THE FORMS OF CAPITAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL CHANGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS: A CASE STUDY OF ARANGUEZ

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Abstract

The study explores higher education access in a marginalised community within a post-colonial context, specifically, why access was low given supportive government policies. The case study of Aranguez, a former sugar-cane plantation in Trinidad, involved interviews with descendants of East Indian indentured labourers of all ages, which allowed insight into intergenerational changes in education and impacts of policy shifts. The conceptual framework combined Bordieuan analytical concepts of social and cultural capital and postcolonial theory to analyse the data. Findings show a critical role for the mother and extended family (kin and non-kin) in first generation students' transitions to higher education. History, economics, and politics shape education policy formation and enactment from colonial to the post-colonial context, which provide new insights for critical education policy research. First, it expands our understanding of how intersections of race, class, religion, and geographical location operate as axes of marginalisation and discrimination resulting in inequitable access to education. Second, findings demonstrate how colonial legacies persist in education policy and the education system, operating to reproduce social inequality. In addition, a culture of violence lingers in the community along with intergenerational trauma, which have negative implications for educational access and life trajectories. The research challenges the global discourse to expand higher education in developing countries, as community members prefer informal training and and self-employment without formal higher education credentials. Findings demonstrate a need for education policy fit for the local context, addressing issues such as outreach and engagement of families; recognition of informal training; legacies of post-colonial trauma; brain drain; and the need for decolonisation of education.

Keywords: higher education access, social capital, cultural capital, post-colonial, Bourdieu, indentured labourer, intergenerational trauma, education policy

Dedication

For my late mother, Annie.

For my late sister, Devi, who transitioned at the dawn of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

For the indentured ancestors of Aranguez.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

‘A’ level – Advanced level (2 years of additional secondary school; entrance requirement for local university)

CARICOM – Caribbean Community

CAPE – Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination. Students who complete secondary education and wish to continue their studies sit the CAPE (replaced Cambridge Advanced level examinations)

CEE – Common Entrance Examination

CSO – Central Statistical Office

CSEC – Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (replaced Cambridge Ordinary level examinations)

CXC – Caribbean Examination Council (established in 1972 under Agreement by the participating governments in CARICOM)

GCE – General Certificate of Education (Cambridge or London examinations replaced by CXC)

GoRTT – Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

HE – Higher education (or post-seondary education)

HEI – Higher education institution

IADB – Inter-American Development Bank

IGO – Intergovernmental Organisation

OJT – On-the-Job Training

‘O’ level – Ordinary level (secondary school certification)

K-12 – Kindergarten to grade 12 or kindergarten to primary to secondary school

POS – Port of Spain

PSLCE – Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination

SDMS – Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha

SEA – Secondary Entrance Assessment

TT – Trinidad and Tobago

UWI – University of the West Indies

UTT – University of Trinidad and Tobago

WP – Widening participation

Chapter 1: Introduction

Policies to widen participation in higher education (HE) for people from marginalised groups, require addressing financial barriers, but also a multitude of other factors including the role of various policy actors who influence student transition to higher education, and the context-specific opportunities that people have and the challenges that they face. The case study of the village of Aranguez sought to explore reasons for low participation in higher education, given supportive government education policy that funds seats at higher education institutions (HEIs) and provide tuition-free higher education – technical, vocational, and university.

Research in OECD countries has shown that non-financial factors are just as important as financial barriers in transitions to higher education. The research provides new understandings of why and how people enact education policy to choose or reject the option of higher education. The research context shifts our understandings of racialisation and marginalisation given the diversity of this post-colonial society with racial/ethnic groups competing for access to education. The research also presents frameworks for interrogating the complexity of higher education access. The research is set within the expanding field of critical policy studies in higher education.

Increasing access to higher education first became a priority in the policy agenda of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) governments in the 1960s. Over the next few decades institutional enrolments increased, leading to the *massification* of higher education in OECD countries, shifting HE status as an *elitis*t 'good', available only to higher income groups to more of the population. Higher education enrolments have expanded globally every decade in the 20th century and in the 21st century, driven by the USA and Europe, and are also increasing in Asia. Enrolments rose to 214.1 million in 2015, up from 32.6

million students in 1970, and is projected to reach 594.1 million enrolments by 2040 (Calderon, 2018).

The higher education access policy discourse has focused on efforts to expand participation in higher education of the general population by *expanding the number of spaces* available and improving affordability through *financial assistance*. The *widening participation* policy discourse shifted focus from increasing the numbers of people accessing higher education to include improving participation of traditionally marginalised or disadvantaged groups, such as low-income groups, rural populations, racialised/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and those with intersecting identities who face multiple barriers.

Higher education access in this research is discussed in the context of *massification* and not *universal higher education* and incorporates three meanings: (a) expanding seats in existing or new higher education institutions (HEIs); (b) providing financial support to students; and (c) improving access to HE for marginalised or disadvantaged groups through specific policy initiatives. The issue of higher education access is approached from a holistic perspective and comprises two aspects: (a) the *journey* of participants through the K-12 system (kindergarten, primary and secondary school), and factors that impede or facilitate success and enrolment at a higher education institution; and (b) *specific policies and programmes* implemented by government to facilitate access to higher education.

Rationale for the Study

There is a plethora of traditional and critical policy studies in ‘developed’ countries on the topic of higher education access, but there is a dearth of critical policy research on higher education in the Caribbean. Given heavy investments by Trinidad & Tobago in higher education for several years, there was an opportunity to conduct research in this context on the issue of higher education access and the way people in a marginalised community enact education policy.

Trinidad & Tobago citizens have access to free primary and secondary schooling (unlike other Caribbean islands) and affordable HE (at times tuition-free and sometimes low tuition). The Government of Trinidad & Tobago (GoRTT) implemented policies over the years to expand the HE system for human capital development to promote economic growth and invested heavily in the HE sector since the turn of the century, to move the country to 'developed country' status. The research was conducted within this context of the evolution of higher education policy and the movement for the democratisation of higher education with access to the broader population - massification.

The research explored why higher education transitions were not improving, even when policy supports though government funding supports were available. The case allowed for the interrogation of several factors around the topic of higher education policy enactments and how changes in education policy influenced access over time. The history, context, and characteristics of Aranguez as a former sugarcane plantation created a community facing intersecting axes of marginalisation – racialisation as Indians, ghettoisation[1] based on geographical location, low socio-economic status (SES) as a peasant farming community, and their status as religious minorities (Hindus/Muslims). Researchers have tended to focus on one of these factors in HE access research, but Aranjuez offered an opportunity to explore these factors interacting together as multi-barriered challenges facing a community.

The stories provided rich material for examining issues of HE access/widening participation (WP) beyond issues of 'class.' There were many themes that arose from the stories, supported by documentary data, which made the study challenging and multi-layered, but provided an opportunity to further the conversation on HE access/WP in a developing country with a diverse population, still struggling with legacies of British colonialism.

[1] 'ghetto' has a Jewish origin steeped in antisemitism, where Jews were restricted by law to a specific area of Venice. "From the 16th to the 18th century, the institution of the legally compulsory and physically enclosed exclusively Jewish enclave spread to Rome, Florence Mantua and a host of other Italian towns and cities" (Schwartz, 2019). See Time, https://time.com/5684505/ghetto-word-history/).

Statement of the Problem

The research has two main objectives: (a) the empirical objective seeks to understand low participation in higher education in a marginalised community where supportive government policy exists; (b) the theoretical objective is to understand higher education policy enactment employing a theoretical framework that integrates Bordieuan theory with Caribbean postcolonial theory.

The research focused on understanding the factors influencing higher education access for the primary population (descendants of East Indian indentured labourers) in the village of Aranguez, considering changing public policy in education (K-12) and higher education. In the 20th and 21st century, higher education became financially accessible to people in Aranguez, with increased spaces and tuition-waivers, but only a small number of people access higher education.

The research concentrated on understanding why more people were not accessing higher education and what non-financial factors could be operating to influence HE access in Aranguez. The research interrogated how policy was enacted by participants and institutional agents; whether there were no aspirations to HE and why; whether there were aspirations but barriers and challenges; whether truncation of the formal education journey was based on a deliberate, reasoned choice; and what factors were involved for those who did access HE.

Research Questions

The research sought to answer the questions outlined below:

1. What role has the forms of capital played in mediating higher education access for East Indian people in Aranguez?
2. Has higher education access of East Indians in Aranguez changed intergenerationally?
3. How have broader shifts in the historical, economic, social, and political contexts of Aranguez influenced the East Indian community's access to higher education?

4. What implications do the findings from the case study have for policy and practice related to higher education access in the Trinidad context, and more generally?

Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 outlines the methodological approach and data collection methods for the study including the advantages and disadvantages of the case study method, and the data collection process and challenges. I include some background on the case of Aranguez as well as the rationale for selection of study participants. The conceptual framework used to analyse the data follows, as well as a discussion of the limitations of the case study approach, and researcher positionality.

Chapter 3 explores the existing literature related to higher education access and widening participation, informed by disciplinary approaches – an economic and a sociological lens. Several themes in the higher education access literature is presented related to financial barriers and non-financial factors – streaming of students in the education system; social capital of students; the role of parental education; college choice; and issues of race[2], religion, age, and gender regarding equitable access to education and higher education. In the review, I include policy responses from a governmental and institutional perspective to widening participation that include financial supports, administrative programmes, and academic policies by HEIs to reach non-traditional groups.

Chapter 4 outlines the theoretical framework which underpins the study – Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction and social inequality, and concepts of social capital, cultural capital, economic capital, and habitus. Bourdieu suggests that the dominant elite reproduces inequality through society's institutional structures such as the education system. I

[2] 'race' is a social construction of identity that categorises individuals and population groups based on *physical characteristics* which "is not based on any *biologically valid* distinctions between the genetic make-up of differently identified 'races' (Scott, 2015)". In Trinidad race is based on physical appearance and ancestral homeland (Africa, India, China, European countries, indigenous peoples), for example, Afro-Trinidadians (or Black people), or Indo-Trinidadians (East Indians).

explain concepts from Caribbean postcolonial theories used to understand policy enactment, given the history and context of the study in Trinidad.

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the research context – primarily the English colonial and postcolonial periods including the history, politics, economy, and social evolution of Trinidad as a diverse society in terms of race and religion, focusing on the arrival of East Indians as indentured labourers and their evolving access to education. I present the development of the education system (primary, secondary, and higher education), along with government policy initiatives to improve higher education access. Issues of equity and access created by colonial legacies (policies and practices) in the education system are presented. In chapters 6 and 7, I present the findings as they relate to higher education policy enactment of the descendants of the indentured people of Aranguez.

Chapter 6 provides an analysis within a Bordieuan conceptual framework of how social capital of the family and community, and schools serve to limit information, guidance and aspirations towards higher education, similar to previous literature. The chapter also discusses more nuanced findings on the role of the mother and extended family, and the relevance of cultural capital as both positive and negative. Shifts in the social, political and education policy context were related to intergenerational shifts in education access, complicated by intersections of class (low income), racialisation (Indians), religious diversity (Hindu/Muslim) and ghettoisation (geographical location).

Chapter 7 presents unexpected findings specific to the case and the post-colonial context that were not considered by Bordieuan theory. The issue of post-colonial legacies of violence, mental health and intergenerational trauma from indentureship are discussed as factors that impact community members and their educational trajectory. The findings challenge the global HE discourse of the need to massify higher education, especially in developing countries and highlights the importance of informal postsecondary education and self-employment for specific communities.

In Chapter 8, I answer the research questions and provide a summary of key findings. I discuss the utility of Bordieuan and post-colonial theory in explaining higher education access in the case study showing why policy is enacted by community members that result in low participation in higher education. I discuss policy implications and changes government and other policy actors can address based on the needs of the population. I also suggest areas for further study.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This chapter explains the research design including the epistemological influence; the research site (the case); participant sample; data collection; the conceptual framework used in data analysis; researcher positionality; and limitations of the study. The issue of higher education access and what leads people to go or not go onto HE requires *rich, information with thick description*, only obtainable through qualitative research where the research participants themselves can fill in the details on the diverse factors that may have influenced their lives and their decisions. The qualitative nature of the study meant that the interest was not in how many people accessed HE (quantitative) but *why* and *how* some accessed HE and why most did not in the specific context of Aranguez.

Qualitative Research

Ontology and Epistemology - Critical Theory and Constructivism

Both *critical theory* and *constructivism* influenced the ontological orientation of the study. Constructivism was important to understanding the phenomena and theory generation through the multiple meanings of participants in the study, where social and historical constructions are important (Creswell, 2014). Constructivism posits that people's realities are mental constructions that are "socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature … which may be shared among many individuals and across cultures" and these constructions can be altered (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 110-111; Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2014). The epistemology for both critical theory and constructivism is that research is "transactional and subjectivist" where the research findings are constructed by the researcher and the participants and are mediated by their values (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Creswell, 2014).

Critical theory is a school of thought rooted in Marx's theory of revolution and critique of capitalist society and is concerned with power, politics, social justice, and social change (Creswell, 2014). Critical theory is conscious of the linkages and manner by which power and

knowledge are produced and disseminated (Rexhepi and Torres, 2011 citing Marcuse 1991). A main tenet of critical theory is that critiquing ideology can help oppressed people to resist their oppressor by overcoming 'false consciousness[3]' expressed in Freire's critical pedagogy for emancipating the oppressed.

It is also concerned with removing social injustice (Horkheimer, 1937). Herbert Marcuse believed radical social change required a new sensibility in individuals - radical change of the individual themselves, where domination and submission in history are repeated; to halt this process requires knowledge of its genesis and the ways it is reproduced, which requires critical thinking (McKernan, 2013). Critical theory's ontology of historical realism acknowledges that 'reality' is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, gender and ethnic/racist values which become structures that people take to be "real and immutable" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.110; McKernan, 2013).

Culture in critical theory such as *media, language, education,* and *religion*, are central to production of hegemony (Rexhepi & Torres, 2011). The evolution of critical theories led to the *transformative worldview* or *paradigm* in the 1980s and 1990s with critiques of society that include Marxist, feminist, critical race theory, gender studies, Indigenous studies, and queer theories that try to explain society from the perspectives of diverse and marginalised voices, (Creswell, 2014; Hurtado, 2015). These theorists felt that constructivism did not adequately address power and social justice for marginalised groups, whereas the critical perspective focuses on how research in marginalised or disenfranchised communities can be transformative (Creswell, 2014). The idea of 'consciousness' of one's own life situation in relation to the *economy* is still relevant. However, focusing only on the dimension of '*class*' is limiting for understanding the processes of discrimination, inequity and exploitation based on other dimensions of life such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, tribe, et al. (Rexhepi & Torres, 2011).

[3] False consciousness refers to people's inability to recognise inequality, oppression, and exploitation in a capitalist society because of the prevalence of views that legitimise the existence of social classes.

In the era of globalisation, critical theory has given rise to new conceptions including neoliberalism or free-market fundamentalism as the dominant driving force in the economic and socio-political arenas, which has impacted higher education and its role in the economy as a driver of development and prosperity. Rexhepi & Torres (2011) suggest that critical theory can be re-imagined in *political sociology of education* to theorise about phenomena with the understanding that the normative cannot be fully disassociated from the *analytical* and the *political* role of education, and the *historicity of thought and the policy* arising from various theorising. Furthermore, a critical historical perspective of the *context* being studied provides insight to understanding the education system (Aldridge, 2015; Diem & Young, 2015).

Critical Theory and Public Policy Research

Critical theory, when applied to the field of public policy research suggests that traditional policy-making uses a positivist approach which is grounded in rationalism and functionalism and notions of *one reality*, impacting the kind of policies that disregard inequities in society (Diem & Young, 2015). Critical policy analysis (CPA) acknowledges that enacted policy directly impacts the operations, processes, and nature of institutions.

Policy implementation depends on the economic, political, and social context and the policy actors - interest groups and stakeholders - involved in the process. Grounded in a constructivist perspective in which each person has a unique perspective of ‘reality’ shaped by their values, experiences and privilege, or lack thereof, CPA acknowledges that State policy is value-laden (Taylor et al., 1997) and is influenced by policy actors with diverging interests regarding goals, approaches and policy outcomes.

The dominant groups with the most power control the policy-making process. The norms, values, and culture of marginalised populations are generally not considered in designing government policy, as they are usually left out of the policy-making process. This was apparent in implementation of the residential school system where the ruling class imposed their

own western European cultural values and beliefs on schooling on the Indigenous populations in Canada.

Engaging the voices of the marginalised through “community consultations” is a policy practice that is commonly recommended to address inequities but is usually a performative exercise and their input are ignored. When “the marginalised” are left out of the policy-making process, policy ends up reflecting the values and interests of dominant groups in society, which may or may not be suitable for other groups. However, members of specific marginalised groups – racialised, ethnic minorities, Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ2S+ people – continue to demand that their interests be reflected in government policy agendas, including education policy. Those who identify as being from marginalised or oppressed groups based on identity may also be in different economic social classes. For example, one may be oppressed as a racial minority but have membership in the elite class based on economic wealth. Researchers adopting CPA to critique society, bridge the gap between policy research and practice, interrogate the players and the process, explore power relations, and listen to the voices on the margins of society (Diem & Young, 2015).

A critical approach to the study of HE access/WP acknowledges that *policy is value-laden*, reflecting the agenda and values of the political elite and dominant interest groups, who fail to grasp barriers and challenges faced by marginalised groups (Diem & Young, 2015). It also addresses the *value-laden nature of educational institutions* whose policies, practices, structures, and agents serve the interests of political and economic elites (Bourdieu, 1977; Taylor et al., 1997). Government creates policies and agents implement them in ways that could include or exclude people from equitable access to educational resources, thus determining different life trajectories for different students.

As a result of the epistemologies that inform the research, a qualitative approach was suitable to understand higher education access in Aranguez from the perspective of the residents. Quantitative studies, sometimes with single point high level data, do not capture the

lived reality of their subjects, the dynamic nature of that 'reality,' and fail to understand the complexity of issues constraining behaviour of groups living on the margins of society or factors that may impact the ability to move from the margins to the mainstream society. The research took a critical approach to the study of HE access, privileging the voices of the participants, which allowed the researcher to understand how they viewed and valued education based on their ethnicity, culture, geographical location, gender, and social location; how participants enacted education policy; and how policy enactment by institutional agents of the education system in schools impacted participants' chances for higher education access.

Qualitative research afforded understandings of processes, mechanisms, settings, contexts, and impacts through participants' perspectives, allowing exploration of how participants made sense of their world in relation to the education system and their own educational outcomes. Participants' voices, supported by documentary research, spoke to education policy and practices and their relationship to social stratification, relationships of power, reproduction of social inequality, and post-colonial legacies.

The Case Study as Method of Inquiry

The case study methodology is widely used in qualitative education research and its strength is that it allows in depth, first-hand examination of a case in its 'real-life' context (Yin, 2004). My approach to the case study was to combine aspects of various methodologies in a manner that worked for the study in a logical, cohesive, and consistent manner at every stage from research questions, theoretical propositions, units of analysis, logic linking data to propositions and criteria for interpreting findings (Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2014).

The case study was not constrained by positivistic notions of validity and reliability but focused on trustworthiness of the process and data. My primary role as the researcher was interpreter of constructions and gatherer of multiple interpretations of participants' experiences. I was open to flexibility in design as the research progressed, based on constraints of time,

resources, and access to people, but the proposal design provided guidance based on research questions, literature review and the theoretical framework (Yazan, 2015).

