively interviewed, for as directors and managers of The College, they would be expected to have an intimate knowledge of the issues which face the institution.

• The Relationship between The College and CGIL

Changes in the relationship between The College and CGIL are likely to affect the role of The College as an educational institution and by extension, its curriculum. Both institutions have had a business relationship for more than twenty-one years; a relationship marked by periods of intense interest and also of benign neglect. Kathleen recalls for example, the earlier days, when except for sporadic visits from external verifiers from the UK, there was little communication apart from that required for business purposes, between The College and CGIL. During this period only a few institutions in the country offered CGIL qualifications. Toward the end of the first decade of the twenty- first century however, interest in the Caribbean revived with the establishment of a regional office in Barbados in 2011. Harry remembered that his father, the founder of The College had been awarded honorary membership in GCIL on that occasion. He was mystified as to why then, after two years, the regional office was closed and why shortly after that, the contract of the CGIL representative in Trinidad and Tobago was not renewed.

Both Kathleen and Harry, expressed concern that CGIL's disengagement appeared to be continuing in view of one, their permanent removal of several long running technical and vocational programmes, and two, a downscaling of the relationship between Trinidadian

training providers including The College, and the London Head Office of CGIL. The South African Office of CGIL which in the past had had no relationship with The College, was now given the responsibility for matters pertaining to Trinidad and Tobago, instead of the London Head Office.

Kathleen was sceptical of CGIL's "Assured" programmes which were now being offered for a fee to local training providers as a replacement for those programmes that had been removed.

These programmes would now be certified by the local training provider, and "*assured*" by CGIL. They would no longer be considered as qualifications whereby they might be part of a

Qualifications' Framework, but would instead be considered as *Programmes of Study*. Kathleen was not convinced of the merit of this arrangement despite the *foreign assurance of CGIL*. According to her, "We don't know how this will affect our students when they go to look for a job, or when they want to study".

Interestingly, Harry took a more practical approach by observing that if The College opted to use this model, it might not have to pay out so much to CGIL especially as it was difficult to source the foreign exchange to do so. He also stated that it might be a chance for The College to think about getting its own programmes accredited, although he expressed some doubt about whether these would be recognized as valid by either students or the wider population.

- The Relationship between The College and State Regulatory Agencies

With regard to the second issue about external governance, Kathleen, identified two main problems in the relationship between The College and the local State agencies. These were: one; "too much bureaucracy and paperwork!" And two, inordinate delays which were often detrimental to The College. According to her, the relatively frequent requests for information were time consuming and tedious, particularly when information had to be submitted more than once to different departments of the same organization.

Acknowledging their need to be thorough, Kathleen however, cited occasions when delays by both the ACTT and the Funding Division of the MOE, had detrimental effects on The College. She recalled an occasion when a problem (that did not directly concern The College), between the ACTT and a Qualifications' Provider in the UK, caused an unwarranted delay in the granting of programme approval to the College from the same provider. The duration of the

delay was such, that The College lost its entire market share as a provider of that programme; a development that had serious financial repercussions for its operations.

With regard to the State agency that was responsible for GATE funding, Kathleen recalled a time when she "used to call the GATE office nearly every week to find out about payment. Sometimes it would be for months!" She remembered one time when payments for a January cohort of students were not made until after September of that same year, a delay that caused severe hardship to The College. In those days between 2014 and 2015, GATE receipts constituted more than 60% of the total revenue of The College. She noted that even though currently, the GATE receipts are less than 15% of total revenue, at least the students (who are fewer now than then), pay on a monthly schedule which allows The College to sustain itself on a more regular basis. It is noteworthy however, that despite the reduced importance of revenue from GATE, institutions like The College are still considered to be signatories to the GATE agreement. This means that they are still bound by many of its strictures such as those which require official permission to change non-tuition fees. This is an important restriction, particularly in a situation of financial difficulty, where institutions need to adjust their prices to cope with inflation and other contingencies.

Issue 2:

5.4.6 Analysis and Discussion: The Issues that Face The College (2)

The Relationship between The College and (i). CGIL and (ii). The State Regulatory Agencies

- The Implications for the Curriculum of the Changing Nature of the Relationship Between the College and CGIL

The first discussion concerns the changing nature of the relationship between The College and its main Qualifications' Provider, CGIL, and the implications of this change for the curriculum. The relationship between CGIL and The College was a rekindling of the colonial relationship begun more than one hundred years before between the former and the local colonial authorities. Altbach (2008), has spoken of the difficulty of disentangling relationships between the formerly colonized and the former colonizers, so the renewing of this relationship was not altogether unusual. This association between CGIL and The College over a twenty-one year period, epitomised neocolonialism with regard to its structures and systems, whereby, the

syllabus, regulations, training materials and examinations all originated in the UK. The orientation of the content while claiming to be international or universal largely reflected a British industrial context. Permission had to be sought before any action could be taken on various curricular issues.

It is worth recognising that because of the relationship between CGIL and The College, I am placed in the middle of a critical contradiction. On one hand, I am excited by the opportunity to lighten the *chains* of neocolonial hegemony and to embrace the chance to implement strategies for transformative growth while on the other hand, I have concerns about the sustainability of the institution without the foreign connections. The first concern is a very human one and is placed in the context of the liminal space within which The College and CGIL interact. It relates to the relationships that were built over the decades between the staff at the CGIL Head Office in London and the staff at The College. While the relationship did chafe at times, it allowed for personal interventions when urgent issues arose. Second, the removal of some long-standing programmes will affect the sustainability of The College and I am unpersuaded about the viability the replacement, namely, the new *Assured* model.

Despite the various uncertainties inherent in change (Hargreaves, 2005) however, the College now has the opportunity to offer its own programmes, a move supported by the MOE which encourages private institutions to seek both programme and institutional accreditation (MTEST, 2015). The positive effects of this change possibly make for: (i), increased curricular relevance through the design of new or hybrid programmes; (ii), easier institutional governance and (iii), reduced need for *hard to get* foreign exchange. This model thus offers The College a chance to transform itself despite both Kathleen's and Harry's concerns about public acceptance of indigenous qualifications and the possible business and financial ramifications of such a change.

1) ***The Relationship Between the College and the State Regulatory Agencies and its Implications for the Curriculum***

State agencies such as the ACTT, exercise hegemony over the selection of programmes that may be provided at the tertiary level. As such institutions with regard to their curricula, are only allowed to offer programmes that are considered to be relevant to the present and potential

labour market needs of the country. The College was recently required to prove this with regard to a programme in health and safety.

5.4.7 Summary

With regard to the discussion in Parts 2 and 3 above, The College as an educational institution must sustain itself by providing training programmes and certification that are required by the market. Using Wallerstein's (1976) classifications, Trinidad and Tobago's insertion in the global market as a *semi –peripheral country*, is such that its education system is expected to produce qualified graduates for industries which ensure that the economy will fit easily into the global capitalist network. In other words, as asserted by Dependency theorists, the curricula of higher educational institutions in peripheral and semi-peripheral countries, will tend to prioritize training that suits western interests rather than that which will promote holistic development of the local economies.

The College also enables students to access opportunities for employment and emigration. By providing programmes which support dominant discourses such as HCT and the desirability of foreign qualifications, it ensures its survival. Not surprisingly then, its ability to promote indigenous transformation while selling and stressing the benefits of foreign programmes is limited. The College thus buttresses the neocolonial status quo and in so doing, facilitates the entry of the economy into the global economic system.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS - GOVERNANCE

6.1 Research Questions

The Main Research Question

How can we understand the social and cultural context of The College?

Subsidiary Research Question 2

What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses about institutional governance contribute to an understanding of the role of and issues facing The College as it seeks to both sustain and transform itself into a more socially and culturally relevant institution?

6.2 Findings Analysis and Discussion

This chapter examines the role of The College as a business, and focuses on how its institutional governance attempts to treat with its financial challenges through increased emphasis on: marketing, quality and resource optimization. The chapter also highlights dilemmas between educational and business objectives. The findings are presented, analysed and then discussed in the chapter.

6.2.1 Findings: The Role of the College

The findings suggest that a cross section of stakeholders explicitly recognise the corporate nature of The College and the need for its governance structures to comply with this role. According to Nigel, a student, "*I think it is a business. As a school you need to operate, and you have to have finances to run the school*". Kathleen, a manager makes the nature and orientation of the institution clear, in her observation that it has to "*run like a business and their decisions have to be business oriented, which means some profit must be made… They have to pay their bills and depend on themselves to move forward and progress*". As a private institution, Debbie, an administrative assistant observes that The College has some degree of

autonomy when she states that, *"you can choose and decide how you want to run the school".* With regard to its corporate role, The College is expected to ensure its financial sustainability by increasing its revenue as the findings indicate below.

1. *To be financially sustainable*

With regard to its corporate status and private nature, the findings recognized that the institution had to finance itself. As Stanley a senior lecturer wryly observed, "*There is no Minister in whatever Ministry ..... to bail you out."* Unlike publicly supported institutions which receive significant amounts of their financing from both GATE and Government grants, The College receives no grants and must therefore attract sufficient students and corporate business to generate funds to finance its operations.

- Emphasis on Marketing

Following from the above, the findings suggested that the institutional governance emphasise marketing to increase financial sustainability. I define "marketing" as all those activities that are involved in identifying potential customers, anticipating and satisfying their needs, in order to earn a profit. Although the term has acquired a wider meaning in many areas, this definition forms the basis of the marketing activities pursued by The College.