The study allowed for an intensive analysis of the issue of HE access using the peculiarities of a complex system (the town of Aranguez) *to understand 'how' and 'why' HE access happens or does not happen*. The case study was concerned with the interrelationship between the phenomenon (HE access), and the case (Aranguez), its context, and education/HE policy. Gerring (2007) notes that the case study assumes that there is a *micro-macro link in social behaviour and in-depth knowledge provides better understanding of the whole*. In understanding higher education access for the people of Aranguez, the link of the macro-level institutional structures and broader environment impinging on their lives is important, which made a critical approach important. The research questions shaped the literature review and theoretical propositions, data collection plan and analytic priorities. The details of the design are elaborated upon in the sections below.

The Case: Aranguez

Aranguez was selected as the case because it offered a unique opportunity to explore how financial and non-financial factors intersect in a complex way to support or inhibit transitions to HE. The history and demography of the village of Aranguez make it a unique case for understanding challenges in HE for marginalised groups. When HE spaces and policy supports for low or no tuition became available, people from Aranguez were not accessing it to the same extent as people from other East Indian communities in Trinidad, who were not only accessing HE but excelling. Therefore, Aranguez is a unique and interesting case to study.

History

The history of Aranguez is not well documented and is transmitted through oral history to subsequent generations. Aranguez has traditionally been an agricultural village which evolved from the Aranguez Plantations Estate which in 1825, had 121 slaves providing labour to the sugarcane plantation (MacMillan, 1967). The 'village' of Aranguez is smaller than what

constituted the ‘plantation’ which included land south of the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway, and the Aranguez Savannah which extends to the Eastern Main Road in the North (Refer to the maps in Appendix F and G).

The former African slaves left the plantation after emancipation in 1838. In 1840, the owner of the estate bequeathed it to an emancipated slave. The area became an East Indian settlement through indentureship of people from India. Many of the indentured East Indians who were brought to work in Trinidad on the plantations, stayed after their indentured contracts expired. They settled mostly in the central and southern parts of the island but in the North, there were some plantations that needed indentured labourers such as St. James (now a sub-division of Port of Spain), El Socorro, and Aranguez estates.

While many estates were nationalised by the Trinidad government, Aranguez remained in private hands. John Alfred Rapsey, an Englishman who made his fortune in the bakery, dairy products, and soft drink business in Trinidad bought Aranguez estates in 1901. He died in 1912 but his widow and children continued to run Aranguez estates, with emphasis on housing development rather than agriculture. The Estate ceased operations as a large sugar estate and the owners sold off or rented parcels of the land to the former indentured workers and their descendants to live and farm for a small rental fee paid to the Aranguez Estates Office. Over time, families purchased the land that they were renting from the Aranguez Estates which was still a legal entity. The Aranguez Estates Office shut its doors in 2018.

Economy

From a private sugar cane estate, Aranguez transformed into a peasant farming village which became known as the food basket of Port of Spain, providing fresh fruits and vegetables. In the 1960s, Aranguez was producing one third of green vegetables in the country through intensive farming. Some people entered the retail business with the sale of goods and services (MacMillan, 1967). The 1980s was a decade of economic decline in the country, felt in low-income areas like Aranguez. Families migrated abroad, leaving empty homes, as people

struggled to cope with rising costs of living, and renting apartments to 'outsiders' became more common.

Aranguez changed over the generations. Traditional peasant families still farm the land while others are engaged in low-income jobs in the private sector, or are self-employed in retail, services, or trades, and some have jobs in the lower rungs of the public sector. Other descendants of the Indentureds have moved away to other towns or migrated abroad. Given its proximity to the capital, the value of the once agricultural land increased dramatically over the years, given the size of the island and scarcity of land. In the 21st century, Aranguez, as a community, became more open for economic reasons - the need to engage in retail, or rent their property for income generation. The town continues to evolve with the arrival of newcomers.

Demographics

The 'official' population of Aranguez in 2011 was 7404, 5% of the San Juan-Laventille (SJL) municipality. In the SJL region, the African ethnic group accounted for 52.7% of the population and the East Indian ethnic group comprised 17.7%, making Indians a racial minority in the region. The demographics of the village has been shifting since the 1980s to a more diverse population including Afro-Trinidadians[4], Chinese immigrants who opened restaurants and stores, Venezuelan refugees, and Guyanese East Indians. The Guyanese immigrants have moved into agriculture and built homes on former farmlands sold to them by locals who have migrated, lost interest in agriculture, or want to cash in on their land inheritance.

Geographical Location

Aranguez is in the San Juan-Laventille (SJL) region or municipality in Saint George County in North Trinidad. According to the Local Economic Profile, there are 39 primary and 15 secondary schools, and several private institutions offering technical and tertiary level academic

[4] Historically, Trinidad has been a destination for migrants from other islands in the English-speaking West Indies and Venezuela which has contributed to population growth.

instruction, including external degrees at the bachelor's and master's levels from United Kingdom universities. The St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) is within 3 miles of the eastern boundary of SJL, and the teaching hospital is within the boundaries of the SJL regional municipality (SJL, n.d). The location of Aranguez in North Trinidad had implications for its evolution.

First, Aranguez was near the capital of Port of Spain, which was a key factor in its success as a small farming community and the gradual increase in population of 'outside people' and non-gardening community (Macmillan, 1967).

Second, its context is different from other East Indian towns in Trinidad, as it existed as an ethnic/racial enclave in the North, which is predominantly Afro-Trinidadian and Christian. Most Indians had settled in Central and South Trinidad, where most of the conversion to Christianity occurred, besides the Indians living in Port of Spain. Aranjuez continued to be racially homogenous and a closed community until the 1980s – comprised mainly of non-Christian, East Indians which meant they were not part of creole society – the dominant society, although the process of creolisation (adoption of local norms, values and culture) is an ongoing process of assimilation of Indians to the society.

The large settlements of Indians in Central and South Trinidad meant that there were communities to support each other while Aranguez Indians were a numerical minority thus leading to racialisation, marginalisation and ghettoisation. Up until the 1960s, 'outsiders' were not welcome. There was a quiet racial tension between Aranguez and neighbouring villages (KI, 2018).

For decades, Aranguez had limited access to basic government services − electricity, pipe borne water, paved roads and sidewalks, access to unemployment relief programmes, social assistance, and other social services. Primary and secondary school access lagged other communities in the North. The People's National Movement (PNM) government did not prioritise a village like Aranjuez where political votes were not in their favour, given the racialised nature

of politics. Churches and NGOs did not attempt to provide services to the community, either, which sometimes faced severe financial challenges when floods washed out the farmers' crops.

Third, Aranguez's location in North Trinidad cut it off from the flow of wealth from the Energy sector in the South which bypassed the people of Aranguez. The Aranguez Main Road was an alternative route for commuters who needed to exit the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway, taking the upper and middle-class people from Port of Spain to the oil and gas companies in South Trinidad.

A History of Violence

Aranguez developed a reputation as a haven for criminal activity with local gangs and 'bad johns'[5] in the village, operating freely in the San Juan area. MacMillan (1967), a UWI student from the Faculty of Agriculture, who conducted his dissertation research on market gardening in Aranguez, noted:

> Since the Second World War, Aranguez has enjoyed a dual reputation: to some it is the vegetable bowl of Trinidad and Tobago and to others, it is the hub of crime and violence in the country. The people who live in Aranguez remember outstanding crop years with the same vividness as incidents of gang warfare, robbery, and murder. Country and town, agriculture, and industry, in Aranguez.

The description of Aranguez as "the hub of crime and violence in the country," however, is an indicator of the biased view of the community since there are other high crime areas in and around Port of Spain.

In the late 1950s, the GoRTT declared a state of emergency in the village based on 'concerns' with criminal activity (KII[6], 2017). One key informant, who was a child at the time, remembered seeing soldiers set up camp in the grounds of the Aranguez Estates Office. People had to be indoors at dusk because of a curfew imposed by the Government. Gangs engaged in

[5] Thug or gangster
[6] Key Informant Interview

war with gangs in other towns in the environs and from Port of Spain. The arrival of cocaine in the 1980s, with Trinidad as a major transshipment point from South America, impacted the entire area[7]. Drug lords emerged in Aranguez and nearby El Socorro in the 1980s, which was the peak of narcotics activity in Aranguez and Trinidad, with a few families involved in trafficking and distribution for larger traffickers in society.

The few small-time drug lords who reigned in Aranguez and environs were eventually eliminated by warring factions from other parts of the country or the South American suppliers themselves. Cocaine usage impacted some families but selling to outsiders was the focus of operations. However, criminal activity of Aranguez residents has decreased over the decades while criminal activity in the broader society has increasingly worsened. The stigmatisation as a bad neighbourhood persisted into subsequent generations but that reputation may be fading as outside criminals now feel emboldened to enter Aranguez to commit crimes – robbery and murder. These outside elements would not have been allowed to operate in the village in previous generations (KII, 2017).

Cultural Preservation Versus Assimilation

Aranguez had been resistant to assimilation to the dominant society. The town retains a strong heritage of Indian culture and religion comprising Hindus and a few Muslim families, which contributed to its marginalisation as people refused to convert to Christianity and assimilate to the broader society. Despite efforts from Canadian Presbyterian missionaries, Mormon missionaries, Jehovah Witnesses, and Pentecostal churches, mass conversion to Christianity was not successful. The location in the North led to a level of social isolation, some of which was self-imposed, based on a fear of assimilation, acculturation, and loss of identity.

[7] Trinidad is six miles away from Venezuela, providing easy access for drug traffickers and lately undocumented people.

The town remained fiercely protective of its "Indian" culture, even in the 21st century, although there have been recent losses by all religious groups to small Christian evangelical churches. SWAHA, a Hindu organisation emerged from Aranguez, promoting Hindu culture and education across the island, and in the diaspora of North America. A secondary site for the research is Chaguanas, a town in central Trinidad, where some Aranguez residents relocated because of land inheritance.

Participants

Purposive sampling was used to select individuals from the community to serve as the units of analysis. The case study approach to inquiry has been challenged for sample bias but inherent bias exists in all research. By selecting participants who are representative of the population under study in the town, one could make inferences about the broader group of Indentured descendants in the town (Gerring, 2007).

Sample selection was based on the following criteria: East Indian[8]; ancestor was indentured labourer from India with at least 3 generations of family who lived in Aranguez; education status; age; and Hindu or Muslim religion which define them as 'other' in a Christian society. All interviewees were born in Aranguez or spent most of their life in Aranguez from childhood to adult life, except for one interviewee who was the offspring of two people from Aranguez who moved away to Central Trinidad. This participant was raised by Aranguez parents, spent considerable time in Aranguez as a child, but lived in another town, which allows for comparison of the educational journey of this participant to the other participants in Aranguez. See Appendix A for descriptors of each participant.

Race is homogeneous in the selection criteria, because only the East Indians were indentured labourers in Aranguez[9]. In addition, racial diversity creates another level of

[8] There are some recent immigrants from Guyana in Aranguez who descended from indentured labourers who went to Guyana. They are not the focus of this study. The small numbers of recent immigrants from India do not live in Aranguez.

[9] The Irish and Chinese indentured labourer experiment mentioned earlier had failed.

complexity, which changes the nature of the study. While the East Indians were racialised with regards to access to education, race does not explain the more recent lack of higher education attainment of Indians in Aranguez given the increasing success of Indians in the education system in other geographies in Trinidad.

Intergenerational Data

Temporality is one of the ways of organising the case study analysis (Strauss, 1987). The participants were selected based on age and different time periods when they were in primary school, to capture intergenerational changes. The experiences of participants in school at different time periods, reflect the social, political, economic and education policy changes. In addition, primary school experience and success are keys to later achievement in secondary school and higher education access.

Change in the forms of capital over generations was important in the study, as capital accumulations or deficits could impact HE access of subsequent generations. To capture the intragenerational changes, each participant was asked questions about when they attended various levels of education; whether they went back to school as mature students; and they were also asked questions about the education of their families in different generations.

Historical Data

Little documented history exists of the Aranguez and its people. The history of the town is based on materials from online historical sites and from MacMillan's PhD dissertation completed at the UWI. In addition, three key informants, aged 69, 70, and 88 were interviewed to provide historical information orally to fill in missing recorded history, which was not documented in any academic or public library archives. Participants from older generations (Nadira, Prem, Boyo) were also a source of information about the history of the town.

Constraints in Sample Selection

It proved difficult to find anyone who had attended a higher education institution in the 1950s or 1960s, because there was no one available given the history of education in the town.

People who started primary school in the 1950s and 1960s onwards, were easier to locate. For those accessing higher education, the sample lacked anyone who had attended primary school solely in the 1990s due to limitations of access and participant availability. However, Neil attended most of his primary school during the 1990s. The participants in the 21st century were male. It was difficult to access female participants attending an HEI or with higher education, since females tend to marry out of town (given the filial relations in the village) and move away to their husband's town. Table 1 below shows the breakdown of thirteen participants who were included in the study by time period, higher education status, and gender.

Table 1:

Participants by Education, Gender, and Time Period

Time Period of Primary School Attendance or Completion	**Person with HE**	**Person without HE**
1950s	None	Nadira - female
1950s-1960s	Prem - male	Boyo - male
1970s	Devanand - male	Manny - male
1980s	Renuka - female	Rohan - male
1990s	Neil - male	Jameela - female Shanti - female
2000s	Suresh - male Jason - male	Valmiki - male
Other key informant interviewees	Ramesh - 88, male Indra - 70, female Maya - 69, female	

The sample allows for an examination of the evolution of education for villagers from the 1950s to the 21st century. There were three participants who attended primary school in the 21st century (from 2001), which is when higher education spaces expanded and affordability improved. The time period allows for a better understanding of changes in higher education access.

Data Collection Methods

I used two data collection methods (documentary research and interviews) to which allowed for corroboration of data to strengthen the rigour of the study. I selected data collection instruments based on the type of information needed; data availability; and the opportunities available to the researcher given participant availability, literacy, and computer literacy for virtual interviews. Information collected was used to understand the context, assess social capital formation – level and nature (positive/negative), economic and cultural capital, and factors impacting HE access in the specific context. See details outlined in Table 2.

Table *2*:

Information Needed, Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Type of Information Needed	**Method of data collection**	**Instrument**	**Data**
Contextual - to provide context and background related to the case and the forms of capital	Documentary Research on Trinidad	Policy documents, academic books/documents/ statistical and historical/archival documents	Information collected from the local university, in-person and online via York Libraries, the GoRTT, the Central Statistical Office, IGOs, and other sources • History of the village/country • Political and economic context • Demographic information on Trinidad and the research site - age, race, gender, religion, socio-economic indicators (occupation) • Educational institutions/facilities. • Educational policy history and statistics on education/higher education
Factual info. on participants related to the forms of capital	Interviews with people in Aranguez and one outside Aranguez 90 minutes to 2-hour interviews recorded by notes and voice recorder, in person and 2 virtual	Open-ended questions	Demographic information: age, gender, occupation, educational levels - primary, secondary, postsecondary; parental education and occupation (SES), religion, count of relatives, number of children; marital status; education institutions – type, location – history
Perceptual information from participants	Interviews (see above)	Open-ended questions	Factors related to individual; family; community social capital (and interplay with economic, cultural capital), post-colonial legacies, as outlined in Table 3.

Documentary Research and Archival Data

The documentary research provided historical, political, economic, and social context for the case. It also helped to validate as well as supplement the primary data from interviews with participants. Secondary data mined from public documents and archival materials, expanded upon the interview data. Documentary data included information on the policy history on education/higher education; statistics; and historical and demographic information about Aranguez. The contextual information created a broad education policy picture from British colonial times to the present, to understand the context for the families in Aranguez, and their relationship with the education system.

Data sources were public policy documents from Trinidad and IGOs (UNESCO, IADB, and similar institutions), online newspapers articles, online historical websites from universities and other sources, information from various HEIs, official education/HE statistics such as census survey data, published and unpublished administrative documents, and formal academic studies.

Interviews

The open-ended, semi-structured interview was the primary method of data collection used to collect demographic and other factual information from the participants about themselves and their family; information about the town; and perceptual information on lived experiences related to education/HE access and reflections on their world which allowed understanding of the issues, structures, processes, government education policies, and role of policy actors, which impacted their educational outcomes (Seidman, 1991; Yin, 2014; Merriam, 2016). Interview questions are based on the research questions and conceptual framework to capture data and information related to the three types of capital – economic, cultural, and social capital, and educational factors related to them. Ball (2005) emphasises the importance of doing ‘voiced’ policy research, where policy actors, in this case the villagers of Aranguez, tell their own stories. See Appendix B for interview questions.

There were some limitations to using the interview method. The data collection was dependent on the availability of people and the quality of the data they provided, and equally important was the researcher's ability to engage with the participants. There were instances when memory failed for some of the participants due to the passage of time and age. Oral history of the community was as important as their personal stories.

The issue of generational change is dependent on the recollection of memories about people and events in the past, and second-hand stories about previous generations and historical occurrences may not always be accurate. To manage data reliability, the researcher cross-referenced data with key informants, and other participants, where possible, without revealing identities, and used documented historical data to help validate some of the information.

The researcher had to build trust to negotiate time and availability with interviewees. The researcher used creole language[10] for the most part with interviewees which is the spoken language, as opposed to written language, which is standard UK english. Reflexivity did not appear to be an issue as the participants responded openly and honestly to questions and spoke freely about their educational experiences as well as issues in their personal lives that impacted their education.

Participant Access

As the researcher lived in another country, there were constraints around time for locating and interviewing participants. The researcher secured the permission of interviewees by telephone, email, and through familial contacts who knew people in the community. This was helpful because the villagers do not trust strangers. However, being a member of the community, allowed me to speak in the local dialect and elicit information that would not be accessible to 'outsider' researchers. I conducted two interviews remotely through WhatsApp and interviewees

[10] Creole language is Trinidadian creole English influenced by Spanish, French, French Creole, Hindi and other Indian dialects, Portuguese, and Chinese dialects (mainly Cantonese).

gave consent electronically. I used an electronic voice recorder to tape the interviews and used Dragon Speech recognition software to convert the voice data to text. I also kept handwritten notes of the interviews.

Research Ethics

I followed Tri-Council research ethics guidelines. I assured participants of anonymity and they each signed a *Consent Form* (See Appendix C and Appendix D) before commencing the interview, as per the confidentiality requirements of the research outlined in the 'Research Ethics' process of the University. However, the researcher acknowledges that she cannot guarantee anonymity of participants. For instance, she cannot prevent community members from talking amongst themselves about their responses; but given the nature of the research, there is negligible risk of privacy breaches, if participants do speak to each other. For accessibility purposes, the title of the study was simplified in the *Consent Form* using plain language.

Conceptual Framework for Data Analysis

The original conceptual framework (See Figure 1) guided the data analysis and exploration of relationships among variables/factors and policy actors in the case study. The framework was informed by the propositions in the theoretical framework, which drew on Bourdieu's critical theory of social inequality and the resource-based concepts of the forms of capital (social, economic, cultural), and post-colonial theory. Data analysis involved a hybrid approach, where I used both deductive and inductive methods.

Firstly, using a thematic analysis, I used the proxies related to the forms of capital in Table 3 as codes to look for patterns in the data. These proxies are grounded in previous research that reflect financial and non-financial issues in higher education access which employ the forms of capital as analytical tools. Although Bourdieu focuses on 'class,' researchers have extended his theory using gender, religion, and race, as discussed in the literature review, which were also useful in the conceptual framework. The utilisation of these factors or proxies and

their relationships provided some logic and direction for the investigation. This was the deductive aspect of the analysis.

The framework informed but did not constrain data collection and analysis and allowed for the exploration of unexpected findings. This was the inductive aspect of the research. Other factors arose while reading the data that did not fit into the conceptual framework and I created new codes to explore findings. As the research evolved, it became necessary to extend the conceptual framework to include post-colonial theory given the Trinidadian context. The post-colonial theory from Caribbean researchers contextualised the research and spoke to the impacts of colonisation in the Caribbean context and how this impacted social equality and enactment of education policy.

Table 3:

Factors Related to the Forms of Capital

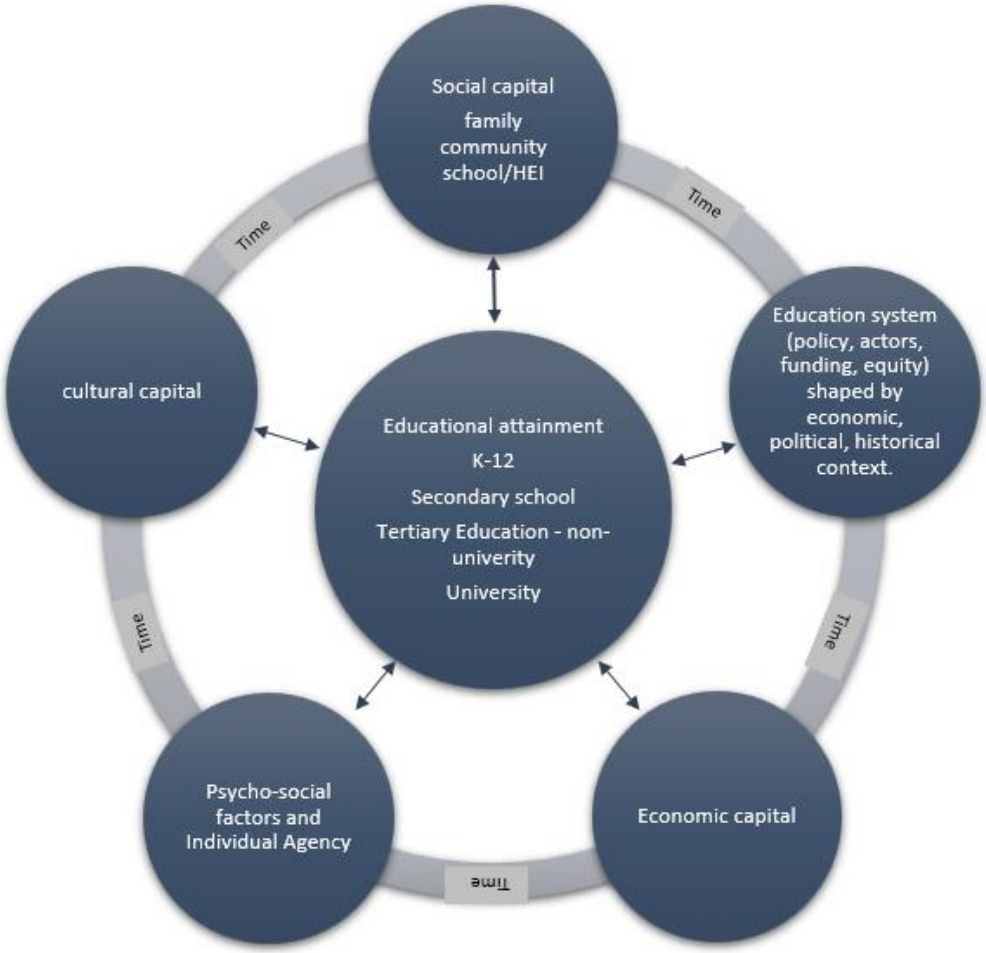
Forms of Capital	Factors impacting capital (proxies)
Social Capital - family	Parent(s) present in the home; parental support information source (parents, siblings, extended family, friends); educational background or human capital; parental and siblings role - expectations and involvement; norms/values; family influence and attitudes; motivation; aspirations for education/HE; expected benefits/costs of education/HE (individual, family); parental occupation and occupational expectations
Social Capital - community	Norms; culture; community trust; sense of belonging; diversity; negative social capital (crime, gangs, drugs, violence); extra community networks - people/organisations outside the community; habitus
Social Capital - school	Primary school, secondary school and HEIs; geographic location/racial break-down/reputation); student experience - relationship with teachers/professors/guidance counsellors; preparation/encouragement for higher levels of education; peer influence and networks; teacher expectations for students; access to resources - funding, scholarships, school tier; feelings of trust and safety – crime, drugs, violence; sense of belonging; extracurricular activities; school culture; parent-school involvement; student comfort level at school; information sources; school type - public, denominational, private; school facilities; habitus

Forms of Capital	Factors impacting capital (proxies)
Economic Capital	Class, income, financial assistance for education, occupation, parental occupation; assets/material resources - land
Cultural Capital	Religion - conversion, caste, leisure activities/hobbies and participation in cultural activities in Aranguez/outside Aranguez; language, resources – books; gender, race
Post-colonial Theory	Plantation economy/society; creole society; colonial legacies; oppression

The conceptual framework has a temporal aspect (represented by the circular concept of time) to represent intergenerational changes in education. Temporality in the study covers the 1950s to 2021, during which time changes in education/HE policy take place. I excluded the previous period (1840s-1940s), since East Indians in Aranguez did not have access to education. I designed the conceptual framework (see Figure 1) to focus on the education system and policy actors, the three forms of capital of the participants, psycho-social factors and individual agency, and how the contextual factors (historical, political, economic) impacted education attainment and HE access.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework for Analysis



Limitations of the Study

The case study does not aim for generalisability of findings. It is context-based and acknowledges that multiple versions of knowledge exist and varies for each participant in keeping with the constructivist perspective. The study aimed for credibility, dependability, and confirmability of findings, through appropriate research methods and record-keeping. The researcher applied, where possible, principles of validity and reliability using triangulation to improve data robustness, trustworthiness, and credibility of the research. *Data source triangulation* involved the use of both primary and secondary data sources which balance each

other to increase the credibility of the research. *Methods triangulation* involved the use of multiple methods to gather data - documentary research; participant interviews, and key informant interviews.

Delimitations

In terms of the *research objective*, the research *does not* address issues of higher education outcomes for students already enrolled at HEIs – admissions, retention, time to completion, stop-outs, student experience, and graduation. These issues require a different focus - looking at academic and administrative policies and programmes of HEIs to support retention and completion, once students from marginalised/ disadvantaged backgrounds arrive at HEIs.

The *target population* was limited to *East Indian Muslims and Hindus* from Aranguez, who were descendants of indentureds, to capture the particular colonial and post-colonial experiences of this group. In addition, it made the study more manageable in terms of demographic variables (race, religion, class) given the diversity of Trinidad. While the localised study is not generalisable, its purpose is to understand how policy interacts with context, therefore, the research focused on *one research site – Aranguez* and *one jurisdiction* as context – Trinidad.

This research was interested in education policy enactments of individuals early in the policy cycle at K-12, in homes and communities, which determine higher educational outcomes. This focus is key for interrogating challenges facing people from marginalised groups or communities, and opens up questions of how education policy enactment takes place and why. The research therefore *centered the perspectives of the target group* as policy actors, while addressing the role of other policy actors.

Researcher Positionality

No research is value-free and objective (Creswell, 2013), but is ‘coloured’ by values and beliefs which stem from race, class, religion, gender, social status, education, life experiences

and other factors. The researcher adopted the Bordieuan position that education policy is a social field that is impacted by the field of politics and the field of the economy. Bourdieu's reflexive methodology calls on the researcher to analyse their social location and position within the field of study and in academia, to do better research (Lingard et al., 2005). Holmes (2014) notes that "the researcher's worldview has to be located in relation to three areas: the subject, the participants and the research context and process" (p. 3).

Given the constructivist understanding of the nature of research, the interpretation of results was shaped by my own experiences and background as a member of the Aranguez community. Using a reflexive approach, I reflected on my own experiences and biases as a former resident of Aranguez, an East Indian, Hindu (non-Christian), female, first-generation student of the education system in Trinidad. These experiences helped shape the research design.

The researcher had advantages of being an insider: enabled easier access to subjects; more meaningful and insightful questions from *a priori* knowledge; understanding of their language (Trinidadian creole); ability to produce a more truthful understanding of the culture; and obtained trust to get more honest answers. In addition, I did not have to deal with culture shock (Holmes 2014 citing Sanghera & Thapar-Bjokert, 2008).

The main disadvantage was some information was not articulated to the *insider researcher* by participants because they expected me to already know some facts about the context and challenges members of the community faced. The ability to bring an external perspective (Holmes, 2014) was an ongoing process. However, my separation from the community for a significant number of years through migration supported the ability to be dispassionate.

The literature review in the next chapter explores key research findings in the field of higher education access.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview of key themes in higher education access research and policy approaches to promote higher education access. The review covered academic research and policy studies related to improving higher education access for the general population and widening participation for people from marginalised groups. I examined different disciplinary approaches (economic and social) and policy interventions that address financial and non-financial factors impacting higher education access. The literature review informed the selection of a theoretical framework within which to ground the study. From a preliminary investigation, confirmed by a local researcher (Pragg, 2014), there is not much primary research on higher education access in Trinidad & Tobago. Therefore, the review focused on research from OECD countries but discuss relevant Trinidad and Caribbean literature on access to education, where available.

Education Policy Research

Education policy refers to K-12 and post-secondary education (TVET and university) and consists of texts (legislation, policy documents), academic and administrative programmes and interventions. Taylor et al. (1997) note that education policy is complex and has a wide scope. Various diverging interests with different values, and historical, political, and social contexts impact the education policy process and practices with unequal and inequitable outcomes for distinct groups and local interests.

The theory of policy enactment proposes that “the material, structural and relational need to be incorporated into policy analysis in order to make better sense of policy enactments at the institutional level” (Ball, Maguire & Braun, p. 21). Various actors enact education policy – parents, students, communities, agencies, institutions, government bureaucrats, institutional agents (teachers, faculty, administrators, support staff), and interest groups such as churches professional bodies, and unions. Policy analysis, therefore, requires not just reviewing the

implementation of formal policy texts but also the “jumbled, messy, contested creative and mundane social interactions” (Ball et al., 2012, p. 2) of all policy actors and processes of policy enactments, linking text to practice. The research focused on the role of government, parents and family, community, schools and their institutional agents, and the Church as policy actors, but also examines new policy actors not identified in the literature.

A higher education policy discourse arose in the 20th century, establishing itself as a field of investigation amongst researchers in academia, NGOs, International Governing Organisations (IGOs)[11] and government agencies, primarily in Europe and North America (Altbach, 1997). There is also a growing critical policy literature on the influence of neoliberalism on public policies of governments which took root in the 1980s and 1990s (Slaughter et al., 2015). Critical policy research in the field of education/HE is interested in the nature of research and practice, as well as with informing policy to impact change in the real world. Critical policy research in higher education may better explain the structural inequities that lead to low entry into higher education and high attrition for historically marginalised groups (Martinez-Aleman, 2015).

Research areas on HE and government policy include funding policy for HEIs; tuition policy and student aid; government and institutional accountability; labour market relevance of higher education; curriculum and programme development; classroom practices, andragogy and teaching and learning; HEI administrative policies and programmes; quality assurance of programmes; institutional research on enrolment, retention, and graduation; faculty development; and more recently on equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonisation (EDID) in higher education concerning curricula and behaviour of faculty, staff and students.

[11] An IGO is a group of members (sovereign states, countries) working together on issues of mutual self-interest, either as legal entities ratified by charter (e.g., United Nations agencies - UNESCO, ILO, etc., Interamerican Development Bank, IMF, CARICOM) or non-chartered (G7).

Given the breadth of topics, the literature review focused on the stream of research regarding *factors influencing entry into higher education* including factors in a student's early life - family, community, and institutional structures that impact school choice, and academic success at K-12 and transition to higher education. The policy research on administrative and academic issues that impact retention and graduation of students who are already in an HEI was not covered, although some of these issues came up during the fieldwork and will be discussed later in chapter 6 for those participants who went to university with regards to student services, guidance, and peer support networks.

Perspectives on Access to Higher Education

There is a contestation over the goals, nature, and purpose of higher education (Thomas et al., 2007) which influences the academic discourse on access. Two academic disciplines - economics and sociology – inform research and policies on higher education access. Policy responses from governments differ depending on the rationale for increasing higher education access: (a) to improve the economic life of the individual through higher wages and improve broader economic development and increased competitiveness through human capital development; or (b) to meet equity and inclusion goals of social justice for marginalised groups, and on a broader social level to promote good citizenship and democratic ideals.

The economic approach to HE access tends to focus on increasing overall participation rates and improving retention rates and graduation rates of those accessing higher education. Widening participation (WP) is the preferred terminology in Europe for HE access, which focuses on equity of access as it relates to providing equitable opportunities to access HE regardless of differences such as race, religion, ethnicity, ability, geographical location, class, or other axes of inequality (Thomas et al., 2007). Economic solutions to improving access focuses on removing financial barriers and a sociological lens is also interested in non-financial factors.

Economic Approaches and Access to Higher Education

The economic approach to HE access policy assumes individuals educate themselves to accrue economic benefits which builds human capital and on aggregate, benefits a country's economy. Human capital theory is a macro theory which became popular in the 1960s, which views human labour as capital which can increase through investment in education, training, and health care with the assumption that additional investment increases worker productivity and yields additional output for economic development. Skills and education comprise a form of capital investment in humans who become more productive and can contribute better to the economy. This conceptualisation collapses the Marxian boundary between labour and capital. The arguments against human capital theory are that measurement is problematic – qualifications cannot be measured against each other; it does not allow for informal learning at home or at the workplace; and it reduces human beings to units which is dehumanising. The public policy implication of this theory is that government should subsidise HE because of the economic benefits to society not just the individual (Becker, 1964; Schulz, 1961; Slaughter et al., 2015).

The rational choice approach to policy-making and implementation assumes that economic factors (tuition and other costs) are paramount barriers to HE access. Rational choice theory is applied in HE research to the individual to explain *college choice* and *programme choice*. The theory states that a person will make decisions to maximise utility in their own self-interest. The discourse on student choice regarding HEI and programme selection, treats students as independent consumers where education is the product, HEIs create the market, and the decision to go onto HE and programme selection involves rationality (Gausdal, 2015). For instance, the student is willing to pay more for tuition for a professional programme since the expected long-term wage earnings are higher than for other programmes. This is the rationale for de-regulation of tuition fees on specific professional programmes such as business, public policy, medicine, law, and other professional programmes.

Gausdal (2015) notes that the application of pure economic theory to students' decision-making has met with scepticism by other researchers in HE. The focus is on the return on investment to the individual through accumulation of human capital. Individuals invest time and money in higher education with the assumption that they will earn higher incomes and have a better standard of living. This theory does not account for inequities in society, which impedes access and the ability to afford higher education, especially academic programmes with high return on investment (ROI). *This theory also does not explain the low uptake of HE opportunities available to people in Aranguez, as HE became more affordable*.

From a government standpoint, the collective economic good is facilitated when higher incomes earned by PSE graduates provide additional tax revenues for governments and a ready workforce for employers that also contribute to the tax base. The influence of neo-liberal economics positions higher education investments as an economic imperative, where a highly educated workforce is key to innovation, productivity, and global competitiveness. There is a lesser focus on the social returns to HE as collective social good (promoting good citizenship, democratic ideals, and civic education) but rather a collective economic good. This policy shift creates new expectations of higher education institutions (HEIs), especially universities to contribute to 'human capital' development.

HEIs and educators become agents in the global capitalist enterprise and campuses are sites of vocational education. The emphasis is on the value for money of higher education with graduates as instruments for economic development and competitiveness in the global economy, as opposed to the social value, where HE is a means of liberation, spiritual growth, democratisation, and citizenship building (Rexhepi & Torres, 2011 citing Adorno, 2002; Illich, 1999). Moore et al. (2013) view economic development as the 'third mission' for higher education providers alongside research and teaching.

Critical policy theorists in higher education, such as Slaughter et al. (2015), suggest that the new market-driven nature of the HE sector undercuts goals of human capital development,

as the focus of HEIs is removed from students. Policy interventions for higher education access include increased budgetary allocations for operating grants to fund more spaces in HEIs, regulation of tuition fees (low tuition fees, tuition waivers) and student aid providing grants and scholarships, low interest loans, and income contingent loans (Rae, 2005; Finnie et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2008; Slaughter et al., 2015).

The shift from higher education as an *elite* good to *massification* happened in the 1960s in developed countries. The idea of *higher education for all (*or *college-for-all* or *universal higher education*) is interrogated by Lawson (1979) who suggests that it could be an "establishment of *an equal right of access* to the resources of higher education" (p. 28) which is different from *equal access*. HEIs are tiered and programme types, quality, duration, and cost varies. Roderick & Stephens (1979) question whether *higher education for all* can be funded and if so, whether it could meet the needs of everyone. Lawson (1979) also raises the issue of motivating people to engage in higher education since it does not have universal appeal.

Rosenbaum (1997) is a critic of *college-for-all (CFA)* in the USA, where he found students are admitted to HEIs and are unprepared for the work involved and drop out. Nix, Jones & Hu (2021) note that in the US, given the labour market demand for people with college education and future occupations that will demand more higher education, this *'college for all'* ethos prevails, which encourages all students to pursue a college degree regardless of high school performance, social background, and career goals" (p. 212).

In the 21st century, international agencies utilise their influence and funding to shift education policy in developing countries. The higher education policy discourse of the West promotes a narrative that links higher education to labour market dynamics and the needs of the economy. The World Bank (2000) identified higher education as important to developing countries so that they do not get left behind in the technological age. UNESCO is actively involved in the global discourse of *higher education for all* to be part of the economic development agenda in developing countries. For instance, SDG4, one of the 17 Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 is dedicated to education and higher education where the target of 4.3 proclaims, "By 2030, *ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university"* (UNESCO).[12]

Schleicher (2013), an OECD representative, notes that poor people not accessing higher education "risks exposing them to a lifetime of reduced earnings and undermines the foundations of wider economic growth" and financial assistance is a way to help address this issue. High tuition fees are perceived as the *main reason low-income students do not go on to higher education*. This assumes that higher education is a prerequisite for having a good income.

Funding higher education expansion, especially university programmes, is an expensive undertaking and continues to be a challenge for OECD countries. It is even more challenging for developing countries to do so. Hence, the policy goal of higher education access among governments does not always aim for *higher education for all* or *universal higher education*, where everyone accesses higher education, but for *massification* where everyone who wants to go should be able to go on to some form of higher education[13]. This translates to policies for people who are facing financial barriers to be able to access higher education. In Canada, higher education policy actors continue to lobby governments to improve "affordability and accessibility by reducing and eventually eliminating tuition" (CAUT et al., 2021). The OECD and most governments view shared costs between students/parents and government as the most feasible.

The World Bank Group's Education Strategy 2020 (2011) re-defines the education system to include, "all learning opportunities in a given society, whether within or outside of formal education institutions" (p. 29). The Strategy views informal learning and knowledge and

[12] See Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its targets (unesco.org)
[13] For example, See Reaching Higher Plan of Ontario

skills acquired outside the classroom as key to poverty reduction, not just the number of years spent in a classroom; thus a larger network of policy actors make up the education system including national and local governments, students and their families, communities, private providers, and non-State organisations. Therefore, in developing countries, where resources are limited for education, especially college and university education, recognition of informal learning such as informal apprenticeships and work-place training become more important and financially viable for individuals and governments.

Sociological Approaches to Higher Education Access

Despite the expansion of higher education enrolments, in a study of 10 OECD countries including Canada, specific groups - Indigenous peoples, older people without traditional entry qualifications for higher education, the working class, people in remote or rural areas, ethnic minorities, and some immigrant groups - have not done as well in HE, demonstrating that HE is still a mechanism for social selection and social reproduction (Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). Sociological approaches to research on access to HE include different levels of analysis - micro, intermediate or meso, and macro (Vidovich, 2007).