According to Ray, a former student and now himself a teacher:

"Being a private company we have to depend on having a marketing approach. We have to go out to the general public and we have to sell ourselves for them to come and register to do a course."

 Ray further suggested that if lecturers wanted to keep their jobs, then they had to take an active role in marketing the institute by ensuring that their students were perceived to be performing well in examinations.

- Emphasis on Quality Improvements

 The findings suggested that The College, through its corporate governance, place more emphasis on quality as part of its marketing thrust. According to Harry, private institutions needed to stress quality *"because their reputation is key to getting students",* an observation with which Kathleen concurred, asserting that it was necessary for The College to *"brand*

[itself] out there as a quality institution internationally". Whereas both Kathleen and Harry focused on perceptions of quality with regard to reputation and branding, Jake took a wider, more philosophical approach. He asserted that the College had to place a relentless emphasis on quality, prioritizing it above profits and prices. According to him:

If you focus on good quality ....it is because you recognize that that is what is important for the system, and the sustainability of your organization. ... If you focus on profit only, and don't worry about the other things there is where you will run into problems.

This emphasis on quality with regard to PFPs was also stressed by Debbie, an employee, who asserted that because of the importance of customer satisfaction to their business, private firms had to be more efficient than public firms. Like Debbie, Cheryl, a past student, also equated quality with efficiency and customer responsiveness. According to Cheryl: *"... Private institutions have the ability and capability to be responsive ... you get a higher level of professionalism and responsiveness... To me there is greater attention to detail because of the private nature. "*

- Emphasis on Resource Optimization

According to the data, stakeholders such as lecturers, William and Ray, recognized that as a business, The College needed to optimize its expenditure particularly given its limited resources. Ray observed that:

The private institutes have to rely on their own resources, their own funds, their savings and they may not be able to purchase all the advanced and latest equipment that the government would supply to their local institutes. .... so they (the Government institutes) have an advantage compared to us being private ... I know it is difficult.

Kathleen, whose role it is to assist in financial governance, concurred with Ray when she explained the implications of the financial constraints on the operation of the institution.

According to her:

> *Small companies like The College would be at a disadvantage because they would not be able to provide the resources to students like obviously schools like UTT(University of Trinidad and Tobago) and MIC-IT (Metal Industries Company-Institute of Technology) could which are government funded… Students in general who are*

coming to private institutions do have to pay some money themselves and would not really want to put out anything extra to pay for these additional programmes. So for private institutions it is very difficult to add these additional, very beneficial programmes.

With regard to its strategic intentions in the contracting economy, Kathleen insisted that the role of The College should continue as before in terms of offering CIGIL Technicians' programmes (despite falling enrolment). According to her "One student in Mechanical Engineering will bring in what seven to eight students will bring in from a short course". Harry, concurred, noting that the foreign certification of these programmes, still held some attraction for students.

Nevertheless, as the College continues to expand its new short modular programmes, it has had to adjust its governance structure to cater for their creation, marketing and implementation. This is Harry's remit. The College is also developing its own online programmes to be rolled out later this year, 2019. Industry experts, (not necessarily lecturers with The College), are contracted to deliver these newer courses which include Solar and Hybrid Technologies as well as others that relate to the engineering principles associated with Pumps, Motors and Compressors.

2. *To adjudicate between business and educational objectives*

Governance in higher educational institutions such as The College, has become more business focused, sometimes at the expense of their educational orientation. Globalisation and Internationalisation have led to the introduction of more market oriented curricula and governance structures which approximate those of the corporate world. Unsurprisingly therefore, educational objectives, which according to McMurtry (1991) differ from those of business in terms of values, standards, goals and markets are likely to conflict with the latter, from time to time. For example, as explained in chapter 5, scheduling problems related to business considerations sometimes prevent The College from integrating the theoretical and practical components of the longer TVET engineering programs as might be the optimal strategy. As Kathleen wryly states, "We do the best we can". In other words, as educational institutions become more focused on corporate considerations, it is likely that business objectives will increasingly be prioritized over those of education.

When business objectives take precedence over educational ones, new types of governance systems, driven by different values and rewards are likely to emerge. As a result, procedures for handling issues are also likely to be different. With regard to the likely resolution of student grievances for example, the findings allude to Cheryl's interpretation of how issues might be resolved in a private institution versus in a public institution. She was the only respondent who referred to the nature of the student/client – administration relationship. Using a hypothetical scenario, Cheryl suggested that if a student were to bring an issue to the attention of The College for resolution, the issue might be perceived by the latter, as one between a customer and a business, rather than one between a student and an educational institution. According to her, the institute would most likely assert "this *is private and this is what I offer and if you don't like it, then you exit "*.

6.2.2 Analysis and Discussion: The Role of The College

According to the findings, The College as a business, is expected to arrange its governance such that it is a financially stable institution. Increased marketing, emphasis on quality and the economic use of its resources were some of the suggestions alluded to by the findings to achieve this.

With reference to both marketing and quality perceptions, Ray, a senior teacher for example, implies that in a competitive educational market, quantitative indicators such as examination pass rates will influence potential students to enrol in The College. He therefore suggests using high pass rates as a marketing tool. Ray's suggestion offers two interesting perspectives. First, implicit in his statement is the assumption that such quantitative indicators of success, demonstrate quality in education. Schindler et al. (2015) imply that students view quality in terms of institutional reputation which thus might broadly support Ray's views. The College has found this to be a successful approach to marketing over the years, however it belies a narrow modernist approach which ignores less quantitative nuances that contribute to quality.

Second, Ray's suggestion highlights the role of the lecturers in assisting The College to attract students. This recognition underscores the uncertainty which lecturers on contract like himself face with regard to whether classes will be scheduled or not. Such contractual arrangements reflect the increasingly privatised nature of education where lecturers are not considered faculty with affiliations and collegial responsibilities to the institution. They are instead simply hired

for their expertise and paid fees for their time. Ray, who has been associated with The College for many years, has gone beyond his contractual responsibilities. In PFPs classes can only be scheduled when sufficient students have been enrolled, hence Ray's insistence on the need for a marketing effort to which lecturers contribute.

Increased Focus on Quality

Kathleen and Harry have a related but perhaps broader perspectives about what quality means compared to Ray's focus on examination marks. To them branding the institution more generally is important. Jake's view about the need for a quality focus was perhaps more aligned to some of the indicators of quality identified by Parry (2013), which include: the nature of the learning environment, class size and the quality of the teachers (ibid.). In view of the various perceptions of the concept, it is clear why Harvey and Williams (2010) suggest that any discussion of "quality" must always consider purpose and context.

Emphasis on Customer Satisfaction

Private sector institutions like The College which lack a sustainable funding base, are required to make use of their other advantages in terms of flexibility of programme scheduling, diversity of programming, accessibility and emphasis on customer/student satisfaction. The College for example, is open seven days a week, offers night classes and also offers generous payment plans over extended periods of time to students who have financial difficulties.

Change in Governance Focus

The College has had to adopt a more managerial style of governance with an increased business focus in the face of its critical financial realities. Managers such as Harry, now spend more time seeking business opportunities and writing proposals than in the past. Tierney and Hentschke (2007) contend that as educational institutions adopt a more corporate and competitive outlook, their systems of governance change as they place more resources on the business side of the institution. Accordingly, The College, like other private institutions has had to restructure its governance systems by expanding its marketing department, so as to attract more students. Harry and Kathleen's observations expressed above, reflect the importance of advertising and marketing in this regard. Such marketing focus requires The College to spend relatively large sums of money on advertising in the print, electronic and increasingly on social media. According to the literature, PFPs spend as much as 30% of their

revenue on advertising and marketing (Beaver, 2012) whereas non-profit Colleges spend considerably less, approximately 2%. Until 2013, The College was spending between 11% and 14% of its revenue on advertising and marketing, much of it in the print media. At present however, although it has increased its level of advertising, its actual spending on this activity has fallen, to between 6% and the 9% of its revenue because it has placed a greater focus on the use of the much cheaper social media. According to surveys designed by The College, recommendations and social media have proven to be the two most successful ways of attracting new students to the institution.

Treatment of Grievances

With regard to the hypothetical example of how grievances might be treated by educational institutions that become more business focussed, Hirschman (1970), as cited by Levin and Belfield (2006), makes a credible suggestion. He posits that such institutions should build in governance mechanisms of feedback, whereby disaffected clients might show the institution how to treat its clientele better. This is particularly true in competitive markets where consumers/students have more choice as to whether to go or to stay with an   institution when an issue arises

6.2.3 Findings: Issues Faced by the College

Issue 1: Limited Resources

With regard to the first set of interviews, participants, although unaware of the severity of the financial difficulty facing The College at that time, were anxious to make suggestions about how institutional governance might be improved to deal with the issue of limited financial resources The responses identified the need of the institution to perform such roles as allowed it to increase revenue as well as to control its financial and other resources. The findings suggested that The College should expand its corporate outreach by offering relevant programmes of training and that it should market itself more vigorously to attract both individual and corporate customers. Harry stressed for example, that The College could no longer depend only on its retail business model, where it waited for students/customers to respond to advertisements. According to Harry, The College needed to be proactive and to engage with the corporate sector more robustly. While Kathleen agreed with Harry's

proposition in principle, she observed that this model meant that more resources would be needed for marketing and that the outcomes of such efforts were not certain. She recommended that a greater effort needed to be made to sell the year-long CGIL programmes for which The College was known.