The *macro-structuralist* perspective of Bordieuan critical theory focuses on class and structural inequality and the role of the education system in perpetuating inequality in society. The social justice agenda for investing in education and higher education is more concerned with providing access to groups who traditionally do not go on to higher education with goals of promoting social equality and equitable outcomes. On a *meso level*, the social justice policy approach to widening participation in higher education tends to focus on interventions to assist marginalised/disadvantaged groups in *schools and communities* to promote participation and success in HE. *Micro level* research on HE access tends to focus on the individual, their family, and psycho-social issues such as motivation and aspirations, and policies and practices in schools and classrooms that foster success in schools and transition to HE.

The key areas of interest in critical policy research on HE access/WP are related to who is participating in HE; who is left out; what policies are working or are needed; what interventions schools and HEIs could make to increase HE access/WP; and assessing how successful government and institutional policies/initiatives are in helping students access and succeed in HE. Concerns with structural inequality in HE raises questions of how social inequality in the education/higher education system operates; what type of groups attend if they make it to HE; and why certain groups are being excluded or streamed into lower tier institutions or are exiting the education system at different levels (primary school, secondary school, first year college or university). The research literature on higher education access tends to focus on secondary schooll, community college and university, but the trajectory for motivations towards and later success in higher education start earlier than that at the primary school level.

As the quantity of students have increased in HE so has the diversity of learners, which has implications for government and institutional policies addressing access and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) issues in education. Clancy et al. (2007), in a comparative analysis of HE access and equity policies, found a common understanding even though education structures and cultures differ across countries. They identify three organising principles of HE access policy: inherited merit, equality of rights, and equity, the latter defined as equality of opportunity. HEIs have moved from 'inherited merit' in the admission process through a commitment to formal equality, to equity and forms of affirmative action for selected under-represented groups. However, affirmative action or consideration of 'race' in university admissions have come under increasing attack in the US.[14]

The widening participation (WP) strategy focuses on a social justice approach to HE access policy started in the 1990s in Australia (Jones et al., 2008). It is also popular in Europe

[14] In October 2020, the Justice Department under the Trump Administration sued Yale University over admissions practice, alleging the school violated federal civil-rights law by discriminating against Asian-American and white applicants. A private organisation had sued Harvard University in November 2014 alleging that the University discriminates against Asian-Americans, challenging the consideration of race in admissions in higher education.

who have widening participation strategies, policies, statutes, implementation approaches for HEIs and accountability reporting mechanisms. WP or HE access for disadvantaged or equity-seeking groups[15] has been gaining popularity in Canadian academic research in more recent years, and has moved into the public policy arena to some extent among provincial governments and the federal government. For instance, the McGuinty Government's Reaching Higher plan in Ontario focused on expanding HE spaces, and the Wynne Government promoted EDI policies in schools and 'free' higher education for low-income and underrepresented groups. The changes to the student aid system, provided low-income students with non-repayable grants to cover tuition and other expenses to increase access to college and university for under-represented groups as opposed to the OSAP system of loans. The Auditor-General of Ontario's Annual Report (2018) found that the programme changes were costly and did not have data to evaluate whether the policy change had improved access for the target groups.

The critical discourse acknowledges that there are groups (marginalised, disadvantaged, at-risk, or vulnerable) in society who are not accessing HE in the same numbers as mainstream society. They are also not accessing the same quality of higher education, which speaks to more structural concerns with the education system (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Carnevale & Strohl, 2010). Finnie et al. (2011) note that HE access and persistence involves a complex set of issues and suggest that a 'research model' is needed that captures this complexity (as cited in Finnie, Sweetman, & Usher, 2009). The model would need to consider the interplay among economic and social factors.

"Access groups" in the research literature in education and higher education are defined differently depending on the jurisdiction. Socio-professional categories serve as a proxy for social classes in France; Indonesia uses geography; and ethnic and racial demographics

[15] The term equity-deserving groups is gaining popularity but begs the question *who* determines *who* is deserving of support for equity.

identify access groups in the USA (Clancy et al., 2007). In Canada, access groups tend to be defined in the academic discourse and government policy documents as visible minorities, low-income, immigrants or newcomers, people with cognitive and physical disabilities, first-generation students, Indigenous/Aboriginal peoples, rural students, and Francophone students (Finnie et al., 2011). Issues of anti-black racism and the colonial legacies of the residential school system affecting Indigenous Peoples in Canada have, more recently, forced governments and educators in K-12 and higher education to confront the challenges and inequities facing Black and Indigenous students and the need for policy reform and changes in practices.

Australia and the United Kingdom have used geographical approaches to defining access groups which considers both income and educational experience. The Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden use parental education, as an indicator of whether students are first generation students (FGS) combined with employment type which are indicators of socio-economic status (Thomas et al., 2007). In Ireland, the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education has expanded on three previously targeted groups - socio-economically disadvantaged, mature students, and students with disabilities - to include two other groups, members of the Roma and traveller communities[16] and ethnic minorities (Clancy et al., 2007).

HE access/WP include economic, social and institutional challenges facing various groups and policy approaches to addressing these challenges or barriers. The discussion below presents key themes in HE access/WP research.

Class and Streaming in Education

Using data on 1960s France, Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) highlights the streaming mechanism of the education system where, as secondary education expanded, the working class was relegated to schools and subject streams “at the bottom of the academic hierarchy”

[16] Roma and Travellers together comprise the largest set of minority groups in Europe. See *Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe*, Council of Europe, https://rm.coe.int/the-human-rights-of-roma-and-travellers-in-europe/168079b434

(p. 229). The same applied in higher education, where access increased for the working class, but they tended to enrol in Arts and Science, while the wealthy enrolled in professional programmes - Law and Medicine. The working class shifted from being excluded from higher education to being streamed into specific programmes and low tier institutions. They found that in 1961-62, the higher education system eliminated the working class. In 1965-1966, the chances for higher education access rose for all social classes, but this increase did not reflect real democratisation – equalisation of educational opportunities for children from the different social categories (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). The upper class continued to have a higher probability of access to higher education. They also highlight the importance of the 'community' in the probability of higher education access where community can influence attitudes and aspirations and expectations.

Critics such as James Coleman, view Bourdieu's theory as deterministic, removing *agency* from individuals; however, Bourdieu acknowledged that individuals could have social mobility through education within the existing class structure, which is a Weberian perspective on social class. Van Santen (2005) notes that Bourdieu in his later life had become more pragmatic about changing the education system and settled for modest changes "to prevent the system from aggravating inequalities" (p. 681). This reformist approach to change within the existing education system is reflective of current policy approaches in education, which take a tinkering approach as opposed to systemic or radical change to address access and equity issues in education and higher education.

The issue of access and equity in education - streaming, tiered schools, and growing inequality in education - persists in societies. Clanfied et al. (2014) noted that the education system in Ontario needs to be de-streamed as public policy (regulations and procedures) prescribes behaviour of teachers that encourages certain institutional practices - selective

treatment of students, differential programme streams[17], differential expectations, and standardised curricula - that do not serve many students well. The poor and marginalised are streamed into lower tier schools and HEIs. Within schools, students are also streamed - labelling students as 'gifted' and others as not and the creation of classes of gifted students, which are accepted administrative practices. This discourse on streaming that echoes Bordieuan theory is relevant to the Trinidad context as this former plantation society (Best, 1968) has historically been structured to benefit the elite.

Social Capital in Education

Bourdieu's concept of social capital is widely used in critical education research. Social capital is defined as "actual or potential resources" embedded in one's network of relationships (Bourdieu, 1986). Coleman's study of high school students with families differing in social capital (controlling for human capital and financial capital), indicates that family social capital "… is a resource for education of the family's children, just as is financial and human capital" (Coleman, 1988, p. 113). Students from *larger families*, *one-parent families*, and those with *lower maternal expectation for child going to college* impacted the likelihood of dropping out from high school. Coleman furthers the conversation on social capital started by Bourdieu in the 1970s. Both Bourdieu and Coleman's views on social capital have influenced researchers in the field of education and higher education (Ra, 2011; Hussain et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2013).

Hockings et al. (2010) note that 'diversity' categories of students include life and educational experiences, entry routes into HE, family commitments, living situations, different approaches to learning, and subject knowledge. As a result of this diversity, prior learning experiences and knowledge cannot be assumed when students enter higher education (Haggis 2006). The focus on social capital as a non-financial factor impacting higher education access,

[17] In July 2020, the Ford Government in the province of Ontario announced plans to de-stream the education system which would require systemic change to create equitable outcomes in education.

ought not to be seen as lessening the importance of economic capital and the value of financial assistance for low-income and disadvantaged groups.

Religion as Social Capital for Educational Access

Religious networks as social capital is part of the growing research on social capital's role in educational outcomes. Coleman (1998) found that there was "an independent effect of *frequency of religious attendance*" (p. 115), not the type of religion itself, which showed the importance of social capital beyond the school in the surrounding community. *Variation among school types* was also a useful indicator of social capital, where dropout rates for students from public high schools (14.4%) and non-religiously based private high schools (11.9%) were higher than religiously based (Catholic) private high schools (3.4%). Children from Catholic schools and even other minority religions (Jewish, Baptist and others) had a lower dropout rate based on attendance at religious events. He also suggests that the community could make up the *deficits* of social capital in families of students in Catholic schools.

A study (Hussain et al., 2010) of Grade 8 and 10 African American students in the USA suggested that there was a strong relationship between religious social capital and family social capital as a predictor of college ambitions and future goals. The researchers used a sample of 4,273 African American students from the '2008 Monitoring the Future' dataset to evaluate how well religious, family, and cultural social capital influenced student aspirations and their plans. The results indicated that students (especially males) who are *active in religious life, involved with parents,* and have an *active social life*, have greater opportunities and choices for the future. They suggested future research should compare different racial/ethnic groups with African American students looking at student aspirations over time, over several years, to highlight trends. There is also opportunity to further research the differences among HE outcomes for religious secondary schools compared to students from secular schools regarding higher education access and outcomes.

The Aranguez context offered the opportunity to explore religion (Hinduism/Islam) and its relationship with cultural capital and social capital, in two aspects, the influence on attitudes to education/HE, and any differences in higher education opportunities and access of East Indian children who attended Hindu/Muslim schools versus those who attended Christian denominational schools and government secular schools.

College Choice

College choice is an issue of interest in the WP research which reflects psycho-social factors (aspirations, awareness, agency) and affordability considerations related to those of low socio-economic status (SES). The idea of choice is value-laden, in that it assumes students have control over the schools and HEIs that they attend.

Ra (2011) uses Bourdieu's theory of the 'forms of capital' (with a range of factors used as proxies for social, economic, and cultural capital, and individual and organisational habitus), in studying college-choice and enrolment in America. Proxies for individual habitus were *occupational expectations* and a *student's comfort level at school*; and for organisational habitus, she used *high school college-going norm*. The study involved a quantitative analysis of the Education Longitudinal Study (ELS) national student dataset, which found that not all forms of capital and not all proxies of habitus were relevant to college enrolment and college choice.

Economic capital measured by *income* was as important for college enrolment and choice of college, but not economic capital measured by *family resources*. Cultural capital measures − *student cultural participation* and *parental cultural capital* − show no direct effects on college enrolment but does interact with measures of social capital and habitus to predict college outcomes. For instance, *parent-student involvement* between Grades 10 and 12 increases the chances of college enrolment.

She also found the social capital proxy of *peer influence* had a positive impact on college enrolment and college choice. Students *aspiring to upper-level white-collar jobs* are more likely to enrol in college. *Student comfort level at school* showed a relationship with enrolment in a

private four-year college but was not explanatory for choosing between a two-year public and four-year public institution. Ra (2011) suggests that more high-income students may select a private four-year college, which is why student comfort level may be relevant for them, but does not explain college choices for other students, although one could infer from previous qualitative research that low-income students would not be comfortable selecting a private four-year college, an expensive option in the USA.

Organisational habitus only had strong predictive capability for college choice and college enrolment in high schools with a traditionally higher proportion of graduates enrolled in four-year colleges. Ra (2011) notes that "qualitative and quantitative research reach different results regarding the impact of organisational habitus on college choice" (p. 142), where qualitative research shows a greater impact. Ra also attempted to measure the interaction between social capital (*teacher information*) and cultural capital (*arts involvement*) but found a weak relationship for students with high cultural capital. She acknowledges the limitations of quantitative research in this regard, since more students with higher cultural capital went to teachers for advice about college and suggests that "culturally disadvantaged[18]" students, are less likely to approach teachers for advice.

The impact of habitus differs based on race/ethnicity where contrary to expectations, *occupational expectations for white colour jobs* may change from Grade 10 to *non-professional* in Grade 12 for Black students. This is due to *relegation*, where people around them (family and community) receive few rewards for their investment in other forms of capital, so investment in HE is viewed as too risky or too costly. Ra's (2011) application of social capital theory provides empirical evidence of the utility of the theory and concepts, but she acknowledges that the college choice process needs to be understood within *situated contexts*, which would help with

[18] Martinez & Rury suggests that terminology of "culturally disadvantaged" or "culturally deprived" which arose in the 1960s in the US to explain differences in educational attainment based on social class, race, and ethnicity have been replaced with "at risk" and the concepts of social and cultural capital.

addressing stratification in the higher education system. The issue of school choice as opposed to college choice was explored in the dissertation findings.

Parental Education

The role of parental education is widely researched in the access to HE literature and may be a close proxy for social capital. Canadian research suggests that parental education is perhaps the most important predictor of university enrolment (Frenette, 2005). The theme of First-Generation Students (FGS) also runs through the literature on access to HE. The term FGS has numerous definitions including: (a) “students with no family history of PSE”; (b) “families where the parents of a student did not attend university”; and (c) “those for whom the older responsible generation (not necessarily biological parents) have not had an opportunity for university study at any time in their lives” (Thomas & Quinn, 2007, p. 7). Their focus is on university atttendance as opposed to other types of HEIs.

An interesting finding from the *Measuring the Effectiveness of Student Aid (MESA*)[19] project was that, “FGS are not more vulnerable than others when it comes to leaving PSE without graduating” (Finnie et al., 2010, p. 4), which may mean persistence of FGS at HEIs is less of a problem than transitioning to HE. However, more research needs to be done to draw these conclusions since the dataset with which they were working was extremely limited. The research (Finnie, Lascelles, & Sweetman, 2005; Finnie & Mueller, 2008) confirms that FGS is an important component of the student population where, “parental education is a much better predictor of PSE participation than is parental income” (Finnie et al., 2011, p. 8) and students with parents who do not have HE are less likely to obtain HE (Finnie et al., 2010). The discussion on FGS and parental education is related to the issue of social capital where the family network is key to student aspirations for HE. The family can provide assistance and

19 The Measuring the Effectiveness of Student Aid Project, or the MESA Project, is a research effort conducted through the Canadian Education Project and the School for Policy Studies at Queen's University on behalf of the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation.

guidance with navigating the application process and navigating the academy once they start their programme at an HEI.

Lower aspirations and achievements of specific groups (low SES, minority groups, Indigenous Peoples) in the context of urban and rural poverty, continue to create policy and institutional challenges (Parker et al., 2013). *Individual aspirations*, a psycho-social issue, is a focus of government policy in Australia, as a lack of aspiration to HE is viewed as a hindrance to achieving government targets for university participation, particularly for under-represented groups. Parker et al. (2013) researched the specific issue of student aspirations for higher education, among Year 9 students with low socioeconomic status (SES) in Corio, Victoria, Australia. He compares their responses at two different points in time. Although the research had a small sample of seventeen students, it provided useful information which showed a decline over the two periods in their aspirations for attending university; a preference for less prestigious occupations; and less belief that a university qualification would help them in their future career aspirations. He noted that external parties were making efforts to encourage them to consider post-secondary options, but family and friends were still used as the primary source of information for planning their future. This family and community social network had very few people with university qualifications.

The research suggests that information provision on higher education needs to move beyond the school and the students to include family members and disadvantaged neighbourhoods to address social capital deficits. The case study of Aranguez provided an opportunity to examine the role of parental education given changes in educational policies, and its impact on children's K-12 education and access to higher education across generations.

Race, Ethnicity, and Access

Race, racialisation, ethnicity and access have become major social policy issues in Europe and North America in the 21st century including in the field of education, given demographic shifts to more diverse populations. Research has shown the challenges in the

USA and Canada for Black and Latinx populations with higher dropout rates and longer completion times for high school and college. Cities and urban neighbourhoods have higher dropout rates (NCES, 2016).

Critical Race Theory (CRT), which was initially developed to examine history in America, is a race-based epistemology which criticises racist ideologies, norms and customs that underlie and inform policies that marginalise and promote inequality in societies. The importance of race, affirmative action, and equitable access to HE (especially attendance at university), is something that is important in the USA given its history of institutionalised racial discrimination which is reflected in the education system.

Carnevale & Strohl (2010) note that, like in the 1970s and 1980s when white students moved to suburban elementary schools and high schools, a stratification process is taking place in HE where whites attend selective colleges and low-income, racialised and/or immigrant students have large representation in open-admission community colleges. The latter are also more likely to drop out (Anderson et al., 2015). They suggest growing social inequality in the USA is supported and reproduced by the HE system with increasing stratification along racial lines in degree and non-degree attainment, spending per student, and the balance between general education and narrower job training. This streaming leads to greater inequality, as access is increased to community colleges and lower tier universities for marginalised students but not to selective or elite universities (Carnevale and Strohl, 2010). The USA has access concerns that are greater than that of Canada and Europe given that there is a large private higher education sector[20] and costs are higher leaving students in debt for years after graduation.

Gillborn (2005) applies CRT to the English context to understand the role of education policy in “structuring racial inequity” in subtle ways beyond overt racism. Gilborn presents the

[20] Thirty-two percent of US universities are private (Frenette 2005, p. 5).

diverging views of British political leaders and the impact on public policy - former Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher's belief in a colour-blind approach to public policy; her successor, John Major's rejection of the legitimacy of race-based inequality; and Tony Blair's acknowledgement of race as a factor in inequality.

Blair's policy response of addressing systemic racism by funding a select few Muslim schools provides insight into the implicit bias and value-laden nature of policy-making. The policy-makers tried to address systemic racism through funding based on religion and Islamophobia - conflating race and religion - to address a much broader issue that required systemic change for racialised groups, especially Black youth. The policy solution focused on religion and failed to address systemic racism in education.

Gender Equity

In the last decade, the literature on access/WP in HE in OECD countries have focused on the reversal of gender inequality in higher education where female participation rates are equal or greater than that of men (Vincent-Lancrin, 2008). This is also the case in the English-speaking Caribbean where female participation in higher education is also outstripping male participation. A survey of tertiary institutions in TT indicated that in 2009-10 of the total enrolment (full-time and part-time), 64% were female students (MSTTE, 2010). The same applied for part-time only and full-time only students, where 64% were also female for each enrolment status.

A 2011 EU-funded MSTTE study was commissioned on factors affecting the re-entry of males into the tertiary education system in TT to "inform the development of a comprehensive gender policy..." (MSTTE, 2011). However, the report failed to specifically address the issue of high dropout rate of low-income male students from secondary school and lower participation in tertiary education and the specific issues that impact young men in low-income areas in TT.

Reddock (2009), a Trinidadian researcher, recognises the complexity of factors that intersect to impact access and success in HE and the need to look at "the ways in which

economic or ethnic difference, for example, may shape the outcomes of distinct groups of males and females" (p. 10). The change in the participation of women in HE in Trinidad, especially among East Indian women, would be interesting to explore. As a region of matriarchal societies with female-headed households, the change has widespread implications for families especially from the working class. The issue of educational access based on gender was analysed in this case study as intersecting with race, religion, and culture.

Non-Traditional Students

As more people seek out HE or obtain advanced HE credentials given competitive labour market conditions and aging workforces, the issue of catering to mature or non-traditional students have been recognised in many jurisdictions. Schuetze et al. (2002) in a comparative analysis of OECD countries (Austria, Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the USA), looked at institutional and policy issues which appeared to either inhibit or support participation by non-traditional learners. Their comparative analysis found similar findings from other studies (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970; Carnevale & Strohl, 2010) where most non-traditional students tend to be streamed into non-university institutions or programmes. Elite universities may admit a few low-income, talented students by offering tuition fee waivers and scholarships, but they do not admit non-traditional learners.