Several responses discussed the implications of the financial challenges regarding expenditure and the sustainability of the institution in a competitive educational market. Mention was also made of the family focus of corporate governance and of its implications for relationships between management and other stakeholders, particularly where grievances occurred.

With regard to the second set of Interviews, which were held approximately two and a half years after the first set, I was surprised by what the Findings revealed. When I asked participants about their perceptions of the biggest issue/s facing The College in recent years I had expected everyone to know of its financial hardships, but apart from managers, Harry and Kathleen and senior administrative assistant Debbie, the other stakeholders were unaware of these.

Over the past four years, the financial fortunes of The College have declined significantly as a result of both the drastic fall in student enrolments and the fall in GATE receipts. The resources allocated to the educational sector of the institution with regard to lecturers, classrooms and materials, have shrunk considerably. The College has felt the impact of the contraction in the Energy sector, (particularly the refining sector) in terms of plummeting enrolment for programmes which were formerly high in demand, such as Process Technology (Petroleum Operations option). Whereas in the early years of this decade, it was usual to have at least five cohorts of this programme per year, currently, The College is struggling to run even two cohorts of the programme and even then, with smaller class sizes. Other programmes have also suffered. Debbie blames the cut in GATE subsidies for the relatively small numbers of students in the Level 2 Engineering classes, surmising that since: "students now have to pay everything, [so] some people decide not to study again". William a senior lecturer at the Curepe branch of The College, in north Trinidad, although not knowing the details, sensed a general difficulty when he realised that: *The East/West Corridor (one of the most heavily populated areas in north Trinidad) is in bad shape. Just last year I had to give a student $100.00 because he could not afford the transport to come to class. A lot of them have a salary of $4,000.00-$5,000.00 dollars a month to cover everything, so they can't afford class [es]."*

According to the *Future of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, 2015-2025: A National Policy Framework* (MTEST, 2015, p. 30) the GoRTT no longer has the ability to continue funding tertiary education in the same way as in the past "in light of uncertain global economic trends". The impact of this decline in spending on higher education is significant because the Government is the primary source of revenue in this sector. Despite the disappointing trends however, Harry, who performs multiple roles as a director, a manager and a lecturer, is hoping that these difficulties "will soon come to an end". He is optimistic that the massive infrastructural developments promised by the Government will provide opportunities for training in 2019. Kathleen, also a director and a manager was not so optimistic about the future. She noted that The College had already downsized significantly and would find it difficult to cut spending any further. She opined that the challenges for The College were going to be great seeing that "Petrotrin (the largest refinery in Trinidad) had just retrenched more than five thousand employees… and the telephone company, more than five hundred". However, she also suggested that these challenges gave The College an opportunity to restructure itself more efficiently and to engage in other more self –sustaining opportunities for expansion

6.2.4 Analysis and Discussion of the Issues which Face The College

The analysis and discussion below, examine the declining financial status of The College precipitated largely by the volatility of the global energy market and its impact on higher education in Trinidad and Tobago.

The nature of globalisation, and the interconnectedness of countries means that Trinidad and Tobago is unable to insulate its economy from the unpredictability of the price and quantity shifts of the global energy market. In the last decade, the uncertainty of revenue flows had consequential effects for Government revenue and spending (as discussed in chapter 2). This development hit the tertiary education sector particularly hard because the State which had played a dominant financial role in terms of its support of the sector through grants and subsidies, was now forced to cut its expenditure. The contraction in the economy and the cut in students' tuition subsidies had a shocking impact on the finances of all institutions.

Globalisation has had a significant impact on the tertiary sector as evidenced by the reduction in the role of the State and the increased role of the private sector institutions. This has led to changes in both curricula and governance structures of private institutions and those public

institutions which have acquired some private characteristics. According to the literature, as the higher education sector becomes more privatised it also becomes more customer oriented (Hillyard, 2011; Douglas, 2012; Olufunke, 2015) and   market focused with regard to programme determination (Jamieson and Naidoo's 2006). After 2015 The College faced a crisis in terms of its lack of sustainable funding, and as alluded to by the findings, it adopted similar market and consumer oriented strategies. The result of these changes has been to entrench the sector and by extension, The College more deeply into a Neocolonial framework.

Finally, the discussion examined the dilemmas faced by the College when business and educational objectives conflicted. The institution experienced these conflicts with regard to the manner in which it delivered its TVET curriculum, particularly with regard to scheduling, and programme design and delivery. It is also possible that when educational institutions become more business focussed, conflicts pertaining to relationships or grievance resolution might arise. According to McMurtry (1991), such conflicts are to be expected because education and business differ in terms of their: goals, values, motivations methods, markets and standards.

The discussion above, underscores the vulnerability of the Trinidad and Tobago economy to the volatility of the energy sector and by extension, the GoRTT's financial position as well. . The training opportunities which Harry is optimistic about, also depend on whether the Government spending or foreign investment materializes. The dependence on foreign investment puts the country in a vulnerable position, a situation which explains the GoRTT's emphasis on making the labour force globally competitive and attractive to foreign investors.

In the segment below, I present a summary of responses regarding the role of The College as a Family Institution.

6.3 The Role of The College as a Family Institution

6.3.1 The Findings: The College as a Family Institution

The findings of the study with regard to family business, elicited mixed responses from across the entire spectrum of respondents except with regard to the potential business partner David, who did not address this topic.

With phrases such as "this is our bread and butter" and "eat little and live long", family members Harry and Kathleen respectively, alluded to the important role played by The College in providing them with their livelihood and the need to be judicious regarding the use of its resources. With reference to the advantages of this family business, Kathleen, who was also a Director stressed that family members had similar *"values and ethics… [So] everyone is moving with the same vision"*.

Margaret, an administrative employee concurred with this view, when she stated that "*family members are very focussed on the objectives…and always have the best interest of the business at heart*". Other stakeholders, such as Cheryl, a past student, Fred, a consultant and teachers Ray and William also spoke of the commitment and cohesiveness that they had observed in the family. Harry made reference to the burdens of family business by noting the ever present responsibilities and multiple roles of family members.

Students, Shirvanand and Juan alluded to some of the disadvantages that were associated with family firms particularly their vulnerability to family disruptions and disagreements. Harry warned of the dangers of family issues and conflicts of interest which could destabilise the firm. A significant disruption could also be caused by death, as occurred on the death of the founder in 2012. Although temporary, it ruptured the sense of continuity which had previously existed and caused major concerns about the sustainability of the business to many of the stakeholders. After a massive effort to still these fears, The College went back on track.

Other concerns about family business related to the interactions between various stakeholders and the family management. Debby and Stanley for example, alluded to the possibilities that non-family members might be treated unfairly in the event of a disagreement with other family/management members. According to Cheryl, a past student, and Fred, a consultant, another problem might arise due to the insularity of family firms or to their insistence on following traditional practices. Such factors Fred opined, could limit growth. Consultants Fred and Wilma recommended governance systems which would allow for greater access to external ideas and interactions. Wilma also commented that the present levels of informal governance might inhibit growth as The College grew bigger.

6.3.2 Analysis and Discussion: The College as a Family Institution

The following discussion highlights the unique features that all family businesses have. The family members who own and manage The College, are aware of the importance of having the institution survive both financially and historically, in terms of maintaining the legacy of the founder. Both the curriculum and the governance of The College reflect the family nature of the institution. In connection with the former, The College became a technical institution using City and Guilds Curricula because of the passion of the founder for these programmes and his admiration for the CGIL curriculum as described in Chapter 2.

With regard to issues of governance, three issues were highlighted. These included: first, the difficulties which could arise where family members performed multiple roles; second the danger of insularity with regard to ideas and third the nuances and sensitivities which surrounded relationships between members of management and other stakeholders.

Habbershon et al. (2003) and Sirmon and Hitt (2003) refer to the unique "bundle" of family resources which families bring to an enterprise and which when managed purposefully, result in superior levels of performance. However, as highlighted by the data, respondents recognize the need for wider inclusion of non- family members. With regard to the last point, it must also be recognised that tensions are likely to arise as a result of interactions between family members and employees, contractors and other stakeholders. As a result of the asymmetric power relations, hegemony accompanied by implicit or explicit oppression is therefore present with regard to the relationship between The College which is owned and managed by family members and the stakeholders who comprise students, lecturers and administrative staff. It is important that such hegemony be recognized and that procedures and systems dealing with grievance procedures, harassment and equal opportunities be established.

Carr and Hmieleski (2015), as cited by Steier, Chrisman and Chua (2015) assert that family firms might become vulnerable to issues which arise from the difficulty of reconciling family and firm roles. At present, the governance of The College is tightly centred on the family. It is possible for family/firm roles to overlap so closely that the health of the business is affected. Harry, Wilma and Fred assert the need to look outside of the family for further expertise and to find mechanisms which would allow for more "out of the box thinking" as well as provide more opportunities for networking. Wilma also alluded to the need for more formal systems of

governance, noting that while informal systems currently worked, more structured systems would have to be built as The College expanded.

CHAPTER 7: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

7.1 Research Questions

The Main Research Question

How can we understand the social and cultural context of The College?

Subsidiary Research Question 3

What do official policy documents and interviewees' responses imply about the social and cultural relevance of The College?

7.2 Findings, Analysis and Discussion

7.2.1 The Findings: The Social and Cultural Relevance of The College

I posed Subsidiary Research Question 3 with the intention of getting as wide an array of answers as possible from the respondents. I was not disappointed. The findings revealed three broad themes, each with its own implicit interpretation of social and cultural relevance. According to the data, relevance was related to:

(i) the usefulness of the training to students offered by the College,

(ii) the potential contribution training could make to national development and

(iii) the inclusiveness and outreach of the College.

(i) The usefulness of the training to students

With reference to the first theme, a cross section of respondents noted that The College was already performing a relevant role in terms of providing students with training. For example, as Kathleen noted, this gave students: "an opportunity to work and to go to school", thus implying that the relevance of The College was related to the usefulness of its training.

ii) The potential contribution of training to national development

The second theme implied that relevance was related to the contribution that The College might make to national development and diversification, particularly in Agriculture. This view was proposed by David, an agriculturalist, who had approached The College as a last resort for training in the area of cocoa production. He was in the process of establishing a cocoa plantation and his requests for the establishment of a Cocoa Academy and agricultural training had been refused by larger public institutions. Although The College had had no experience in agricultural training, it agreed to David's proposal after making a number of strategic alliances with both individuals and organizations in this field.

Following from the above, David posited that The College would increase its relevance in three ways if it provided agricultural training. First, in keeping with the GoRTT's stated intention of diversifying the economy, such training would be aligned to the State's development plans. Second, by offering specialized training, it would be equipping individuals with the skills necessary to get paid employment and third, through the quality of its training, it would assist in destigmatizing agriculture as a career option. David envisioned a type of training in the industry, which at the end would produce mainly young people: "with a modern concept [of agriculture] whose minds have been disabused of all the cultural deficiencies and taboos and superstitions about the industry … who will be sufficiently energized to go out there and put their experience to work and start to see the nobility in agriculture".

A similar link between relevance and national development was also suggested by teacher William, and consultants Wilma and Fred who recommended that the curriculum include training programmes in Hybrid and Solar Technologies given the enormity of the solar resources available to the country. According to Wilma, "We have plenty sun". Such programmes they further submitted had tremendous potential for employment generation.

(iii) The inclusiveness and outreach of The College

The third theme alluded to by the findings, related the relevance of The College to inclusiveness and community involvement. This theme is in keeping with the Government's agreements with UNESCO's Education For All (EFA) agenda and the United Nation's Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals (MDGs and SDGs). The GoRTT's adherence to these conventions reflects the neocolonial influence of the multi-lateral institutions over local policies although these in themselves are not legally binding. The multi-lateral agenda has been incorporated into the policies of the regulatory agencies such as those of the NTA and the

ACTT. The National Policy Framework (2015) claims to be "guided by these global and regional objectives" (ibid. p.3), particularly in the provision of inclusive and equitable education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all" (ibid., p. 3). *The Policy on Tertiary Education TVET and Lifelong Learning in Trinidad and Tobago (*MSTTE, 2010a, p. 25) outlines its vision of a seamless educational system which would eliminate physical, social and environmental barriers to access, to all persons with the desire and capacity to learn, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, or special education needs.

With reference to the College and its efforts to be more inclusive, the findings made three suggestions. These were: (i), increasing access to The College to persons with physical and other challenges, (ii), assisting communities in need of help and (iii), providing opportunities to communities to voice their ideas and create awareness of various issues through the hosting of seminars or other events.

According to consultant Fred and managers, Harry and Kathleen, The College, by providing training to individuals with physical or cognitive challenges would add value to the lives of a segment of the population which might not have had that opportunity previously. While conceding that more needed to be done, Kathleen spoke of current efforts by The College to accommodate individuals with physical or other challenges. According to her, The College had organized workshops to sensitise lecturers about learning disabilities in adults and in addition had awarded the first, of what is expected to be an annual scholarship, to a high performing student from the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities in 2018. Although Fred concurred with Kathleen's recommendation, he noted that the College would have difficulty facilitating students with physical challenges in many of the practical aspects of the TVET programme because of its limited resources.

With regard to the second aspect of inclusiveness, that is assisting communities, Harry noted that The College had demonstrated its relevance in the past by providing both storage space and transport to hard-hit communities in times of disaster. In addition, he highlighted the relationship between The College and "Habitat for Humanity", the organization which assisted in building homes for those in need. Electrical Installation students of The College, had helped to wire houses under construction. Debbie also referred to the food and toy drives for communities in need that were regularly organized by The College.

According to the data, the third view related relevance to inclusiveness and community interaction. This perspective was stressed by a cross section of participants in both the first and second sets of interviews. In the second set of interviews, Fred, Harry and Kathleen all referenced the recently hosted seminar by The College, entitled, "Living Sustainably". Both the student body and the general public had been invited and it had been moderately well attended. The seminar provided both information and the opportunity for discussion, with regard to the topics of Entrepreneurship, Opportunities in Agriculture and also the Importance of Solar Energy to Householders. The success of the Seminar confirmed that this was a useful method of raising awareness of relevant issues as well as of providing a space for the community to have a voice.

7.2.2 Analysis and Discussion: The Social and Cultural Relevance of The College

The concept of "social and cultural relevance" is extensively examined in the Literature Review and provides a number of angles by which the efforts of The College to achieve this might be viewed. In this section, I rely on the perspectives of Ladson-Billings (2014), Reviere (2002), Dei (2006), Nettleford (2002), Carrington (2002) and Smith (2007) to provide the means by which these attempts might be analysed and discussed. Much of the discussion below relates to the TVET curriculum of the College. I also examine the concept of "change" as it might apply to The College in its efforts to become more socially and culturally relevant. The themes discussed above relate the relevance of the College to the: usefulness of its training, its potential contribution to national development and to its community involvement.

From my own perspective, I see "social and cultural relevance" as a dynamic, aspirational construct which propels us as Caribbean people toward perceptions and behaviours in which we interpret our existence from a postcolonial Caribbean perspective, whereby we place ourselves at the centre of any discourse. We define ourselves using constructivist ontologies and epistemologies which means that in whatever context we find ourselves, we determine its relevance based on our perception of our reality. Ladson Billings (2014, p.75), defines "culture" as "as an amalgamation of human activity, production, thought, and belief systems" a perspective which is broad enough to encompass the various outcomes which The College is trying to achieve. .

Much of Ladson-Billings' work on "cultural relevance" was designed to assist teachers in predominantly African-American urban schools. She identified the acquisition of: academic success; cultural competence and socio-political skills as three ways by which such relevance might be achieved. To Ladson-Billings therefore, education was not simply about certification after training but also about an awareness and appreciation of one's own cultural background. It was also about the acquisition of a socio-political consciousness that would create the ability to use the lessons learnt in school to solve real world problems. Ladson-Billings (ibid.) also referred to this ability as having a critical consciousness, or an awareness of the oppressive aspects of one's own life. It is useful therefore, to benchmark the TVET programmes offered by The College against this multi-dimensional definition of cultural relevance.

Ladson-Billings' first criterion is *academic success*. According to the findings, students come to The College to acquire training and certification in TVET and in as much as they achieve these, then their educational experience may be deemed to be successful. With regard to the second and third criteria however, the neocolonial context of education which was discussed earlier in Chapters 2 and 3, militates against the acquisition of Ladson-Billings' other measures, namely, *"cultural competence"* and *"critical consciousness"*. The reasons for this are obvious. The TVET *focus* is foreign. Its curriculum originates abroad and is based on universalist principles arising from the ethnocentric nature and purpose of its design. GGIL was a qualifications' provider to the colonial authorities in Trinidad and Tobago nearly one hundred years ago and the ontological and epistemological orientation of its TVET programmes has not changed much. More generally, the foreign focus of the higher education sector was further entrenched by the increased multinationalisation and internationalisation which followed the introduction of the GATS in 1995.

Another reason for the foreign orientation might occur because institutions themselves choose to downplay the acquisition of **"cultural competence"** when as Van Vught (2008) notes, their attempts to conform to international norms and standards, cause them to adopt foreign educational characteristics at the expense of indigenous models. Institutional preferences, colonial mind-sets or expediency might also explain the use of foreign text books, syllabi and course materials.

 The *context* of the TVET curriculum in terms of its content, imagery and language is that of a western industrialised environment. Interestingly though, the findings of the study alluded to TVET as a domain where the origin of technical programmes was immaterial, epitomized by

Fred's observation that "A skill is a skill". Notwithstanding this however, the implicit curricular assumption, emphasised by syllabi, textbooks, course materials and assessments, is that such technology and technical learning must come from abroad. This is not surprising because from its inception, the development of indigenous knowledge, except at the colonial ICTA, was never a focus of higher education in the Caribbean. According to the *Future of Tertiary Education and Skills Training 2015-2025: A National Policy Framework (MTEST, 2015, p. 6),* spending on research and innovation in Trinidad and Tobago, which was representative of Central America and the Caribbean was less than 0.1% of GDP. This was the lowest performing region in the world. The failure of higher education to examine and initiate locally based technology and technical knowledge perpetuates the Dependency Syndrome, addressed in Chapter 3.