In all ten countries, the elite universities were not eager to open access for non-traditional students even though there may be pressure from Government to provide access to new types of students. There are increasing numbers of "third age" students in Europe, who enrol in university after their retirement and continuing education provides an access point for them (Schuetze et al., 2002). In the UK, Connell-Smith & Hubble (2018) noted in a brief to the House of Commons, that there had been a decline in applications from *non-traditional students* and *young, white males from low SES background* who have especially low participation rates,

so strategies to widen participation in higher education would focus on these groups in the future.

The provision of continuing higher education has expanded in the USA and Canada. One reason underlying this trend is the fact that continuing education departments are often operated on a cost-recovery or even profit-making basis, so the reason for expanding programming is revenue-related not access related, as HEIs seek to boost their revenues in light of government funding cuts. The demand for continuing education is also crucial to human capital theory, as technologies and economies change and demand for skills change, people need to re-skill or up-skill to remain employed in the capitalist enterprise.

There is a large group of people - 25-plus, usually low-income, and/or visible minority, who may either work in several jobs, in a permanent full-time job or part-time job, and/or may be parents - who are being left out of HE policy and research. These individuals must make college choice decisions later in life and seek out online, distance and part-time programmes, as well as funding. In the USA, data indicate that non-traditional students in HE is projected to grow faster than direct from high school, full-time students with no family obligations (NCES, 2015). The government of Trinidad & Tobago (GoRTT) has recognised that there is a sizeable proportion of working people who may not be able to afford full-time studies and people who did not enter directly from high school who wish to attend part-time (MSTTE, 2010).

In Ontario, the focus continues to be on direct entry high school graduates and to a certain extent, young people who transfer from community colleges to university. There is a need to expand the conversation of higher education access to older adults (25+) who may not have had the opportunity when they were younger and wish to upgrade their education. These students and potential students need to have more innovative and flexible options available to them for entry (such as Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition or PLAR, work-based learning, online learning) into HE, if HEIs are to fulfil their role as leaders in equity and social justice in their communities.

Government Policy Responses to Widening Participation

Government policy responses to increase HE access/widen participation for marginalised groups have included traditional macro level policy involving broad-based funding approaches to HEIs to increase enrolment spaces at HEIs and tuition assistance. In addition, meso and micro level approaches focus on programmes or interventions at secondary school level, targeting students from various marginalised or equity-seeking groups who face specific challenges. Governments, NGOs and HEIs themselves have been involved in programmes and services to widen participation.

Governments tend to utilise a rational approach to policy-making and make assumptions that it is possible to make good policy that will be implemented equally to everyone. However, policy actors that are institutional agents of the education system enact policy in inclusive or inequitable ways that lead to differential impacts and outcomes for students (Ball, 2005; Ball et al., 2012). In this study, besides government and institutional agents (principals and teachers), other policy actors were important.

Tuition and Financial Aid

One of the policy approaches to widening participation in higher education is cost reduction for students through various mechanisms – tuition waiver for targeted groups; means-tested tuition waivers, means-tested scholarships and bursaries, upfront grants, and low-interest government backed loans for various costs (accommodations, supplies etc.). Costs remain an important barrier to HE for people with low income. OECD countries have expanded access through low or no tuition fees, but rising costs of massification have driven countries like the UK to implement tuition fees[21] or in the USA and Canada to increase fees.

In 2018, the UK government, which has been implementing widening participation in higher education policies for decades, noted that there had been success in improving

[21] Until 1998, full-time students in England could attend public universities free of charge.

participation for traditionally disadvantaged groups, despite the 2012 tuition fee increase. But they were having difficulty in meeting their targets to widen participation by 2020, which was to increase Black and minority ethnic students accessing higher education by 20% and double the proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Connell-Smith & Hubble, 2018). Alongside tuition increases, have been attempts to award upfront grants for low-income students.

Ontario provides loans and grants to HE students through OSAP. Canada Student Loan supplements provincial aid. Loans are repayable after graduation but accrues interest during the period of study, and repayment of loans can be burdensome for graduates who had to cover living and accommodation costs, in addition, to tuition costs. Accommodation and living costs are additional expenses during HE that provide challenges for low-income students. Additional access grants continue to be provided for targeted groups - students with disabilities, Indigenous students, and FGS. The federal government in the US provides Pell grants[22] for undergraduate students but access depends on needs, cost, full-time/part-time status, and programme length.

Most governments provide targeted financial assistance as well as needs-based scholarships but the complexity of options and processes for grants and scholarships from various sources (federal, state/provincial/institutional) are challenging for students in terms of lack of awareness, red tape and navigating application processes. Free college tuition and college student debt was a major policy issue in the 2016 US elections for the younger demographic, which both political parties struggled to address in terms of affordability and sustainability.

Free tuition for HE is not usually a policy consideration for most jurisdictions and

[22] Pell grants are not repayable but has several qualifying conditions that may exclude many people. See https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/pell

student loans continue to be a major form of aid to HE students in developed countries (CFS, 2015). Six EU countries offer free college and university for publicly funded institutions − Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden − and a few in South America. In the USA predatory colleges benefit from Pell grants and encourage students to take high interest private loans to cover costs, many of whom are low-income or disadvantaged (Roberts & Parker-Bair, 2019).

The HE research literature has shown that financial cost is not the only factor in getting marginalised students to engage with the HE system. The recognition of non-financial factors in HE access are reflected in some of the approaches discussed below.

Information, Advice, and Guidance (IAG)

Simmons (2013)[23] uses the concept of Social Capital Deficits (SCDs) to explain specific challenges for racial minorities and disadvantaged students in the USA. He feels other approaches yield marginal returns because they fail to address SCDs. His research focuses on inner city students, employing a SCD model to explain why, despite the various policy interventions such as financial aid; K-12 academic preparation to close achievement gaps with other students; and college discretion for diversity admissions, low-income, minority students are less likely to attend college and if they do, they select a community college or a less selective college. He suggests these students' *lack of social capital* create a vacuum of information about how to navigate the complex admissions and financial aid processes in HE.

He proposes better and adequate counselling in public schools to support these students in overcoming their SCDs. McNeilly (1995) notes that in the Canadian context various cultural groups had different expectations for counsellors and therapists. He sees *the school as a social system whose goal should be transformative* where students of diverse genders,

[23] Article cited with permission of the author.

cultures, races, ethnicities, and social class have equal opportunity to learn by providing the information and guidance that may be lacking at home.

Moore et al. (2013) found information, advice, and guidance (IAG) to prospective students in the UK improved the rate of successful applications and retention rates, but formal advising and quality varies, especially for mature and vocational learners. Successful IAG interventions for marginalised or vulnerable groups were personalised, integrated into outreach and other supports, and addressed crucial issues - finance, applications processes and requirements, and employment opportunities. They found *both informal and formal models of intervention* are needed to support potential applicants to higher education programmes and the expertise of staff also needs to be addressed. Educating influencers working with marginalised groups also require a clear strategy that includes understanding student needs, staff training, and providing appropriate interventions based on target groups. Evaluation of interventions while challenging, is important to identify what works and what does not work to assist students.

Dunne et al. (2014) view the HE application process as a 'site of struggle' for students, especially first-generation students. In their study[24] in England, they compared independent and State schools using the types of HEIs to which students applied; the management of the HE application process in their schools; and the quality of assistance from teacher advisors to understand the university application process, as a contributor (alongside other factors, e.g., family background) to educational stratification. Looking at *institutional procedures and advice in the school* allowed for social contextualisation of HE choice and a shift away from *individuated deficit accounts* of those with lower social, cultural, and economic capital that often characterise approaches to WP (Dunne et al., 2014).

[24] The study used survey and interview data from 1400 Year 13 students from eighteen independent and state schools in England and fifteen in-depth interviews with schoolteacher higher education (HE) advisors.

The study demonstrates how differing forms of capital impact HE access for students. Students from 'independent schools' or private schools are more likely to apply to higher status universities in the UK and abroad, with more than three times the number of applications to Oxbridge than students from the State schools. Students from independent schools were more likely to include universities in the application choices (20.6%) compared to State-school students (5.8%). The former was also twice as likely to consider applying to university abroad (5.5%) as students in the State sector (2.8%), and children of working-class parents were more likely to attend ‘local’ universities because of costs. As more students from the working class obtain the academic qualifications to enter prestige universities, “other social mechanisms (e.g., personal statements, applications to elite HEIs outside the UK) are put in place that effectively safeguard the advantages of more privileged groups” (Dunne et al., 2014, p. 1656).

In the UK study, *teachers take on the responsibility for assisting students with their university applications*, which includes identifying the university and course. All schools provided university prospectuses, guidance groups, and individual sessions but in the independent schools, the groups were smaller; students got more individualised time and attention; alumni attending the top 15 universities were involved; and they had more extracurricular activities to include in their personal statements. Therefore, the application choices of a student are “a negotiated outcome influenced by the institutional doxa, the range of available information and resources, and pedagogic action in the form of teacher advice” (Dunne et al., 2014, p. 1661).

Independent schools have *greater expectations for their students in terms of career and quality of universities and academic programme choices*. They also invest more resources, start the process of advising them earlier and are “more proactive in increasing their students’ capital” (Dunne et al., 2014, p. 1665). The *school doxa* determines advice, expectations of students and what students expect of themselves. The outcome is that high achieving students in State schools are less ambitious. The hierarchical or tiered educational field is supported by *teacher practice and engagement in the ‘rules of the game’.* In other words, "teachers’ practices

(whether conscious or not) work to legitimate the cultural arbitrary that structures relations within and between the educational and social hierarchies" (Dunne et al., 2014, p. 1665).

The difference in *school social capital* between State and private schools create unequal outcomes for students. In addition to school differences, in Leicester, which is a more diverse community, the researcher found differences where university choice was not only related to financial issues but *cultural issues especially for girls from minority communities* who are expected to attend HEIs closer to home (Dunne et al., 2014).

In Ontario, the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities piloted the 'Life After High School' programme which targeted students attending schools where conversion rates from high school to HEIs were lower. The pilot was run in fall 2011, in 87 high schools with low rates of transition to HE and targeted 7,500 Grade 12 students who were part of an education programme that involved information on labour market opportunities and the economic benefits of HE, programmes, costs and guidance through the HE and Ontario Student Assistance Programme (OSAP) application processes, which some students have difficulty navigating. The application fee to college or university was also covered by the programme.

The programme attempted to overcome social capital deficits which is especially useful for students who do not have parents or relatives who have been through the HE application process, although this was not stated explicitly by the Ministry. The initial findings were that more students from schools with lower HE enrolment rates had enrolled. This suggests that there is value in the social capital deficit (SCD) theory, if applied appropriately. Phase II ran from April 2013 to March 2016, to evaluate various models and different forms of facilitation (including online and video components of advising) to see what the best approach was to provide supports to Grade 12 students at a school for applying to HE, financial aid, and increasing the probability of enrolment in HE (Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, 2016).

While these types of interventions – information, advising, and counselling - do not address the overall institutionalised, structural nature of social inequality which marginalises some groups, it attempts to overcome *low social capital* in the home and in their communities, and arrest higher dropout rates from high school and lower participation rates in HE. The availability of advising and information in the home and school was explored in this case study.

Admissions Policies

The equity and social justice approach to HE access goes beyond equal opportunity to equity of access, which includes affirmative action for minority groups, based on the rationale that "since access to higher education is, to varying degrees, competitive, it will always privilege those with superior economic, social, and cultural resources" (Clancy et al., p. 139). Affirmative action in the USA, once a well-established practice since the 1960s in HE admissions to diversify the student body, has taken a regressive turn as it is now being discredited as unnecessary in redressing past injustices (Clancy et al., 2007).

Some countries (such as France, Germany, and Israel), try to align with equality rights initiatives by creating open access policies to universities for all high school graduates. Other countries have a national admissions test (such as the USA, Indonesia, Vietnam) which serves to restrict access (Clancy et al., 2007, pp. 138-139). The use of standardised testing for admissions has proven to be a barrier for students with anxiety and special learning needs, immigrants whose first language is not English, and culturally disadvantaged groups. The interests of private HEIs are served using such tests in two ways: top tier HEIs restrict access with these tests and low tier, predatory HEIs (e.g., some private career colleges) position themselves as open access with no tests to encourage students to enrol, many from racialised and low-income groups.

Sweden and the UK use PLAR to provide access for non-traditional students but there is no evidence of "major shifts in the OECD to introduce procedures for assessment of prior learning or work and life experience" (Schuetze et al., 2002, p. 320). PLAR is the formal

evaluation and granting of course credits for prior learning acquired in formal, non-formal and informal ways. UNESCO has established Guidelines[25] for countries for recognition, validation, and assessment (RVA) of non-formal (workplace) and informal learning (life experiences) for countries to use in their lifelong learning policies. In addition, Schuetze et al. (2002) found that HEIs, especially universities, in most countries are not incorporating lifelong learning as part of their core mission, even though it is part of the policy agenda of governments.

HEI Outreach to Schools

Outreach by HEIs as a strategy to widen participation has demonstrated mixed results. Based on the National Survey of Outreach Program in the USA, one third of all colleges and universities offer at least one outreach or access intervention programme to increase access for educationally or economically disadvantaged students, such as racial/ethnic minorities and low-income groups (Bergin et al., 2007). Some programmes have a multi-pronged approach to improve achievement and encourage high aspirations for college. Programmes provide college preparation coursework; one-fifth provide tuition fee reimbursement; and one-third provide scholarships.

Perna (2002) found that there were outreach programmes that did not have the right curriculum to assist students, and many are not evaluated properly for assessing actual outcomes for students. Bergin et al. (2007) reviewed the EXCEL programmes, which provide seminars, tutoring, mentoring, and a scholarship to "maximise the cultural and social capital of the students, so that students gain the sorts of cultural advantages that will allow them to get ahead in the society in which they live" (p. 734). The programmes foster ethnic identity and pride and builds *cultural capital* through exposure to college campuses. It aims to build *social capital* through role models who are university students of colour. Staff guide students through

[25] The Canadian Association for Prior Learning and Assessment provides education and advice to institutions and provincial governments interested in PLAR. CAPLA uses the UNESCO guidelines to inform its work. See http://capla.ca/unesco-guidelines-for-rva/

the college application process. Parents commit to monitor and encourage the child's academic activities and attend occasional meetings with EXCEL staff through a signed contract.

Bergin et al. (2007) found the programme to be effective, given that its purpose was to attract minority students to enrol at the sponsoring university. The results suggest that scholarship incentive and support programmes that target average to above average achieving students in the eighth grade may not raise the overall number of aspiring minority youth attending college but may be useful to specific universities to raise their minority enrolment. However, the programme and the study failed to account for *external factors in the home or community* that may influence *aspirations* and enrollment.

In their review of the UK literature, Moore et al. (2013) found that interventions to facilitate HE access required consideration of a multitude of factors. Interventions needed to be consistent and sustained; start early and engage young people at various stages of their education; and involve partnerships to maximise resources. Activities also need to be targeted given that certain groups face more barriers (care leavers/former wards of the state and disabled learners). Summer schools and mentoring were effective strategies. In terms of outreach groups, there is more focus on work with schools/colleges and youth, and *difficulties with outreach to mature, vocational and part-time learners*. There are also challenges for evaluating progression and outreach activities to families and communities, and research is needed on evaluating these interventions, including the cost and impact of work at the primary school level.

Programme Flexibility

WP involves flexible provisions by HEIs involving modes of study (part-time, online); curricula and delivery; scheduling and timetable; length of study, distinct locations; different admissions processes; and validation of prior knowledge through PLAR. The extent of institutional governance and control determine flexibility with scheduling of courses, curricula and programmes and targeted recruitment of students. In some countries, non-university HEIs offer open or flexible access whereas entry into the university sector tends to be restricted.

Anglophone countries influenced by the British tradition have more flexibility towards non-traditional students. Countries like Austria and Germany do not have a tradition of part-time programmes and part-time students.

Moore et al. (2013) suggest that there are no significant issues of retention and support for part-time learners in the UK. However, Callender (2011) suggests that the funding changes for part-time students - where an HEI now receives no funding from government for a part-time student who already has a bachelor's degree or higher - will impact HE attendance. Many non-traditional learners are employed, do not live near an institution, and have domestic responsibilities, which prevents them from participating in traditional forms of higher education (Moore at al. 2013; NCES, 2015). Institutions continue to provide campus-based programmes and services where facilities and schedules are designed for young and/or full-time students. (Schuetze et al., 2002). These potential students would benefit from modular courses, credit transfers, part-time programmes, and online courses and programmes. Schuetze et al. (2002) find that the US leads the trend in online learning (citing Agbo, 2000) but there was some expansion in other countries such as Australia and Canada. Canada and Sweden with "less vertically diversified" university systems are admitting more non-traditional students to HEIs (Schuetze et al., 2002).

In Trinidad and Tobago (TT), non-traditional students who wish to continue their education now have opportunities through evening and weekend programmes, allowing working people and women with families to continue their studies. In 2012, 56% of all enrolment was part-time students (NPF, 2015, p. 56). The UWI Evening University in TT was introduced in the 2004/2005 academic year (Pragg, 2014), the UWI Open Campus (OC) launched in 2008, and COSTAATT offers distance education including flexibility in entry requirements and study arrangements to promote access. PLAR seems to be a new tool in admissions processes at UWI to increase enrolments and offers pathways to formal higher education for people with

informal training and workplace training. Distance education providers from outside the region also provide options for access to HE.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced change on the K-12 and HE system to embrace online learning out of necessity not willingness, requiring investments in learning platforms and staff/faculty training. It will be interesting to see the impact that these “temporary” changes have on future demand for online learning (synchronous and asynchronous) and willingness of HEIs to accommodate students. The legacy of the pandemic could turn out to be positive for widening participation, especially for non-traditional students.

Gaps and Challenges

HE access/WP research has addressed various issues (financial and non-financial) that impact transitions to higher education from three levels - macro (government policy, education systems and structures); meso (schools, communities; HEI practices); and micro level (the individual, psycho-social factors, and family) and focus on various policy actors. Research approaches tend to focus on quantitative methodologies.

Researchers tend to focus more on the schools, HEIs and individuals, with less of a focus on the macro – the social reproduction of inequality through the education system and its differential outcomes for marginalised and equity-seeking groups. The literature also suggests that we need to understand more about the impacts of social and cultural capital of the family and community. Critical policy research on race, religion, and other aspects of diversity need to explore how social and cultural capital of various subcultures and subgroups impact education/HE access, through outreach and collaboration with marginalised communities.

The collection of time series data through surveys, such as Youth in Transition (YITS) in Canada and the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS) in the USA, have allowed for high-level longitudinal studies which capture changes in student behaviour and educational outcomes after high school. However, more longitudinal studies are needed in access to HE to

track intergenerational changes in participation, patterns of access, retention and drop-outs, stop-outs and return to education/HE for specific groups which cannot be captured in cross-sectional datasets. Longitudinal studies can capture patterns of change for families, schools, communities and education/HE policy equity impacts. More consistent and comprehensive national data collection will be helpful in assessing changes in education/HE policy at a macro level. At the same time, there is room for qualitative studies to improve understanding of HE access and the value of interventions with marginalised communities and strategies to build social networks and understandings of the dominant culture by minority groups.

Another area for further research is the university's role in lifelong learning focusing on learners instead of the institution, the learning process instead of the curriculum (Schuetze et al., 2002). More research is needed on access and outcomes for non-traditional students at universities. Case studies of HEIs with multiple pathways to entry and who have a mandate of providing access for all learners not just full-time, young students coming directly from high school will be useful in informing the access to HE discourse. In developing countries like Trinidad & Tobago, there is a need to conduct more critical policy research in higher education – both quantitative and qualitative.