Much of the critique of the current TVET curriculum above, resonates in the work of Reviere (2002) and Nettleford (2002). Reviere's (ibid.) Afrocentric perspective, relies heavily on the work of Molefi Asanti (1980), and stresses the importance of the centrality of one's cultural context in determining the nature of one's educational experience. Reviere asserts that education in its neocolonial framework, has been associated with privilege and with an approach that sees learners as passive receptors of knowledge instead of empowered and self-motivated individuals. According to her, an education system which is based on the principles of Afrocentrism, will be both useful and geared to the promotion of human well-being.

Nettleford's (ibid.) perspectives have some similarities to those of Reviere. He holds that all curricula should be infused with a Caribbean ethos, a cultural perspective that would avoid the adoption of ultimately damaging western conventions. Similarly, Smith's (2007) work on indigeneity, although pertaining to research with the Maori, resonates with that of Nettleford (ibid.) regarding education, in terms of centring landscapes, values, images and metaphors on that which is indigenous.

Like Reviere, (ibid.), Carrington (2002) sees the need for adult education to be socially useful. Deploring the fragmented and irrelevant nature of current adult education, he identifies three problems for which critical focus is required. These include the teaching of relevant skills to assist populations to deal with globalisation or as he expresses it, "global market forces in an aggressively invasive world" (ibid. p.30). The other problems requiring attention, include, the HIV pandemic and the degradation of the Caribbean environment. Further, the emphasis on education as an investment, a perspective espoused by the multilateral institutions in a bid to

increase the productivity of the work force, is at odds with the objectives of a critically conscious curriculum. Based on the critique above, the current TVET curriculum of The College except in the limited sense of employment preparation, does not match the criteria of social and cultural relevance.

Underlying my definition of "social and cultural relevance" above, is the notion of agency and freedom. An education that is liberatory is one which actively rejects the imposition of western paradigms, ontologies and epistemologies and the structuring of educational systems in ways that privilege western interests (Nguyen et al., 2009). Dei's (2006) approach to confronting any attempts at oppression, rests on an anti-colonial stance which is based on the validation and understanding of indigeneity, and "the pursuit of agency, resistance and subjective politics". In other words, Dei's emphasis on agency and continuing resistance, differs from the perspective that shapes the view of the "Ideal Caribbean Person" (discussed in chapter 3), which had emerged from the Montego Bay Conference of 1997. While this latter formulation has several laudable qualities, it lacks a certain "critical consciousness" that would lead the "The Ideal Caribbean Person" to confront oppression. The TVET curriculum with its Metropolitan bias and compliance with the status quo would perpetuate neocolonialism by allowing such individuals to fit seamlessly into the global socio-cultural environment rather than to confront its domination. It follows then that programmes aimed at social and cultural relevance require curricula which stress awareness of oppression and strategies to confront it. The implementation of such strategies is dependent on the will of the institution itself to effect change, a notion which is discussed below.

One of the objectives of The College is to become a transformational institution by becoming more socially and culturally relevant. What are the factors that contribute to successful change? According to Connolly and Seymour (2015, p. 2) Change Theory is a "predictive assumption about the relationship between desired changes and the actions that may produce these changes". Such predictability is based on a clear understanding of the nature of the context as well as of the assumptions underlying both the desired change and the change agent itself (Weiss, 1995). What are the factors within this context that might   propel or inhibit transformation? The College is subject to both the direct forces of control, in terms of the regulatory agencies and to the indirect pressures exerted by local and global market forces. Can it be assumed that because the institution is privately owned and managed, that it has sufficient "agency" to change itself as it wishes or is it too deeply enmeshed in the neo-colonial

framework to do so? Another factor that influences change is the way that it is implemented. Darling-Hammond (2005) contends that change fails because of the gap between the policy design and the implementation which she notes becomes modified at every stage. The role of leadership and feedback are critical factors in engendering sustainable change according to Wiggins and Mctighe (2007).

The College also wishes to sustain itself. Does this mean that it is required to conform to an educational status quo that is structured to support western economic interests? Finally, are there any nascent possibilities for transformation to exist and thrive in the spaces within the Neocolonial structures that encase The College? These questions will be further discussed in chapter 8.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

8.1 Overview

This research is based on my inherent interest in The College; a college to which I am bound by family ties, by my livelihood and by my interest in education. The College is a multi-faceted, privately owned institution, which provides technical and vocational education and training at the post-secondary/tertiary level. The main objective of the study is to understand the place of this institution within the context of Trinidad and Tobago. To this end, interviewee's responses were analysed to understand their perceptions of the roles performed by The College as well as the issues which face the institution. I have used a neocolonial lens to examine these perspectives.

In chapter 1, I set the scene by presenting my heart-felt reflections about the current context in which The College finds itself by identifying both its struggles and opportunities. The chapter then went on to outline the aims, rationales and relevant concepts that shape the study. Next, Chapter 2 provided the historical background of Higher Education (inclusive of TVET) in Trinidad and Tobago as well as of The College itself. The objective was to highlight the colonial and neocolonial continuities over the span of more than five hundred years. Following this, the Literature Review in Chapter 3, sought to introduce the framework upon which the study was based by presenting an eclectic array of theories and literature, ranging from studies on Postcolonialism, through those on Globalisation, Curriculum, Governance and Cultural Relevance. In Chapter 4, where the focus was on Methodology, I explained that I chose a Decolonizing approach to my study because I was aware of my relatively powerful position vis-à-vis that of the respondents, with reference to my roles as researcher and participant. In this chapter also, I explained my choices regarding methodologies and methods and outlined my approach to the ethical issues that might arise.

In Chapters 5, 6 and 7, I presented my findings which were based on the Research Questions and these were simultaneously analysed and discussed in those chapters as well. Finally, chapter 8, pulled all of the strands together. It presented: the findings, conclusions, recommendations as well as my reflections on what has been a tremendous journey of learning. It also gave a synopsis of the struggle of which the title of the Dissertation speaks.

8.2 Findings

The findings of the study are drawn from the responses of participants in semi-structured interviews and are discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7. The findings below which were based on the concepts of "curriculum", "governance", "quality" and "social and cultural relevance" relate to: (i) the role of The College, (ii), the issues which it faces and (iii) its efforts to become more socially and culturally relevant.

8.2.1 The Role of The College

(i) With regard to its *role*, (Research Question 1), the findings indicate that The College:

- provides TVET training to students who primarily value this as a means of accessing remunerative employment in the energy/industrial sector. Such training also helps students to: balance resumes, prepare for further study and become more effective at work.
- awards foreign certification which is considered to be more prestigious than local certification, and which is perceived to be advantageous in securing employment at home and abroad,
- implements a TVET curriculum in which the skills taught are universally applicable whether they are certified locally or abroad.
- can only survive as an educational institution, if it widens its business model by focussing more on providing customized training for firms and by entering new fields of training,
- is becoming more involved in the business of education and is adopting pedagogical models that are related to the perception of education as a commodity,
- is likely to prioritize business objectives, when these conflict with educational objectives and
- is a vehicle for perpetuating the legacy of the founder.

8.2.2 The Issues which Face The College

(ii) With regard to the *issues* which face The College in its struggle for survival and transformation (Research Question 2), the findings indicate that:

- The institution lacks sustainable funding, partly as a result of the slashing of GATE subsidies to students and also from other factors arising from the contraction of the economy,
- the sustainability of future CGIL programmes is in doubt due to the perception that CGIL is scaling down its relationship with the Caribbean and by extension The College,

• the delays regarding payments from Government institutions as well as delays which follow requests for programme and institutional approval from State agencies are detrimental to the sustainability of The College and

• logistical conflicts exist between business and educational objectives which affect the delivery of the TVET curriculum.

8.2.3 Social and Cultural Relevance

(i) With regard to the efforts of The College to be socially and culturally relevant (Research Question 3), the data reveal that:

• The College is perceived to be relevant through its training and certification efforts in TVET. Relevance is related to usefulness of training in terms of:
  - o assisting in the personal enhancement of students' qualifications
  - o contributing to the development of Trinidad and Tobago.

• stakeholders perceive relevance to be related to community involvement and to the inclusion of communities of students with physical and cognitive challenges and that

• The College needs to expand its Community outreach for example through the hosting of Seminars and the like.

8.3 A Synopsis of the Struggle of the College to Survive and to Transform itself in a Neocolonial Environment

The title of this dissertation, presents itself as a struggle by The College to survive and transform itself in neocolonial Trinidad between 1997 and 2018. Below is a synopsis of this struggle which occurs in an environment that exerts what appears to be an inexorable force that compels institutions to conform to the status quo. Nevertheless limited opportunities for transformation do exist within this neocolonial   framework.

8.3.1 The Context of the Struggle

During the colonial era, the main purpose of higher education in Trinidad and Tobago was according to Lavia (2012, p. 14), to "provide the infrastructure for power and control, in which the legitimacy of metropolitan rule would be established and maintained". Today despite its Independence, Trinidad and Tobago is encased in a neocolonial economic, social and political system, in which the objectives of education largely mirror those of the colonial period.

The neocolonial framework is supported by an economic structure whereby the ownership of the energy resources of the country is still largely foreign and subject to the repercussions of global price and supply shifts. In other words, the economy is subject to external propulsion. Politically and judicially, the country retains both the Westminster Parliamentary system and the Privy Council respectively. Socially, the higher education system imitates the institutions of developed countries and manifests a dependency syndrome with respect to its reliance on these countries for curricula, text books, course materials, certification and online content. The governance structures and curricula are similar to those of institutions in developed countries as well, and are made even more so by the links maintained by the ACTT and its adherence through its QA systems, to the international standards of credits, credentials and rankings. The dominance of western hegemonic educational systems and structures has continued even after Independence, ensuring that Trinidad and Tobago's economy continues to prepare itself to fit easily into the global capitalist network.

The neocolonial nature of Trinidad and Tobago is also reflected in the dualistic structure of the economy, whereby the dynamic foreign dominated modern sector contrasts sharply with the stagnant locally owned, traditional sector (Lewis 1954). Despite Independence, the developmental economic models selected have done little to change this dualistic structure thus perpetuating a lop-sidedness that is reflected in the education system.

8.3.2 The Struggle

Given the unbalanced nature of the economy, the survival of the College and other private institutions within the post-secondary/tertiary sector requires that they orient their business and educational strategies to the modern rather than to the traditional sector. Their curricula will thus reflect the type of training that   is required by the labour force in the industrial /energy

sectors which service western capitalist interests. The struggle for survival arises from the economic volatility of the externally propelled domestic economy, (dominated as it is by the modern sector) and the consequences of this on both the economy and the financial capacity of the Government. When the economy contracts due to external factors in the energy market, the repercussions include rising unemployment and a reduction in the Government's tax revenue. The resultant effects of these are a fall in demand for training by firms and individuals alike, as well as the reduced ability of the government to finance training through programmes such as GATE. These occurrences have put the survival of the college at stake.

With regard to the struggle for transformation, The College is constrained externally, by the inability of firms and individuals in the traditional sector (wherein lie many opportunities for transformation), to afford training and internally by its own limited resources. The lack of emphasis placed on the traditional sector is reflected in the neglect of agriculture and the disregard of development of renewable technologies. Internally, the College is unable to offer programmes that are not self- sustaining.

Clearly then, the nature of the education system reinforces neocolonial patterns within the country and thus perpetuates the status quo. These patterns are further entrenched now that the GoRTT has adopted the discursive perspectives of the multi-lateral institutions whereby educational funding is now perceived as an "investment" and the labour force as "human capital". Internationalisation and the growing importance of foreign institutions and programmes have further entrenched neocolonialism. Can private institutions which depend on the custom of individuals and firms that seek their own financial interests, play a transformative role in these circumstances? Is there any room within this neocolonial cage to make a difference and become socially and culturally relevant? The short answer to this is "Yes, but with difficulty". The section below outlines some of the ways that The College has sought to survive and transform itself.

8.3.3 Attempts by The College to Sustain and Transform Itself

The College has sought to face its challenges in a number of ways. These include becoming a Training Solutions Provider to companies and also by developing new programmes and modalities of training.

(i) Becoming a Training Solutions Provider

This approach requires The College to undertake Training Gap analyses and to develop and conduct customized training. Thus education is now perceived by the institution from a business perspective with consequential effects on the ontological and epistemological focus of the training programmes. In catering to the market, convenience and efficiency are prioritised. Programmes/courses which are positivist in orientation, are modularized and delivered in transmissive and transactional modes akin to Freire's (1968) "banking" concept of teaching. This corporate focus further entrenches a neocolonial outlook in education.

(ii) Designing, Developing and Implementing New Training Programmes

The College is also designing, developing and implementing new programmes in agriculture (particularly cocoa), solar and hybrid technologies which has given it a small window of opportunity to exercise some agency of its own with regard to objectives and training. This gives the institution some leeway in focussing on relevance by embedding indigenous concepts related to the country's history and culture into these curricula. Nevertheless, the programmes continue to reinforce old patterns of dependency since they are still largely benchmarked against foreign programmes and rely on foreign training materials. Another initiative that The College has explored is offering programmes to Guyana, which has recently developed its own oil industry, but which lacks the requisite trained labour. This is an area with much potential and from which The College stands to benefit given its experience in this sector.

Both the opportunity and the need to develop new programmes has arisen mainly because of the changing relationship with the main Qualifications' Provider, CGIL. The changing relationship and its implications have caused some ambivalence on my part. Aside from the breaking of old ties with the CGIL Head office staff, the sustainability of The College might also be negatively affected by venturing into new areas with uncertain economic outcomes. It cannot be denied however that it is exciting to contemplate the possibility of shaking off hegemonic bonds and choosing to become not only autonomous but also to offer indigenous programmes.

The concept of "social and cultural relevance" embodies macro, meso and micro elements. Using a macroperspective, I have described social and cultural relevance as a Postcolonial aspiration and in my opinion it is through an exploration of such Postcolonial concepts that the efforts to achieve educational relevance must start. The awareness of oneself, as defined by oneself, is where the journey of transformation begins. Ladson-Billings (2014) posits that

education for cultural relevance must include the acquisition of cultural competence and critical consciousness in addition to academic competence. Bristol's (2012) and Reviere's (2002) emphasis on the need for reflection of historic plantation legacies to heighten consciousness is a useful technique which when combined with Smith's (2007) focus on indigeneity provide a meso approach to transforming education through a praxis focussed curriculum.

Finally, contemplating the requirements necessary for successful change within the institution and the specific nature of leadership required are approached from the micro-level. Darling-Hammond (2005), posits that a transformative curriculum, requires that leaders, "develop capacity" rather than "design controls" because of the inevitable gaps that occur between policy and implementation. Finally, she asserts the need for total overall commitment and widespread engagement by all stakeholders to change. With regard to The College, I assert that such a process of change starts with first, a Postcolonial awareness of context and reality and second, a commitment to transformation to a position of social and cultural relevance.

8.4 Conclusions of the Study

The findings of this study, of which as a participant, I am also a part, have convinced me that currently, both private and public post-secondary /tertiary institutions have a precarious existence in Trinidad and Tobago. The dramatic decrease in students enrolling for higher education in the country since 2012, namely, 49% in Tertiary education and 50% in TVET shows a similar trend in the experience of The College. The rise in youth unemployment and the slashing of State funding for tuition subsidies make the future appear quite bleak. On the other hand, it is possible that the dire economic situation might provoke real interest in the development of new economic sectors with a consequential increase in the demand for training in those areas.

Another conclusion, is that the focus of education and training at the higher educational level is likely to become more market oriented and less focussed on development in its widest sense. As the role of the Government has shrunk, and that of the private sector increased, (particularly the "internationalised sector"), the neocolonial orientation of the economy is likely to become even more marked. Further, as programmes become more marketised, the pedagogical approaches to learning will become less focussed on areas of critical thinking and more on occupational training. The demand for programmes such as Accountancy and Finance

(Rosemin & Ovid, 2008) which might provide credentials for entry into economic sectors with strong international links is likely to continue, leading to an oversupply of trained people in certain areas and a shortage in others. As has happened in the past, this might constitute a "push" factor leading to an exacerbation of the "Brain Drain" from the country. With the reduction in State financing of tuition, higher education will become less accessible and as a result more inequitable in the future as individual are called upon to pay for their own education.

The TVET sector is expected to contract even further in the future because not enough is being done to incentivise persons to enter. The recent slashing of GATE funding for example, will deter individuals who wish to register for Level 2 programmes which fall just below the tertiary threshold required for funding. . With fewer persons entering at this gateway, it is obvious that there will be fewer persons to enter the higher technician training levels. Private institutions are therefore forced to adopt market oriented strategies to survive, and in so doing, further entrench the status quo.

8.5 Recommendations for Future Research

This research has been based on a Case Study of a Private-For-Profit institution in Trinidad and Tobago. Despite the fact that such institutions comprise more than 95% of the Higher Education sector and cater to more than 40% of the students at this level, information about this type of entity is relatively scarce. I would therefore recommend, that in light of their significance to the sector, that more research be undertaken about private sector higher educational institutions. Base line studies which identify their characteristics as well as the issues which they face would assist regulatory agencies of the state to formulate policies of external governance that might assist these private institutions and clarify the parameters of their authority.

A second recommendation for research is one which explores the potential of public –private institutional cooperation. Unlike public educational institutions, many private TVET institutions like The College suffer from a lack of resources such as well-equipped laboratories and machine shops. In view of the expense of equipping such facilities, and the reality of falling numbers of students, cooperative relationships that would allow for the sharing of resources would be beneficial to both organisations. The students of private colleges would have access

to equipment and facilities which they might otherwise not have done and the public institutions will earn income from the rental of resources which otherwise might have been underutilised. Research can possibly examine the nature of the relationships and the conditions under which these could take place.

8.6 The Significance of this Research

Although more than 95% of higher level institutions are located in the private sector, relatively little research has been conducted about this sector. This dissertation therefore attempts to contribute to the literature in this area.

Although the findings of this research cannot be generalized, the Case is one of intrinsic interest. It provides insights into a unique institution and its struggle for survival and transformation in a neocolonial context. At the very least, it can cause a pause for thought.

Thirdly, this Insider Research displays the perspectives of both participants and the researcher. The Case, enhanced by an autoethnographic addition, provides a unique opportunity to explore the viewpoints of stakeholders in the institution inclusive of the researcher in her dual role in which she shares her deeply personal emotions. The potential difficulties of Insider Research in the institution are identified as well as the steps taken to ameliorate them.