Summary

The research on HE access/WP explores the challenges with encouraging higher education access for low-income and marginalised groups. The discourse on the reproduction of social inequality and the forms of capital underpins some of the research such as streaming of low-income groups into lower tier high schools and HEIs; the role of teachers; factors impacting college choice; the importance of parental education; formation of aspirations to HE; and access to resources through social networks.

Mechanisms for widening participation in HE at the individual level include interventions such as counselling, information provision, mentoring and guidance, and teacher support. At the institutional level - programme flexibility and innovation, and flexible admissions processes for

non-traditional students were recommended but less practiced in HEIs. The literature also demonstrates that demographic diversity complicates HE access. The theoretical and policy issues raised in the literature review were considered in framing, design, and execution of the case study. The literature review informed the selection of a theoretical framework to inform the analysis which is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

A review of the literature on higher education access and widening participation, suggested the need for a theoretical framework that addresses the complexity of factors that impact higher education access for people from marginalised groups and that apply to the context and target group. The theoretical framework drew from critical theory on education, specifically, Bordieuan theory on the role and function of the education system. Bourdieu's legacy continues to be relevant in critical policy research as modern education systems continue to be part of the structuring of social inequality and inequity for working class and marginalised groups. Bourdieu's ideas have been adopted and expanded in critical policy research on education/HE, including government policy, and institutional and pedagogical practices in HEIs (van Zanten, 2005).

Lingard et al. (2005) suggest that Bourdieu's theories – field theory, habitus, and capital theory can be utilised in the study of the policy cycle in education and its associated practices. In Bourdieu's theory of fields, where social arrangements consist of various fields (e.g., the economy, politics, power, education), the *field of power overarches the field of education*. Lingard et al. (2005) echo the conclusions of other researchers who suggest that education policy as a field is losing autonomy, as globalisation and the field of the economy take precedence, even leading to a global policy field in education.

The theoretical framework focused on the *forms of capital* whose application to the field of education research has expanded rapidly from the late 20th century to present. The research also utilised Coleman's research on social capital and education. The application of capital theory to understand education/HE access is situated in the stream of sociological research that applies a critical social justice lens to the issue of higher education access. While Bordieuan theory is useful, it has limitations within the context of postcolonial Trinidad and Tobago.

Postcolonial theory and concepts from the Caribbean were used to supplement Bordieuan theory.

Bourdieu's Theory of Social Reproduction and Inequality

Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction and inequality focuses on the macro level, based on his understanding of the structural nature of inequality, where the concepts of the *forms of capital* are central to understanding social stratification and power in society. The dominant class with the most social capital perpetuates inequality. Social capital is key to one's class, which is at the core of his argument in understanding the way society reproduces inequality through its institutions, including educational institutions.

For Bourdieu, the social system allows for *individual* social mobility, while structurally staying the same (reproducing itself) to maintain the class structure. Critics have viewed this theory as pessimistic and deterministic, working against ideas of education reform and radical transformation (van Zanten, 2005). In his early works, his framing of HE access/WP from a macro-structural perspective challenges the elitist education system itself, whose schools and HEIs support the social structure.

Forms of Capital – Social, Cultural, Economic

Bourdieu's resource-based concepts of social, cultural, and economic capital operate together to explain the reproduction of inequality*,* fusing the structural aspect of social inequality and individual agency. The 'forms of capital' have been used as analytical concepts to study financial (economic capital) and non-financial issues (cultural and social capital) related to access and equitable outcomes in the education/HE system. The different forms of capital – social, cultural, economic capital – are an extension of Marx's notion of the role of capital in structuring classes and the importance of history in shaping society. Capital can be economic (money, property rights); cultural (convertible into economic capital under certain conditions and may be institutionalised as educational qualifications; and social (social obligations or connections) which may be convertible into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

Social Capital

Bourdieu defines social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition …. which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity….” (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 248-249). The premise is that one’s social networks have value. In Bourdieu’s theory, 'networks of relationships' are where social capital resides, which may be in the neighbourhood, the workplace, or even family relationships. These relationships create obligations and feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, reciprocity, or even provide institutionally guaranteed rights that allow access and privileges for the members involved (Bourdieu, 1986). The ‘volume’ of social capital depends on the size of the network and the amount of economic or cultural capital each member possesses.

The nature and value of social capital relates to one’s class position in society and is connected to group membership, access to resources, and power. Social capital can operate to create inequality. Social capital involves knowing the right people to help you; cultural capital involves understanding the culture of society and how to achieve goals, especially the culture of elite society; and economic capital involves having money to access the right social networks. The more capital you have, the more power you have in the social order. Social capital may be “socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class, or a tribe or of a school, a party, etc.) and by a whole set of instituting acts” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). Social capital may stem from proximity in *physical, economic*, and *social space*.

The *family is the first social network* that an individual possesses - the foundational social capital. Social connections in networks need investment, “establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long-term” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) noted the importance of the community’s role (*social capital embedded in communities*) and its role in higher education access where community can influence *attitudes* and *aspirations* in terms of ‘reasonable expectations.’

Habitus is a key Bordieuan concept which refers to “a structure of norms and tendencies” determining how we understand the world, our beliefs and values, habits, skills, attitudes, behaviour, and general disposition, which operates subconsciously (Bourdieu, 1977). Our habitus varies based on our class.

Coleman (1988) furthers the conversation on the usage of social capital in education. He outlines three forms displayed in social relations which are resources for individuals: *obligations and expectations*; *information channels* that provide a basis for action; and *norms and effective sanctions*. He defines social capital as “a variety of entities” which have social structure and facilitates the actions of actors. Therefore, social capital is anything that facilitates *individual or collective action* and elements include *trust, relationships in networks, information flow among colleagues, friends and family, and norms and sanction*s towards the common good. While others have critiqued the concept of social capital as being too vague or over-abused, he operationalises social capital by using various variables, such as *two-parent presence; parental involvement; sibling influence, and parental expectations* to represent sources of social capital which moves the concept beyond the vagueness of which Bourdieu has been accused.

Coleman (1988) examined the value of social capital in creating human capital through a quantitative analysis of a student dataset of high school students to demonstrate "the effect of social capital in the family and in the community in aiding the formation of human capital" (p.118). He believes that social capital affects the creation of human capital in the next generation, both from *family* and the *community*. Coleman notes, "Norms in a community that support and provide effective rewards for high achievement in school greatly facilitate the school's task" (p. 104). *Social capital of the family is “the relations between children and parents and other family members with whom they have relationships*” (Coleman, 1988, p. 109). The family background has different components: financial capital, human capital, and social capital.

From a *psychological perspective*, human capital in the form of the *parents' education*,

"provides the potential for a cognitive environment for the child that aids learning" (Coleman,1988, p. 109). In addition, a family's human capital is only important to outcomes for children if parents are part of their children's lives (p. 110). He suggests that one could analyse the impact and interaction between both "human capital (parents' education) and social capital (some combination of measures such *as two parents in the home, number of siblings,* and *parents' expectations for child's education*" (p. 110) and its implications for a child's development.

Putnam (2021) borrowed the concept of social capital from Coleman (who in turn built on Bourdieu's work) which he applied to examining politics, democracy, social cohesion, and America's shifting social inequality over the course of the 20th century. However, he noted[26] that he later changed his views on social capital in that he rejected Coleman's notion that social capital can only be good or positive social capital. He supports the idea that *social capital could be positive or negative*. For example, negative social capital arises from membership in the Mafia or ISIS or criminal gangs, where members receive certain benefits, but whose criminal activities are deemed unacceptable by society, bringing negative social outcomes. On the other hand, positive social capital comes from being part of elitist organisations such as being students or alumni of Ivy League universities.

Cultural Capital

Cultural capital exists in three forms: "embodied state (long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body); the objectified state (cultural goods, pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines.); and institutionalised state - *educational qualifications, credential"* (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243). One equips oneself with cultural capital, which is reproduced by economic capital. If you are well-educated, have skills that are in demand, can speak different languages, then you have cultural capital that can change your economic and social status.

[26] Robert Putnam: A reflection on 30 years of social capital research, Webinar, May 21, 2021, socialcapitalresearch.com

Bourdieu found cultural capital to be an important concept *"to explain the unequal scholastic achievement of children originating from the different social classes by relating academic success…. to the distribution of cultural capital between the classes and class fractions*" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243). This approach is a break from traditional thinking that ascribes academic success or failure to the *natural aptitude* or *ability* of the student. This may better explain the high failure rates among students from equity-seeking or marginalised groups. In his application of his theory to education/HE, students with families who have more of the "right" types of capital because of their class do better in the education/HE system, integrating better into school and university culture and perform better academically (Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

Economic Capital

Economic capital consists of material assets that are "immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalised in the form of *property rights*" (Bourdieu, 1970, p. 242). Economic capital is related to class formation, where the elite has the most economic capital. One's social capital (knowing the right people) can improve one's economic capital. Understanding and possessing the cultural capital of the elite also provides access to economic capital.

Post-colonial Theory and the Caribbean Context

Postcolonial theory relates to critical theories that interrogate the impact of colonisation and imperialism on countries after gaining their independence from various perspectives – social, economic, political, cultural (literary), and psychological. Although there have been imperialists from different areas of the world colonising spaces on an ongoing basis, postcolonial theory tends to focus on European colonisation which has had differing impacts and legacies depending on the colonising country. Decolonising approaches in education have become popular in former colonies, calling for restoration of indigenous forms of education and ways of knowing which are particularly important for jurisdictions where an Indigenous

population survived colonisation such as Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, and South America.

Postcolonial theory has impacted the study and formation of education policy. For instance, the 2007 Ontario Ministry of Education's *First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* acknowledge FNMI students' need to learn within a culturally responsive setting and non-indigenous students and teachers need to learn more about the cultures and histories of Indigenous Peoples (People for Education, 2016). In the Caribbean, colonising countries were England, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and France and each experience of colonisation evolved differently for the local Indigenous peoples and the people who came later. Trinidad & Tobago (and the other former British West Indies[27] islands in the Caribbean) continue to maintain an education system that is a colonial legacy underpinned by Western assumptions and understanding of what comprises knowledge. Some ongoing tinkering with the system in Trinidad has led to a unique attempt to address the demands of a diverse population.

The Caribbean has been of interest to external academic researchers given its history and diversity. For instance, US anthropologist Sidney Mintz wrote extensively on different islands in the region. However, postcolonial theory allows for people's own voices to counter the narratives of others who have spoken for them and written about them. Before post-colonial theory became popular, Caribbean intellectuals were theorising and examining their colonial and post-colonial condition and their societies from economic, political, sociological, psychological, artistic, and cultural perspectives[28]. For instance, Ashcroft et al. (2002) note that the Caribbean "has been the crucible of the most extensive and challenging post-colonial

[27] Guyana is in South America and Belize is in Central America but are part of the former British West Indies which still have Indigenous populations. However, the Caribs and Arawak populations in Trinidad & Tobago were decimated but they still have a few descendants.

[28] Edward Said's book Orientalism, 1978 is credited as laying the foundation for what is now referred to as postcolonial theory. However, many writers, including French and English West Indian intellectuals were already writing in the 1950s about the impact of colonialism on the Caribbean.

literary theory" and what is now known as postcolonial theory arose from the work of "African, Caribbean and Indian writers, artists and social theorists who were actually engaging the power of imperial discourse – who were *writing back*" (p. 198).

Caribbean theories and concepts have analytical and explanatory value to fill the gaps of Bordieuan theory which focuses on class, and some of these concepts are used in analysing the data given the context. Caribbean post-colonial theory includes models of Caribbean society and concepts of *plantation society* (Lloyd Best, George Beckford), *creole society* (Edward Kamau Brathwaite), and *plural society* (M. G. Smith; Lloyd Brathwaite), which provide different analytical lenses to examine social inequality and the effects of colonialism.

In *plantation society theory*, the demographics, social structures, and political structures are a replication of the *plantation community* on which the society was built after emancipation of the enslaved. This theory ignores the social forces of change such as political resistance and independence, economic and technological evolution away from the plantation, and the rise of a middle class and new elites drawn from the descendants of the former colonised. Race is a cornerstone of class and the occupational structure and expansion of capitalism, of which slavery was a foundation. Whites continue to be the owners of the means of production. Tensions, racial divisions, conflict and crises are inherent to this society.

The term 'creole' used to mean a European born in the Caribbean, but Brathwaite (1971) used it to mean the society that was formed in the Caribbean comprising of Afro-Creoles, 'mixed-race[29]' Creoles, and white Creoles. Brathwaite found that historians used an imperial lens focusing on imperialism, trade, and colonialism to analyse early Jamaican society and he wanted to use a local perspective whereby a society of Black people, whites, and their mixed-

[29] 'Mixed-race' - someone of 2 or more 'racial' ancestry, e.g., someone with an Afro-Trinidadian parent and an Indo-Trinidadian or East Indian parent is called a 'dougla'. Coloureds is an outdated term from plantation societies, used by West Indians in colonial times and early post-independence to refer to mixed-race people of African and European descent. After other racial groups came to Trinidad (Chinese, Portuguese, middle eastern minorities - Syrians, Lebanese, Jewish), interracial relationships led to a larger and growing group of mixed-race people. Presently, the Trinidad & Tobago census refers to anyone with more than one racial heritage as "mixed."

race children created their own distinctive culture, which was not British or African but a new creole society. This term was applied to discourses on the other islands.

In the post-colonial literature in the Trinidad context, creole society came to mean the society formed before the arrival of East Indians comprising people of African, European, or mixed-race ancestry, and later Chinese people. The European group later expanded to include various waves of immigrants - Middle Eastern people (Syrians, Lebanese, Jewish minorities). East Indians did not belong to Creole society as most (but not all) arrived as Indentureds after the British colonial societies of Trinidad and Guyana were formed. Brathwaite (1971) considered 'creolisation' as a process whereby distinct groups in the Caribbean absorbed each other's culture.

For Indians, the process of creolisation of Indians (assimilation to the dominant society) started from first arrival to the West Indies and continues to the present. Creolisation is thus a spectrum, from losing their East Indian culture (religion, cultural practices, norms, and values) and conforming to the dominant Creole culture including conversion to Christianity, to adapting while maintaining a peaceful co-existence with their Eastern culture and the Western culture in varying degrees. For the dominant society, Indian culture was accommodated and absorbed into the mainstream culture such as food, music, and aspects of the language. The Africans were forced to conform to the European culture during slavery but some African cultural practices persist among lower income communities. Jamaican, M. G. Smith wrote on the *plural society* in the Caribbean, which he saw as cultural groupings, not simply racial or ethnic groupings.

In the post-colonial era, societies undergo a process of identity formation and for Trinidad, this resulted in narratives which marginalised East Indian voices in the Caribbean diaspora. Brereton (2007) identifies a typology of narratives that exists in Trinidad & Tobago based on time period, power, and racial/ethnic/cultural backgrounds including: hegemonic, historical narratives of Trinidad during the colonial era - the British imperial historical narrative

and the French Creole one, associated with political and/or planter elites; the Afro-Creole narrative; the Tobago narrative; the Indocentric narrative; an undeveloped Afrocentric narrative; and a Hinducentric narrative. She notes that the imperial narrative was replaced by a nationalistic, Afro-Creole conception of the postcolonial state, “The Afro-Creole historical narrative helped to shape (and was shaped by) a hegemonic understanding of what was Trinidadian, what was national, and what was “other” (p. 177).

East Indians and other groups (Chinese, Middle Eastern Syrians/Jews) were expected to assimilate to the mainstream culture. The Afro-Creole narrative, which was led by middle-class intellectuals like Dr. Eric Williams (the first Prime Minister, an Oxford PhD graduate and historian), became dominant in the decades after the 1962 independence from England, defining Trinidad as a nation with African-descended creoles. Williams’s afro-creole approach to independence and nation-building was creolisation – assimilation of all cultural groups to the dominant creole culture (Christian, Eurocentric), which was resisted by Hindu and Muslim people.

The Afrocentric narrative associated with the Black Panther movement challenged the Creole values and colonial mentalities that devalued African heritage which created a discourse on values, ideology, and history which aimed at decolonising the Afro-Creole view. East Indians were absent in the Afro-creole intellectual narratives in academia. Brereton (2007) notes that there were challenges by an Indocentric narrative to the dominant Afro-Creole narrative with the rise of a small and growing group of educated, middle-class Indo-Trinidadians in the 1950s, which matured late in the 20th century. At the root was the *spread of education* which produced qualified Indo-Trinidadians in the professions, landowners, businesspeople, and entrepreneurs with increasing wealth.

A revitalisation of Indian culture happened while Indians were also becoming more creolised with forces of *acculturation* and *de-culturation* happening at the same time. According to Brereton, a version of the Indocentric narrative - a Hinducentric narrative - is a more recent

extreme version, where Indian and Hindu are synonymous with an inherent superiority of the Hindu civilisation, attributing this view to the growth of Hindu nationalism in India (Brereton, 2007). East Indian academics in the former British West Indies and those in the diaspora in North America and the UK could be considered part of the Indocentric narrative.

Martiniquean, Frantz Fanon is part of the Afro-creole post-colonial narrative in the wider Caribbean who interrogated the *psychological impact of colonisation and slavery.* Ward (2013) notes that French writers in the 1950s[30] began looking at the *psychological effects of colonisation on the coloniser and colonised*. She *sees post-colonial theory as benefiting from trauma theory in psychology*, acknowledging its Eurocentric beginnings, terms, and methods. She suggests that trauma theory such as Hirsch's use of post-memory regarding the intergenerational trauma (IGT) of Holocaust survivors could be used to understand post-colonial trauma from events such as slavery, genocide and war. Nandy (1983) argues that the damaging legacy of colonialism is its *creation of a culture of violence* and resistance in the colonised that mimics the violence that the oppressors perpetrated.

The Caribbean post-colonial literature informed the analysis of findings. Understandings of the *plantation economy* and its history of slavery and indentureship; the intersection of class with race and religion in the structuring of power which impact education access; the relationship between *creole society* and the East Indian community; and challenges facing a plural (diverse) society are applied to the data analysis and discussion of findings. These post-colonial issues and concepts that speak to the impacts of colonisation in the Caribbean context, were used to extend Bordieuan concepts, and move beyond them to understand education policy enactment and impacts on higher education access.

[30] Octave Mannoni – Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonisation, 1950; Frantz Fanon – The Wretched of The Earth; Black Skins, White Masks, 1952; Albert Memmi- The Colonizer and The Colonized 1957.

Summary

Bordieuan theory focuses on *class* and social inequality which provides a critical analytic framework to examine higher education access in the case study. Studies have demonstrated the value of Bordieuan capital theory for understanding HE access among marginalised groups such as racialised groups, low-income groups, and ethnic minorities. In addition, the expansion of usage of the ‘social capital’ concept by Coleman to understand the role of family and community in educational success, was useful in the analysis of findings.

Caribbean postcolonial theory was utilised to contextualise and understand some of the data related to power relations, access and colonial legacies specific to this case. The theoretical framework informed the conceptual framework that was used in the analysis of data and findings. The next chapter presents the history and context for the case study to situate discussion of the findings.

Chapter 5: Research Context - Trinidad

This chapter provides the social, economic, and political contexts that shaped education policy and the education system – system design, policy formation, policy actors, processes, and access for people in Aranguez. This contextual framing is important as "policy creates context, but context also precedes policy" (Ball et al., 2012). The post-colonial context is key to interrogating how higher education was enacted by participants and their families, as well as other policy actors and why higher education is not an obvious option.

Trinidad and Tobago (TT) is a twin-island[31] Caribbean state located 6 miles off the coast of Venezuela, with a population of 1,405,775 (UN, 2019). It ranks #67 on the 2020 Human Development Index (HDI[32]) and is designated a high income, non-OECD country by the World Bank (IBRD, 2020)[33]. However, TT is still a developing, capitalist country with income inequality - 21.8%[34] of the population lives in poverty, and many on the margins of poverty. The case study site is located in Trinidad, so the focus of the discussion is limited to this island.

Colonial Period

History, Politics, and Economics

The historical, social, and economic context of Trinidad & Tobago (TT) is important in understanding social inequality and inequity in education/HE in the case study of Aranguez. Historically, the society was formed and stratified based on notions of race, class, colour, and by religion which intersect in complicated ways as axes of social inequality and oppression. TT is a former Spanish and English colony whose history is steeped in violence - enslavement and

[31] Trinidad and Tobago became a united territory in 1889.
[32] See Latest Human Development Index Ranking for details at https://www.hdr.undp.org/en
[33] TT GNI per capita, PPP (current international $) is USD$26 160. High-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of $12,536 or more. See World Bank Country and Lending Groups – World Bank Data Help Desk
[34] Central Statistical Office Household and Budgetary Survey for 2011.

decimation of the Indigenous Peoples[35], enslavement of Africans, and indentureship of poor whites, Chinese, and East Indians.

Trinidad's Indigenous peoples - Caribs and Arawaks – lived on the land before Columbus captured it for the King and Queen of Spain in 1498. In 1783, the Spanish King allowed French refugees from the French West Indian islands to settle in Trinidad. It remained a Spanish colony until 1797, when the British took it. At that time, the population was 17 718 comprising Indigenous peoples and European colonisers. The Indigenous population was almost wiped out through war and disease during colonisation by the Spanish. It became a plantation-based economy, as the Spanish and later English colonisers established sugarcane plantations using *enslaved labour* from Africa to manufacture sugar for the European market.

Slavery in the West Indies ended in stages with the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, and then the passage of the British Slavery Abolition Act which came into force in 1834, ending slavery (Braithwaite, 1975). By the end of slavery, the population was 43 678 - 627 Indigenous peoples; 20 657 African slaves; 18 627 mixed-race; and 3 632 whites − Spanish, English, French, Irish, Scottish, Portuguese. Slaves only became fully free in 1838 after a period of *forced apprenticeship* after which the former slaves left the plantations.

Williams (1944) set forth the argument that slavery ended not for moral reasons but economic reasons – it was no longer profitable for the European estate owners. Unlike smaller islands like Barbados and Antigua where former slaves had to continue to work on plantations because of population density and lack of land availability, Trinidad had unoccupied land that the former slaves could settle and different labour relations (Perry, 1969). Over time, mixed-race people and Afro-Trinidadians grew the middle class (Campbell, 1997), holding positions in politics and the bureaucracy, while absentee landowners and local European minority[36] elites

[35] There are small numbers of people who identify as First Peoples and have ancestors who were the original peoples – Caribs and Arawaks.
[36] Minority in numbers but the elite in economic and social status.

owned large tracts of land and businesses. After Emancipation (1838), within one generation, mixed-race people were able to establish a small middle class in the 19th century. In the early 20th century, TT achieved self-government in 1956 under Dr. Eric Williams[37] and his People's National Movement Party. Williams was an Oxford PhD graduate, historian, and former Howard University professor, and became the Chief Minister. From 1958-1962, TT's status changed to a territory of the British West Indies.

Immigration: Indentureship and other Migrants

A new labour force was needed by the plantocracy after slavery ended, which resulted in various indentureship experiments that included Irish, Chinese, and East Indian people. Before indentureship, some Indians had migrated to Trinidad, but the colonial authorities put a stop to it, as these migrants were not under any obligation to work on the plantations.

As early as 1806, 192 Chinese immigrants were brought to Trinidad as an experiment of replacement labour for African slaves. From the1850s to 1866, organised immigration of Chinese labourers to the West Indies took place with approximately 18 000 Chinese immigrants coming to the Caribbean (Rajkumar, 2013). High mortality rates among the Irish Indentureds and abandonment of the estates by the Chinese to become shopkeepers and small businesspeople proved these experiments to be a failure in Trinidad. When this labour strategy did not work out for the planters, East Indians were brought from India between 1845[38] to 1917 as indentured labourers. The main provinces from which Indian indentured labourers came were the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, Behar, and Bengal in India.

After early recruitment of Indians as indentured labourers for Mauritius and Guyana, recruitment was suspended after reports of abusive treatment by estate owners. However, after a committee report concluded that safeguards could be put in place, the East India Company authorised recruitment of labourers from Kolkata (Calcutta) for West Indian plantations through

[37] See http://trinbagopan.com/Ericwilliams.html
[38] This period included the pre-partitioning of India in 1947.

Act XXI of 1844. Problems with recruiters plagued the indentureship process. Stories of people being forcibly recruited or convinced with false information about what awaited them in the West Indies, have been passed down through generations. Recruiters were paid by the number of people recruited and tried to get as many people as they could. Perry (1969) notes: “Complaints of recruitment through fraud and coercion led to the passage of laws in 1845 with frequent revisions thereafter” (p. 53). Despite changes by the colonial government in India, abusive practices by recruiters continued including kidnapping, subterfuge, rape, and murder.

The potential migrants at the Trinidad Emigration Depot in Kolkata suffered from fever and dysentery. Mortality was high on the ships carrying Indians to the West Indies, due to contaminated water, food spoilage, poor toilet facilities, and lack of access to medical help for tropical diseases. Once these issues were addressed, the death rates declined to approximately 2% by the end of the 19th century (Perry, 1969).

On the plantations, the daily work in the fields was supervised by ‘drivers’ or overseers[39] who sometimes whipped their workers to improve productivity. Incidents such as wage reductions could lead to dissatisfaction and violence or threats against overseers or managers, and even murder. The indentureship system faced growing opposition in India and England which was seen as close to slavery (Perry, 1969), and it was stopped in 1917.

Other small groups of immigrants and refugees migrated to Trinidad – Lebanese and Syrian Christians, and Jewish people escaping civil war and persecution in Europe at various points in history. These small minority ethnic groups became part of the local elite. Most re-migrated in subsequent generations to the USA and Canada. In addition, people from the other English-speaking West Indian countries (Afro-Caribbean people from the islands and Indians from Guyana) migrated over time, growing the population. The current population is again changing with waves of migrants from Venezuela and China.

[39] Drivers were East Indian, and overseers were white, and both supervised the workers, same as when drivers were black, and overseers were white during slavery.

Race, Religion, Culture

Religion played a key role in colonisation with efforts to Christianise and civilise the Indigenous peoples, the African slaves and many of the East Indian indentured labourers. Creole society which had already formed before the arrival of the East Indians was built on Christian norms and values (Roman Catholicism and the Anglican churches). East Indians existed alongside creole society, becoming a racialised group. The same happened in other countries in the diaspora where they were indentured such as Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica, and Fiji. This racialisation of Indians by creole society impacted access to political power, economic resources, literacy and education, and the labour market. However, 'race' was not the only factor in East Indians being marginalised to the bottom of the social ladder in Trinidad; their culture and religion separated them from the rest of the society.

Unlike the African slaves, whose religions and cultures were almost erased by plantation owners and the colonial government, the East Indians were left to practice their culture and continue their traditions for the most part, providing a separation between the two largest racial/ethnic groups – part of the divide and rule policy of the British Empire. The Indentureds were mainly Hindu peasant farmers from the lower castes (artisans, traders, agriculturalists, labourers) in India, although there is evidence that some people of higher castes including a few Kshatriyas (warriors) and brahmins (priests), made the journey across the Kala Pani. [40] Most had some cultivation experience, even though it was not part of their caste. The caste system continued to be practiced in limited ways (inter-caste marriage was discouraged) for the new arrivals but over time lost its relevance in the society. The Brahmins would continue to have higher standing in the Hindu community which contributed to their economic prosperity. Muslims were a minority among the newcomers, along with a few Christian Indians. Hindus and Muslims who converted to Christianity were viewed as traitors to their communities.

[40] Black water with associated taboos - reference to crossing the ocean as Indentureds.

The newly arrived indentured labourers and their children were illiterate and uneducated from a Western perspective as far as the English colonialists and the local community were concerned. However, they came with literacy in their own languages and knowledge of their Scriptures such as the Ramayana and Bhagavad-Gita for the Hindus and the Koran for the minority Muslims. The eastern culture (language, food, customs, religions) put Indians at a disadvantage in the society on arrival, as their cultural practices and customs were seen as alien, and they were labelled as heathens. Their eastern culture did not provide cultural capital for navigating the dominant society. Being non-Christian resulted in the 'othering' of the East Indians. Conversion to Christianity (Catholicism; Presbyterianism) provided some social acceptance and chance for upward social mobility including access to education. In St. James in Port of Spain, which had a large settlement of Indians, the Catholic Church was able to convert most Indians, but the same did not happen in Aranguez.

Trinidad became a plural society with diverse races, cultures, and religions which tend to intersect with class, status, and political affiliation. Social stratification is based on group memberships that impact access to opportunities. A society formed that was divided along lines of race, religion, skin colour, economic position, and educational level (Braithwaite, 1975; Ryan, 1992; Premdas, 2007). The Black population in Trinidad distrusted the newcomers who were shifting the balance of political power as their numbers grew. Religious interest groups and economic elites, which intersect with race and class had significant impact (some more than others) as education policy actors from the early history.

Education: Primary and Secondary

In the early colonial history of Trinidad, prior to the arrival of the East Indians, education was not provided to the slaves, only to the free classes, as it was not seen as necessary by the plantation owners. From 1835 – 1845, the *Negro Education grant*, a programme of the Protestant missionaries and the British government, provided 80,000 pounds to the British West Indies to build private school houses (mission schools) for children of the Black community and

pay teacher salaries, part of which came to Trinidad. The Christian churches (Roman Catholic, Anglican, Wesleyan) brought primary education to the low-income Black and mixed-raced people, *establishing the prominent role of religious entities in education expansion*. Primary schools were not established as a means of social mobility but to spread Christianity, to provide basic literacy and to expand the membership of the various denominations (Campbell, 1997). By mid-century, the denominational bodies were the only providers of education (primary school level) using the grants from the British government.

In 1830, St. Joseph's Convent in Port of Spain provided secondary education for the daughters of the elite class. In 1851, Governor Lord Harris established the first education policy. This state control of secular education aimed to unify the various religious, cultural, and political groups in society. Local government established *ward schools* and withdrew support to denominational schools. Two schools were built in Port of Spain to train teachers. In 1859, a secondary school for boys, Queens' Collegiate, was established in Port of Spain, becoming Queen's Royal College (QRC) in 1870, which became one of the prestige schools in the country. QRC was deemed by the Governor to be *open to every race and every religion*.

The government created the Keenan[41] Commission in 1869 to evaluate the state of education but ignored Keenan's recommendation to make all the schools denominational. In 1870, the *Education Ordinance* recognised two main types of schools – *government schools* funded by the government and *assisted denominational schools*, who received government funding but were run by religious Boards from the respective Christian denominations. This created the *dual system of education* that continues today in Trinidad (GoRTT, 1962).

The examination for entering the secondary school system was the College Exhibition test, which started in 1879. A limited number of *boys*, nationwide, sat the examination and were able to attend the prestige schools of QRC and St. Mary's College, the latter being a Catholic

[41] A British government representative from Ireland.

school founded in 1863 in Port of Spain. The first girl sat the examination in 1926 (De Lisle, 2012). The examination allowed a few children from the working class to attend secondary school. Facilities at that time included 3 secondary schools, 30 Ward schools, 2 model schools, 3 Borough schools, 30 denominational schools, and 1 Indian school.

The arrival of East Indians was a challenge for the mostly Christian schools, as they were not Christian and did not speak English. Thus, the East Indian population had limited access to education (primary and secondary), until the arrival in 1868 of Canadian Presbyterian missionaries, led by Reverend John Morton from Nova Scotia, who set up schools and trained local Indians to instruct the Indian children, sometimes, using their Indian dialects in the early days. The Presbyterian Church deliberately targeted East Indians for conversion, while ignoring Afro-Trinidadian children. These Indians converted to Christianity to access education and teaching jobs with the Church, and to assimilate for upward social mobility. By the 1920s, 10% of the East Indian population had converted to Presbyterianism even though the Church claimed conversion was not a condition of access to education. However, some Indian parents including those in Aranguez, distrusted the missionary schools, who they felt sought to convert their children and chose instead for them to remain illiterate. The education of Indians was, therefore, primarily linked to expansion of the public education system and secondarily, the creation of Hindu/Muslim denominational schools.

Since 1914, the Arya Samaj movement had been visiting Trinidad from India, but incorporated in 1943 as the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Trinidad, “for the purpose of carrying out *educational*, religious and charitable work” .[42] Nine Vedic primary schools were built over time including the Gandhi Memorial Vedic School in Aranguez in 1952. The schools also served as mandirs (temples of worship) where Hindu religious functions and celebrations were held

[42] See https://www.aryasamajtrinidad.org/about-us

including weekly religious services. But local Indian leaders saw a need to establish their own schools.

Indian leaders began a struggle to establish Hindu and Muslim schools and they fought to establish the right to education access for Indians (Campbell, 1992; Verma, 2000). The Takveeatul Islamic Association (TIA) established El Socorro Islamia Primary School in 1942 and in 1949 became the first non-Christian school to get government assistance. El Socorro borders Aranguez, and Muslims from Aranguez and surrounding areas could attend the school. Badase Sagan Maharaj, along with Dr. Rudranath Capildeo,[43] were founding members of the Hindu organisation, Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha (SDMS) in 1952. By 1952, government started to provide funding to Hindu schools. The Sabha built six schools in the early 1950s, and soon became the largest Hindu organisation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Literacy among East Indians became a political issue when in 1943, the Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago voted to impose a *language test before one could vote in elections.* In 1950, 45.8% of East Indians were illiterate (excluding literacy in Hindi and Sanskrit) and 60% of Hindus were illiterate. A language test would have disenfranchised many Indians and skew elections results. It was withdrawn in the face of opposition and protest from the East Indian community (La Guerre, 1991).

Access to education for women was related to class, in addition to race (white and mixed-race people) and religion (Christian). Upper class women gained access to secondary education with the establishment of secondary schools for girls in the 1920s and 1930s. The education system evolved with regulations such as the *Compulsory Education Ordinance* introduced in 1921 for children, ages 4-15, to attend elementary school in designated compulsory school attendance areas. In the same year, intermediate schools (2 government and 5 Roman Catholic) were introduced to bridge the gap between primary schools and the

[43] Capildeo, a scholar, received Trinidad & Tobago's highest honour to citizens, the Trinity Cross, later renamed Order of the Republic of T & T. See http://icons.niherst.gov.tt/icon/rudranath-capildeo-ci1/

more exclusive secondary schools, as the growing middle class sought education beyond primary school and wanted greater government representation. Both intermediate and secondary schools collected small fees, at this point. In 1935, regulations for primary schools were introduced.

In 1936, the *Private School Ordinance* was introduced through which the government had the right to supervise buildings, sanitation, and the health of students. The schools received no assistance from government and were run as business enterprises. In 1940, the Board of Education created the *Primary School Leaving Certificate* which became effective in 1948. In 1951, one hundred years after Lord Harris' first education policy, there were 312 primary schools (age 5-15) with 120 847 students; 9 handicraft centres and 7 subcentres; 19 domestic science centres and 12 subcentres; and 13 recognised secondary schools (ages 12-18) with 6074 students, and 13 private, registered schools with 3827 students.

In the decade before Independence, 1951-1962, there were efforts to revise the education system to the needs of an emerging nation state. The government also took responsibility for technical education which had been the responsibility of Industry since 1906 with some State grants. In 1956, government implemented a fairer system of grants to assisted schools and their teachers were given the same salary and pensions as government teachers.

In 1960, *the Concordat*[44] *was signed between the Denominational Boards and the Government which formalised the dual system of education.* The government agreed to pay the salaries of teachers and staff and the schools could be administrated by their own Governing Boards. This dual system of education involved efforts by policy actors to evolve a system that accommodated the diversity of religions and allowed an influential role for Churches in education, unlike other jurisdictions who separate Church and State. The government integrated diverse religions into public schools - a policy designed to combat the demand for

[44] See https://www.moe.gov.tt/the-concordat-of-1960-2/

denominational schools - but it did not stem the cries for religious schools of the various Christian and non-Christian denominations (Campbell, 1992).

In the 1960s, Trinidad was still lacking educational facilities with poor access to secondary school for the lower class – both Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians. By 1962, the year of independence from England, at least 20% of the secondary school-aged population (12-18 years) had access to secondary education (3% government schools; 8% assisted denominational secondary schools, and 9% private secondary schools). There were also 46 Hindu schools and 15 Muslim schools.[45] Tuition was free in the government and assisted schools, but fees were charged in the privately-run schools. The latter were only accessible to people who had the funds to pay for their children.

Higher Education

Higher education institutions were undeveloped in the British West Indies, unlike the Spanish colonies and North America, who were already establishing universities as early as the 16th century.[46] The first specialised technical training institution in Trinidad was established in 1922, the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA), to train agricultural development officers who would work in tropical areas of the British Colonial Service. University graduates of British universities could attend ICTA for a one-year diploma in Tropical Agriculture; in 1959, a Bachelor of Science programme was introduced. Before 1950, only the wealthy could afford university education which involved travel abroad.

During the 19th century, imperial authorities developed the Island Scholarships for gifted students to attend university in Britain.[47] University education became accessible to a few who won these colonial scholarships. From eleven scholarships in 1951, 55 were awarded in 1961,

[45] See A Digest of Statistics on Education, 1962-1963
[46] The Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino (or University of Saint Thomas Aquinas) in present-day Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic) was the first university in the Americas established in 1538.
[47] Dr. Eric Williams, the first Prime Minister received a scholarship in 1932 and later became a lecturer at Howard University; Dr. Rudranathan Capildeo, Leader of the Opposition received one in 1939 and went to Oxford University, but later Capildeo would go to the University of London and became a lecturer there.

in education, engineering, and agriculture. The Commonwealth scholarships became available in 1960. A select number of Black people and Indian people were able to achieve higher education through these scholarships during the colonial period; some of whom later became the political leaders in Trinidad and other islands.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) was established in 1948 in Jamaica as a University College affiliated with the University of London, who granted the degrees, providing university education to those who could not afford to go abroad. Technical and vocational education institutions were available to adults. In the 1940s, foreign oil companies like Texaco and Shell, established industrial training schools, which provided labour for the oil fields in the South. In 1960, United British Oilfields (Shell) handed over the school facilities to government. The government later established technical institutes in San Fernando (1954) and in Port of Spain (1961) which are now subsumed under the University of Trinidad & Tobago (UTT). These institutes provided limited spaces for non-university higher education, focusing on applied programmes and technical/vocational education and training (TVET).

Post-Colonial Period

Politics and Economics

Trinidad & Tobago obtained Independence from England in 1962 and became a Republic in 1976. TT's government after Independence was formed by the People's National Movement (PNM), led by the former Chief Minister, Dr. Eric Williams. The Opposition, Democratic Labour Party (DLP) was led by Dr. Rudranath Capildeo, former lecturer at University of London, England. He led the DLP from 1960 to 1969 and was the Opposition Leader in the Parliament from 1962 to 1967, succeeding his older brother Simbhoonath Capildeo, who was the last Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council of British Trinidad and Tobago.

Williams and Capildeo, two highly educated men, left their academic careers abroad to help found the new nation. Capildeo's DLP was fighting for the interests of the Indians and the

PNM party was fighting to forge a new nation, where all groups were expected to conform to the norms and values of creole society.