8.7 My Research Journey

Reflections

My research journey began many years ago and was marked by several interruptions, rest stops, death, and other obstacles. Now, as the journey draws to a close, it is comforting to know that the many stresses, sleepless nights, the uncertainties and worry will hopefully be vague memories of the past.

At the start of my research journey, the way forward was unclear, obscured as it was by clouds of indecision, mountains of research and the promise of uncharted territory ahead. Nevertheless, I found solace in the tales of those who had successfully traversed the landscape,

and whose accounts gave promise of safe passage in this journey toward a destination called a doctoral thesis.

Stepping forward, with well-meaning but disparate pieces of advice ringing in my ears, my progress was slow. I made as many steps forward, as I made missteps backward and it was only after reaching one more dead end, that it dawned on me that my approach was flawed. It was only then, that I realized, that this was my journey; no one else's, and that I would need to map my own path and set my own course.

During this research journey, I determined that one of my aims in undertaking this dissertation should involve my achieving a new mind set; a different approach to my usual way of thinking and one which would require me to learn, unlearn and re-learn (Toffler, 1970) certain attitudes and behaviours. My learning during the course of this research project was overwhelming, multifaceted and encompassing. It ranged from the pragmatic to the profound and included the attainment of new perspectives, new skills and new behaviours. Nevertheless, for me, two areas of learning were particularly notable. The first was practical and concerned the acquisition of research skills which were necessary to accomplish the research project and the second was more philosophical and reflective, in allowing me to gain insights about myself.

Learning Research Skills

Qualitative research skills appeared easy to learn and apply at first sight, nevertheless they were more difficult to understand than I expected. After several false starts, what I eventually gleaned from the experience was that I could not simply learn how to conduct research in the same way as if I were attempting to acquire a "craft skill". I realized that I needed to understand the philosophical underpinning of the research study and to reconcile it with my own philosophic world view. In doing so, I was required to: first, clarify the nature of the knowledge that I was seeking, second, to understand how I would make sense or meaning of it, and third, to decide how I would represent it.

My choice of a constructivist paradigm provided me with the appropriate framework for my research, in that it was able to accommodate multiple perspectives and allowed for the dialogical construction of meaning from the "rich, thick data" which I had acquired from my respondents.

Learning about myself

The second aspect of my learning concerns my experiences with The College an institution with which I have been associated, both directly and indirectly for the past two decades. According to Sikes and Potts (2008, p.7), ethnographers are exhorted to "make the familiar strange" and to "make the strange familiar". Making the familiar strange was manifest in the disparity between my own perceptions of the curriculum and governance of the institution and those of the findings of the study. In other words, despite my apparent familiarity with the curriculum and governance of The College, it was strange for me to discover that there were particular weaknesses within these areas, and that there were areas of potential conflict between various business, family and educational objectives embedded within the governance structures of The College.

With regard to the second aspect of the exhortation, "that of making the strange familiar", I have learned from stakeholder responses about new directions such as agricultural training which The College might follow, as it attempts to grapple with the declining economic fortunes of Trinidad and Tobago. It is imperative that I consider these new pathways as possible solutions that might help to ensure the survival of the institution, upon which so many depend.

A third area of learning afforded by my participation in this project rests on my perception of myself and of what I am capable. The period of engagement with this dissertation occurred over two tumultuous periods of my life, the first, the death of my husband the founder of The College and the second, the dramatic decline in the fortunes of The College. The period was marked by severe bouts of despondency and feelings of inadequacy when, I struggled with myself as to whether to continue with my studies or to give up on them knowing how much my presence and focus were required at The College.

I have learned that I am vulnerable when I feel overwhelmed, but I have also learned that I am strong and resolute. I have persevered with my studies in spite of the sickness and death of my husband as well as of bearing the responsibilities of managing and leading The College. Over recent years the challenges of keeping the institution afloat, during a period of precipitously falling revenue and student numbers have been difficult. Nevertheless, exciting new opportunities have opened up with tantalising glimpses of a future that provide hope that The College will be able to both survive and transform itself.

Nevertheless, during my journey, I made two promises to myself, one, that I would complete my doctoral thesis and two, that I would use every iota of my strength to ensure the survival of

The College. I became resolute in my determination that I would see these two enterprises to the end; a determination that was bolstered by the tremendous outpouring of support from my family, friends, office staff and others. I have learned then, that feelings of panic and inadequacy are not unusual when buffeted by stressful circumstances. I have learnt also, the importance of having a belief in oneself and also of surrounding oneself with a strong support group.

Unlearning

I define "unlearning" as a process of discarding old attitudes and beliefs if they inhibit personal growth. Engaging in this dissertation has given me the opportunity to unlearn particular beliefs and ways of thinking.

First, the act of participating in this dissertation process has helped me to unlearn previous beliefs such as, for example, that I was incapable of engaging in educational programmes at this level. The outcome of this process of engagement has had consequential influences on other aspects of my life, particularly on my willingness to accept challenges in areas which I would have bypassed previously. Finally, I have had to unlearn attitudes which served me well in Management, that is, in the day-to-day running of the organization and instead, to assume attitudes more in keeping with my leadership role in the institution.

Relearning

I define "relearning" as a process of re-engaging, or looking with new and different eyes, at a previously understood phenomenon, situation or way of thinking. It does not mean learning anew about something which has been forgotten; the focus instead is on reengagement with the same phenomenon, but from a different perspective.

I am relearning about "education" and its role. Initially, I considered education mainly in terms of its role in social reproduction. My views however, underwent a sea change after 2008, upon attending the Sheffield Study School, where my eyes were gradually awakened to a fuller understanding of the transformative potential of education and educational institutions. Today, several years later, after becoming more involved in educational philosophy, and engaging with the stakeholders who were the respondents in my dissertation, I am relearning the meaning of education. Today, I see its transformative and empowering potential that is, once that potential is relevant and centred on the lives of those whom it intends to benefit.

The lessons emerging from the opportunities in undertaking this dissertation with regard to "learning, unlearning and relearning", will emanate beyond this experience and will contribute toward ensuring that The College is focused on being socially and culturally relevant.

Having come to the end, I state unequivocally that my involvement in this research project and my experiences as Principal and Managing Director of The College have changed my life. In this the twenty-second year of the existence of the institution, and in this the 7th anniversary of the death of my husband, much has changed since my initiation into the roles of researcher and leader. My confusion has been transformed to determination, my vulnerability to strength and my fear to courage. Paradoxically, in recent years The College has faced its greatest challenges, challenges in which it is literally fighting for its very survival. These are the qualities, determination, strength and courage that I will need in my fight to keep it alive.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Sheffield Approval

Sandra West   **Head of School**
EdD Caribbean Professor Jackie Marsh

Department of Educational Studies
388 Glossop Road
Sheffield
S10 2JA

27 February 2012   **Telephone:** +44 (0)114 222 8115

Email: t.a.earnshaw@sheffield.ac.uk

Dear Sandra

ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER
Standing on the Sidelines: An analysis of the perceptions of stakeholders about the role and sustainability
of a private tertiary level, technical institution in Trinidad and Tobago

Thank you for submitting your ethics application. I am writing to confirm that your application has
now been approved.

You can proceed with your research but we recommend you refer to the reviewers' additional
comments (please see attached).

This letter is evidence that your application has been approved and should be included as an
Appendix in your final submission.

Good luck with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Simon Warren
Chair of the School of Education Ethics Review Panel

cc   Pat Sikes
Enc   Ethical Review Feedback Sheet(s)

Appendix 2 - Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project:

Standing on the Sidelines: An analysis of the perceptions of stakeholders about the role and sustainability of a private tertiary level, technical institution in Trinidad and Tobago.

Name of Researcher: Sandra West

Participant Identification Number for this project:

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the Information Sheet dated _____ 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. (Researcher's phone number is1 868 788 04030).

3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. ☐ I give permission for the researcher to use my anonymised responses.

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

- **Name of Participant** (or legal representative). _____

  Date and signature _____

- **Name of Person taking consent** (If differentfrom the Lead Researcher.To be signed in the

  presence of the participant). _____

  Date and Signature _____

- **Name of Participant** (or legal representative). _____

  Date and signature _____

Appendix 3 Sample questions

<center>**Sample Questionnaire**</center>

Title of Project:

Through Stakeholders' Eyes: A Review of the Governance Structures, Policies, Programmes and Practices of ITVE and the Prospects for Institutional Transformation.

<u>**Sample**</u> of Interview Questions for Research Project.

DATE

A.   BIO:

      What is your stakeholder relationship with ITVE/ (Student, Teacher etc)

B.   PROGRAMMES

How do you perceive the programmes offered by ITVE ?

Questions will be concerned with the following:

- Technical and Vocational areas
- Foreign origin of programmes
- Suggestions for other programmes

C.   POLICIES AND PRACTICES

How do you perceive the policies and practices of ITVE?

Questions will be concerned with the following:

- Policies of ITVE e.g. Payment, Conduct, Health
- Practices of ITVE e. g. Teaching and Learning

D.   Governance structure of ITVE

- In what ways are private institutions run differently from public institutions like MIC?
- In what ways are family owned institutions different from non- family owned institutions?
- The role of students at ITVE.

E.   Transformational prospects.

- How might ITVE make a difference in the lives of their students, as well as in Trinidad

Sheffield Thesis Interview Questions

Title of Project:

Through Stakeholders' Eyes: A Review of the Governance Structures, Policies, Programmes and Practices of ITVE and the Prospects for Institutional Transformation.

Interview Questions for Research Project.

DATE

CODENAME ---

A.   BIO:

1.   Male or female

2.   Age Range : 18 – 27, 28-37, 38-47, 48-

3.   Programme

4.   Level

5.   How long have you been associated with ITVE?

6.   What is your stakeholder relationship with ITVE/ (Student, Teacher etc)

B.   PROGRAMMES

1.   From your perspective , how would you say Trinidadians view Tech Voc Education compared with other types of education? ……………and the people who go into Tech Voc?

2.   How do you perceive the programmes that ITVE offers? (Relevant, sufficient, too theoretical, irrelevant, wide or narrow variety?)

3.   What are some of the other programmes that you think ITVE could offer that could be relevant to students and the country as a whole? (Technical and Non Technical)

4.   The majority of programmes offered by ITVE are foreign. How do you feel about this? Should more or less be offered?

5.   How might the foreign qualification help students?

6.   How might the foreign qualification hinderstudents?

7.   In your view how would you rate local and foreign programmes. (Is one better than the other?)

C.   POLICIES AND PRACTICES

1.   Are you familiar with any of the policies of ITVE?

2.   How did you find out about the policies?

3.   How do you perceive ITVE's Quality Policy?

4.   How do you perceive ITVE's t policies, e.g. Payment Plans, Late fees, No exams unless fees paid up.

5.   What are some of your recommendations regarding policy? Teachers, Students, Quality School.

6.   Are you familiar with any of thepractices ofITVE? (Teaching ,Learning, Quality, Business)

7.   How did you find out about the practices?

8.   How do you perceive ITVE's Quality Practices?

9.   What are some of your recommendations regarding practices? Teachers, Students, Quality School

D.   GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF ITVE

1.   What are your perceptions of the Governance of ITVE? (With regard to students, etc)

2.   ITVE is a private institution. How does the way that it is run, differ from other public institutions like UTT and MIC etc.?

3.   ITVE is also a family run organisation. How does this make it different in the way that it is run from other institutions?

4.   How do you perceive the family influences on the organisation? What do you perceive as the effects of these influences?

5.   What do you perceive is the role of consultants in the Governance of the school? What role can students play?

E.   TRANSFORMATIONAL PROSPECTS

1.   What are your perceptions of ITVE's prospects of becoming a transformational institution to students and to Trinidad?

2.   How might ITVE do this --- for Students, Teachers

3. What in your view are some areas that ITVE is making a difference in the lives of its students currently.

4. What are some other areas that it might seek to transform in the future? (Students ,Trinidad)

5. ITVE certifies students who have fulfilled the requirements of their programme. How else might ITVE make a difference in the lives of their students? (What are the strengths of ITVE

6. What are its weaknesses?

THANK YOU.

Appendix 4 Information sheet

Information Sheet

1. *What is the title of the Research Project?*

Standing on the Sidelines: An analysis of the perceptions of stakeholders about the role and sustainability of a private tertiary level, technical institution in Trinidad and Tobago.

2. *What is this invitation to participate about?*

You are being invited to participate in a research project. This Information Sheet will explain the reason for the research and what participation will involve.

It is therefore important for you read the Information sheet and discuss it with others before you make a decision. Please feel free to ask me anything that you do not understand.

3. *What is the purpose of the study?*

This research is being done to complete the requirements for a Doctorate in Education from the University of Sheffield.

4. *Why is this research important and how long will it take?*

It is interesting to note, that although more than ninety percent of tertiary level institutions in Trinidad and Tobago, are privately owned and managed, very little is known about this sector. This research project therefore aims to shed some light in this area. It intends to do so by using this college as a Case Study to find out how its stakeholders (regulators, teachers, management, staff and students), perceive both its role, and its ability to continue on as a private, technical, tertiary level institution.

The entire project should be completed within a year and a half.

5. *Who else will be taking part and why have I been chosen?*

The twelve participants (stakeholders) whose perceptions will be analyzed, include regulators fromboth the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education (MSTTE), The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT), members of Management, members of the Teaching and Office Staffs, and students of the college.

You have been chosen because yourposition and / or relationship with the college is such, that you can provide special insights from your experiences and also because you have the ability to express yourself clearly.

DATE:

NAME OF APPLICANT:

6. *Is it compulsory to take part?*

No. Taking part is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to take part, or even to withdraw after you have agreed, it is alright. No reason has to be given and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits (to which you might have been entitled).

7. What will I have to do if I agree to take part?
If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form.

You will be asked to participate in an interview that will last between one and two hours. You **may** be asked to take part in one other shorter interview at a later date.

You will be expected to answer questions in the interview as clearly and honestly as you can, as well as to contribute any insights that can lead to a better understanding of what is being researched.

Sometime after the interview, you will be asked to review a written transcript of the interview to ensure that it is an accurate representation of your views.

8. Are there any possible disadvantages for me if I choose to take part?
Family members, Employees and Students may experience some anxiety, embarrassment or discomfort because of their relationship with the researcher. All participants are reminded that this study is **only for educational purposes**, and is based on the strict ethical requirements of the University of Sheffield. If there is any uneasiness, you are asked to bring this to my attention right away. **You will not be penalized for your views.**

9. Are there any possible advantages for me if I choose to take part?
Although there are no direct benefits to you as a participant, it is hoped that this research will be helpful in providing information and insights into a sector where there is very little information.

10. What happens if something goes wrong?
If you are concerned about something in the research process, please feel free to ask me to clarify the issue.

If you have a complaint about my conduct during the research process, then you can contact my supervisor; Professor Pat Sikes at p.j.sikes@sheffield.ac.uk

If you are still not satisfied with how the issue has been handled, you may contact the Registrar of Sheffield University.

DATE:

NAME OF APPLICANT:

11. Will my participation in this project be kept confidential?
the information that will be collected about you or your views will be kept confidential. All information pertaining to you will be coded so that you will **not** be able to be identified. All tapes and transcripts will be securely filed away.

12. What will happen to the results of the research project?

The results of this research will be published in a Doctoral thesis, which will be available from the relevant authorities of Sheffield University in due course. You will in no way be identified when the research is published and disseminated.

13. *Who is responsible for ethically reviewing this project?*
The **Ethics Review Panel of the School of Education of Sheffield University** is responsible for making sure that the proposed research fulfils the requirements for ethical research.

14. *How can I contact you (the researcher) if I need to?*
I may be contacted at:

- 1 868 788 0403
- sahelowe@hotmail.com
- Lot 4, BryansGate, Phillipine, San Fernando

DATE:

NAME OF APPLICANT:

Appendix 5 letter from Ministry of Education

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Government of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago
Funding and Grants Administration Division
16 Warner Street, St. Augustine
Port-of-Spain

Phone: (868) 663-0244 ext 2003   Fax: (868) 663–7812

August 15, 2016

All GATE Approved Tertiary Level Institutions

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Revision of the GATE Programme

As you may be aware, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) agreed to the establishment of a Task Force to review the Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses (GATE) Programme in March 2016. In July 2016, the Task Force was submitted a report to the Cabinet for consideration.

In August 2016, the GORTT agreed to the following:

a) *effective August 2016 students who are at present enrolled in various programmes will continue to receive funding for the entire programme;*

b) *students who are registered to begin programmes in 2016 be funded fully for the academic year 2016/2017;*

c) *effective for the academic year 2017-2018 and beyond, a means test be used to determine access to the GATE Programme;*

d) *the under-mentioned measures be implemented with effect from the academic year 2017-2018 and beyond:*

    i. *where the household income falls below $10,000.00 per month, students be eligible for 100 % funding*

    ii. *where the household income is above $10,000.00 per month, students will be required to pay 25% of their tuition fees*

    iii. *where the household income is above $30,000.00 per month, students will be required to pay 50% of tuition fees;*

e) *effective August 2017, funding for post graduate degrees be available to students whose programmes are in alignment with the country's developmental needs;*

f) *effective August 2017, only institutions and programmes accredited by the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) be funded;*

g) *effective August 2017, the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) programmes for Level III and above be funded;*

xcellence
in Education!

Appendix 6 Email from City and Guilds

Carribean Quality Assurance update

Dear Renee,

Please be advised that, due to a recent restructure of Quality teams, from December 2018, City & Guilds QA support for Caribbean Centres will be moved to our office in Johannesburg South Africa.

Queries concerning EV visits, reports, applications for approval and all other aspects of our QA model should be directed to **caribbeanquality@cityandguilds.com** or **+ 27 10 009 5421** going forward.

All QA issues will be dealt with by your new team who will continue to provide the best possible support to you.

Meet your new Quality assurance team

Jeanab Morris
Regional Quality Manager

Ekshana Devnarrian
Quality Assurance Coordinator

Andile Clifford
Quality Process Coordinator

Customer service and sales support for the Caribbean region remains in place in the Jamaica office, led by Marva Duncanson.

If you have any queries on the above, please don't hesitate to contact me.
toby.breaden@cityandguilds.com

Kind regards,

Toby Breaden
Territory Quality Manager – International & Nations | Quality Delivery