The PNM won a majority in democratic elections and stayed in power for 25 years from 1962 to 1986. In 1976, the United Labour Front (ULF) was created in Trinidad from a trade union membership base rooted in the sugar industry, and the Democratic Action Congress (DAC) was established in Tobago. The PNM was defeated by a coalition party - National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) in 1986 – consisting of the ULF, DAC, and the Organisation for National Reconstruction (ONR) made up of disenchanted PNM voters. The Prime Minister, A.N.R Robinson from Tobago and Basdeo Pandey, leader of the ULF, formed an alliance which did not last long with the exit of Pandey. There has been change of governments since then: 1991 (PNM), 1995 (United National Congress, allied with the NAR), 2001 (PNM), 2007 (PNM), 2010 (People's Partnership Coalition), 2015 (PNM), and 2020 (PNM).

Basdeo Panday, former Leader of the UNC, and former trade unionist for sugar workers, was the fifth Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago from 1995 to 2001 and first East Indian. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, a former secondary school teacher and lawyer, became the seventh Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago from May 2010 to September 2015. She was also the first female Prime Minister, and the second East Indian Prime Minister. She is an example of the social progress made by Indians and women in Trinidad.

After the plantation system ended with the decline of the sugar industry, the majority of East Indians who had been working on the plantations during indentureship continued to lead a subsistence living as peasant farmers, even after Independence. Subsequently, Indians were able to move into private sector enterprises, the professions, and to a lesser extent, the public sector to participate fully in the society, largely due to access to education. The middle-class expansion started to include Indians. Trinidad's economy *shifted from a plantation economy to an energy-based economy* with the discovery of petroleum and natural gas in the South, off the coast of Trinidad. Oil revenues in the newly independent country created significant wealth

accumulation for some citizens and foreign investors; but exacerbated relative income equality among those who were outside of the industry.

Trinidad was the largest oil and natural gas producer in the Caribbean for a long time, but it shifted again from an oil to mostly natural gas-based sector in the early 1990s.[48] *The state-owned oil refinery closed in 2018 after 101 years of operation*. Local and foreign companies continue to operate in the natural gas arena. Despite the wealth that flowed through the country, there is little to show in terms of infrastructure development. Large numbers of Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians remain in or near poverty in rural and urban areas. Years of mismanagement, failure to diversify the economy from fossil fuels, and corruption has left the country in a vulnerable financial state in the 21st century.

Race, Racialisation, and Religion

The racial, religious, and cultural differences in Trinidad, created one of the most plural societies in the Caribbean, along with Guyana and Suriname. The current ethnic breakdown of Trinidad and Tobago are Indians (35.4%), Africans (34.2%), mixed race (22.8%), all other ethnic groups (1.4%), and 6.2% did not declare an ethnicity (Census 2011).[49] Race underpins the political, economic, and social fabric of the country given the colonial past of a plantation society built with African slaves and Indian Indentureds. European social norms and values, customs, and religion were the foundation for political, social, and economic structures that shaped policy and institutional structures in education/higher education.

Racialisation of Indians by creole society is documented in the fields of anthropology, politics, history, economics, and sociology by local and foreign academic researchers. The

[48] See Ministry of Energy site at https://www.energy.gov.tt/our-business/oil-and-gas-industry/#:~:text=Overview,3)%20billion%20barrels%20of%20oil.

[49] The formal definition of race, according to the Trinidad and Tobago Central Statistical Office (C.S.O), uses a mixture of terminology that conflates 'race' with ancestral 'place of origin', continent or country, and includes: African, Caucasian, Chinese, East Indian, Indigenous, Mixed - African/ East Indian, Mixed – Other, Portuguese, Syrian/ Lebanese, Other ethnic group.

racialisation discourse in the USA and the Caribbean usually involves relations between Black/Latinx populations and White people. However, the Trinidad context is completely different from the US situation. Kumar (2000) notes that the examination of race relations in a plural society such as Trinidad, requires examination of relations between East Indians as a subordinate group and Black people. While Indians continued to grow in numbers and became equal in numbers to the Black population in Trinidad, they occupied a *minority status*[50] during colonial and early post-colonial times, but that has changed through gains in social mobility through education, occupation, and employment status (Reddock, 1991).

The impact of the colonial history in the West Indies manifests itself in the way 'race' continues to play an important part in politics, economics, and social status, determining cultural capital, social capital formation, and economic capital accumulation. Ryan (1999) notes: "Indians in the Caribbean have had a somewhat ambivalent relationship with the other peoples of the region and to proposals for its political unification. This is in large part due to their belief that their Christian Afro-Caribbean counterparts … regard the Caribbean Sea as their ethnic lake and their presence in the region as an unwelcome intrusion" (p. 151). Race-based politics in post-colonial Trinidad became built into the political system with race baiting and accusations of identity fraud, voting by undocumented people from the other islands, and gerrymandering (re-drawing of electoral districts) based on race of residents, and allocation of resources to win votes come election time.

Competition between the two largest racial groups – people of African and Indian descent – in Trinidad is based on economics. The *economic marginalisation* of Indians in the labour market is documented by Ryan (1991;1994)[51] whose research showed the *underrepresentation of Indians in the public sector* whereby systemic racism in recruiting led to

[50] Like Apartheid in South Africa, large racial/ethnic groups can have minority status in their access to resources.
[51] Ryan, S. (1994). Ethnicity and Employment Practices in the Public and Private Sectors of Trinidad and Tobago (with John La Guerre). Centre for Ethnic Studies, UWI, St. Augustine; Ryan, S. D. (Ed.), (1991). Social & Occupational Stratification in contemporary Trinidad & Tobago. (Ed.) Institute of Social and Economic Research. St Augustine: University of the West Indies.

Indians being streamed out of the public service. La Guerre (1991) notes that “economic crisis and faulty political policies … can wreak havoc with race relations” (p. 110) affecting attitudes which in turn shape institutions. Despite economic and social change, race continues to be a determinant in access to political and economic opportunities, and social stratification which intersects with class, social status, *educational outcomes*, labour market outcomes, and access to basic resources.

The education system is one institution that has been shaped by politics and race, intersecting with class and religion from inception. Ryan (1991) and Campbell (1992; 1997) have written on the East Indian experience and their late access to education at the primary and secondary level. Samaroo (1975) notes that the lack of access for non-Christian East Indians was reflective of the religious prejudice and systemic racism and discrimination, which limited access to education for a long time especially higher education. Miller (2000) suggests that given inequities based on class in the education system, “it can only be inferred that similar relationships would be found at the tertiary level” (p. 133).

Race-based politics influence education policy creation and implementation and varies according to which political party holds power. This impacts resource allocation to existing denominational and government schools, and geographical location of new schools and HEIs. For instance, the central and southern parts of Trinidad, where more East Indians live lacked school access and HEIs for a long time. The location of education and other facilities tend to be politically motivated, which each party catering to their voting base (Indo-Trinidadians or Afro-Trinidadians). The relationship among factors such as race, religion, colour (lightness of skin), and class, which has been the focus of sociological research in the Caribbean for generations, requires more research in higher education (Ryan, 1991; Campbell, 1992/1997; Miller 2000).

The issue of under-representation of Indians in faculty and staff, and embedded racism at the UWI and other HEIs in Trinidad are unexplored territory for academic researchers – local and foreign. Black people and Indians continue to have a measure of distrust even as the two

groups continue to blend at the familial and social levels, and the number of people 'without a religion' continue to grow. Despite these ongoing ethnic/racial tensions, Trinidad has managed to avoid outright social unrest and conflicts.

Education: Preschool, Primary, and Secondary School

The current publicly funded education system continues to be fashioned on the old English education system. The education system currently consists of public and private kindergarten, public primary schools, public secondary schools, and a few private primary and secondary schools[52], a regional public university, other public HEIs, and private HEIs. Education policy in Trinidad and Tobago is dictated by Government through legislation and the Ministry of Education who determine funding and curricula for government and government-assisted schools.

Besides religious bodies, other policy actors such as private school owners, private and public HEIs, the teachers' union (TTUTA), and parents have limited influence on education policy. Parents who may be part of PTA Associations, are not strong political lobbyists. While pre-school was a private system of independent operators, public funding of pre-school education has expanded since 2000. In earlier times, this was a cost borne by parents who sent children to unregulated, private, unregulated preschools, which still operate, catering to low-income parents.

According to the Ministry's website, there are 138 Government and Government-assisted ECCE centres throughout Trinidad and Tobago, 63 SERVOL managed centres[53], and 691 privately run ECCE centres. Before universal primary school education, students who 'failed' the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) would move to the post-primary class for two years and receive a Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLCE).[54] This was the norm in the

[52] The term K-12 is avoided when referring to the Trinidad education system and used in a more general context.
[53] SERVOL is a charity that serves people in low-income black communities in Trinidad. See https://www.servoltt.com/about-us
[54] See http://www.ttconnect.gov.tt for more information on PSLCE.

1950s and 1960s since there were not enough secondary school spaces. Currently, the PSLCE is available to adults and adolescents who did not write CEE or SEA; failed the CEE or SEA; or scored less than 30%.

Campbell (1990; 1992) notes that in the years immediately after Independence, the new PNM government sought to expand primary education and later secondary education. Dr. Williams (the new Prime Minister) viewed education as a determinant of economic development for the country. Education expansion, *at no cost to citizens*, was a key election platform which kept the PNM in power for 25 years. Education is a pillar of the social welfare aspect of the state, along with free health care. The old *Education Ordinance* provided for free primary school education but not free secondary school education. The *Education Act, 1966* was passed, to replace the previous Ordinance, which provided for *free secondary education*.

The College Exhibition was replaced by the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) in the early 1960s, and later became the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) which children still do today. Primary and secondary education evolved to be compulsory and *free* to students in government and government-assisted schools. The literacy rate of the 15-24 age group in 2015 was 99.6%. Primary school is universal and primary school net enrolment ratio (NER) is high, currently at 95.2% and secondary school NER is also fairly high at 72.7%[55] (2010 numbers).

When petroleum prices rose after the Second World War (WWII), TT became a leading exporter of petroleum to the USA and had the funds to expand enrolments. The dual system (Church/State) that had developed in the education system persisted. The government was recovering schools from denominational boards while the Boards at the same time expanded the number of their schools. Hindus, Muslims, and Christian denominations lobbied government for more of their own schools. The PNM government allowed the expansion of denominational

[55] See ECLAC at http://estadisticas.cepal.org/cepalstat/Perfil_Nacional_Social.html?pais=TTO&idioma=englis

schools, outside the dominant Catholic and Protestant schools, who also received State funding. Dr. Williams did not want to lose votes from the members of the various denominations, so he gave up his goal of a secular education system.

The GoRTT still provides public funding to any religious denomination who can contribute additional resources (such as land, funds) to establish a primary or secondary school. State assistance to denominational schools does not discriminate and covers all recognised religions in Trinidad & Tobago. This policy approach is in direct contrast to the system in some provinces in Canada, where only Catholic and Protestant churches receive public funding for their schools. The curriculum of the Ministry is followed at denominational primary and secondary schools. In addition, denominational schools are not allowed to deny access to children from other religions.

Catholic, Anglican, or Presbyterian secondary schools were traditionally the top tier schools where students won the Island scholarships. However, that has changed and students at the Hindu and Muslim schools are among those receiving primary and secondary school excellence awards.[56] In 2019, the Ministry of Education awarded 400 scholarships for university education based on CAPE examination results. Only 24 were awarded to students from government secondary schools. In 2020, when the scholarships were reduced, 7 out of 100 were awarded to students from Government secondary schools and the rest to students from denominational schools. East Indian students attending all denominational schools (not just Hindu or Muslim) have been well represented as award recipients. In 2020, Lakshmi Girls Hindu College[57] received 10 out of the 100 scholarships and the Islamic A.S.J.A Girls College in San

[56] The 2019 President's Medal recipients were Celine Roodal of Lakshmi Girls' Hindu College and Sharvaani Rampersad-Maharaj of Naparima Girls' High School. See https://www.facebook.com/MoEduTT/posts/2909954952382563
2018 President's medal award winners were Sadhana Mary Balladin, Amrita Singh, Joshua Mohan, Cassandra Khan, Saiesh Rampersad, and Jada Ramnath, See https://otp.tt/presidents-medal-award-ceremony/

[57] An SDMS school. See Ministry release on 2020 Scholarships at https://www.moe.gov.tt/news-release-2021-2-2-2-2-2/

Fernando, South Trinidad, received five. This suggests that the *organisational habitus* of these denominational schools may contribute to academic excellence, reflective of the research in the UK on Catholic and private secondary schools.

More secondary schools were built in low-income neighbourhoods - bi-sessional Junior secondary schools (2-year, with two shifts) and senior comprehensive schools (3-year). A few of the Senior Comprehensive schools had Form 6 classes for university-bound students. The first set of Junior secondary schools were built in the 1970s. With the expansion of government primary and secondary schools from 1956 to 1981, many low-income children including East Indian children, started attending schools. This increased access to schools curtailed East Indian leaders' struggle to establish Hindu and Muslim schools since they now had access to State schools (Campbell, 1990; 1992). However, the role of denominational schools has strengthened in recent years, with more primary and secondary schools added, including those built by Hindu organisations, SDMS and SWAHA. Denominational schools were a key part of the growth of the education system since Emancipation, especially for primary level education. See Table 4.

Table 4

Size of School System - Primary & Secondary

School Type	Primary (6-11 yrs.)	Secondary (12-18 yrs.)
Government	483	141
Denominational	340	44

Source: Ministry of Education Brief, 2020

Expansion of the education system was facilitated by loans from IGOs to expand educational spaces for secondary school and higher education. *Traditional* schools, both assisted and government, were built in the post-emancipation and early independence era between 1850 to 1970. *New sector* schools refer to a re-naming and re-classification of all non-traditional government and secondary assisted schools built after 1970 and include assisted

denominational schools; secondary; junior secondary; senior secondary; senior comprehensive; composite; and secondary comprehensive schools (James, 2010).

In 2000, then Minister of Education, Kamla Persad-Bissesar in the Pandey administration, declared that *secondary school would be universal* and all students sitting the SEA secondary school entrance examination would get a place in a secondary school. Opposition came from the teachers' union (TTUTA), the National PTA, the media, politicians, and NGOs, who felt the system was not well funded and would be overstretched with an influx of new students. In 2010, another improvement initiative in the secondary school sector was made possible through the World Bank's Secondary Education Modernisation Programme (SEMP). See Figure 2 for the Education System Structure in Trinidad & Tobago.

There are a handful of private secondary schools, some for expatriates, some as an option for students whose parents do not wish for them to attend public secondary schools, and some students attend as there are no government options nearby. It continues to be a challenge to provide spaces in government secondary schools for all primary school students, so the GoRTT still buys almost 8000 spaces in private secondary schools.

Higher Education

Higher education opportunities continued to be limited in the 1960s, and those who could afford to, went abroad to the United States, England, and Canada. The expansion of the UWI provided opportunities for university education for those who met the entry qualifications and could afford to attend based on opportunity costs and a need to earn a living to support themselves and/or their families.

The University of the West Indies (UWI).

The University of the West Indies is the main HEI for the English-speaking Caribbean. UWI's first campus was established in Jamaica in 1948 as the University College of the West Indies. Trinidad became the location of the second UWI campus, established in 1960 from the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA), which became the Faculty of Agriculture in UWI,

Trinidad. In the 1950s and 1960s, colleges were established for specific occupations such as teaching, paramedical professions, arts, sports, agriculture, and business. When Trinidad gained its independence in 1962, UWI became an independent degree granting institution that same year, no longer depending on the University of London in England to award degrees. From 2004, tertiary education to TT citizens was free up to the undergraduate level at accredited public and select private HEIs. Public and private HEIs are overseen by the Ministry and its related agencies but have independence in operations with their own governing board. The Ministry approves institutions to operate as HEIs.

The consolidated University of the West Indies − Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, Open Campus − is independent but is directly impacted financially by government funding changes since operating and capital funding comes from contributions from 17 CARICOM countries, which amounted to 45% of funds in 2018. Other income sources were tuition (13%), special projects and other sources (12%), other projects (22%), and commercial operations (8%).

In 2018, UWI started to explore alternative funding models, given the struggles of CARICOM countries to meet their financial obligations, including private partnerships and funding, research and commercialisation, private donors, and endowments, along with an internationalisation strategy to attract foreign students. These strategies are similar to what universities in North American universities have had to do to supplement government funding in order to maintain operations or minimise administrative cuts. The UWI Principal has signalled the adoption of managerialism, noting that UWI must “run like a business” in light of government funding cuts and financial constraints (Zainab, 2021).

The UWI St. Augustine campus is the main HEI in Trinidad, which has eight faculties with a total enrolment of 16 589 in 2018/19 of which 63% were female and 37% were male, and 70% were undergraduates. The campus had 979 full-time and part-time academic staff in 2018/19, after cuts of part-time staff were made to reduce expenditures. Trinidad students also attend university at the Jamaica and Barbados campuses, depending on the programme.

Admission requirements to UWI have changed *to expand access, allowing different entry points* for students, including 'mature' students with relevant work experience (21 years and over, and out of secondary school for at least five years), and students with other HE qualifications. Study abroad and inter-campus studies with Jamaica and Barbados, are also options for students.

Caribbean governments that experience financial pressures have difficulties paying their contributions to the UWI, including the Trinidad campus. UWI Trinidad depends on CARICOM subventions from contributing countries to support students financially. In 2020-2021, contributing governments paid 80% for undergraduate costs. UWI is already facing financial constraints and has been cutting staff, programmes, and pro bono services to the government. New student enrolments at UWI declined by 21% for the first time in 2021. Factors impacting the decline were attributed to increased costs because of GATE changes, and an aging population and decline in the age group that would normally enrol in higher education. The COVID-19 pandemic was also impacting enrolments.

The HE system was rationalised and expanded beyond the UWI, St. Augustine campus. UTT was established in 2004 through the consolidation of existing government technical/vocational training institutes including the Valsayn Teachers' College, the Corinth Teachers' College, the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST), and the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (ECIAF). There are thirteen UTT campuses geographically spread out in the north, central and south of Trinidad and one campus in Tobago, whose mission is focused on skills development and research related to economic development of the country.[58]

In 2006, older polytechnic institutes, the John Donaldson Technical Institute in Port of Spain and the San Fernando Technical Institute became part of UTT. The focus of UTT was

[58] UTT's stated mission is "To be an entrepreneurial university designed to discover and develop entrepreneurs, commercialise research and development and spawn companies for wealth generation…". See https://u.tt/index.php?page_key=7&main=1 for more information about UTT.

initially on engineering and technology but now includes other professional training such as education and business. UTT provides alternative avenues to enter, exit and re-enter tertiary education. University of the Southern Caribbean (USC), a private Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher education and other private higher education institutions (HEIs) provide supplementary HE spaces.

Expansion of higher education in TT has more recently, included *foreign provider partnerships with local State and private HEIs*. Local, private HEIs were beginning to establish themselves during the 1980s, attracting students through their international partnerships with foreign universities and professional certification bodies. Some of these private HEIs offer North American and British degree and diploma programmes. All institutions and organisations that want to provide technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in the country need approval from the National Training Agency (NTA). The middle class and upper class send their children to university in North America and England. In 2018, 1318 HE students studied in the USA, 622 in the UK, 319 in Canada, 212 in Grenada (which houses a foreign medical school), and 214 in other countries.

HE Policy and Widening Participation.

Expanding participation in HE to all sectors of society has been one of the espoused goals of the GoRTT (NPF, 2015). With high petroleum and natural gas prices in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the revenues were available to fund policy goals related to higher education expansion. The main policy initiatives for expanding HE enrolment were (a) tuition waivers and financial assistance for approved programmes for TT citizens; (b) creation of new spaces by expanding existing State-owned HEIs as well as subsidisation of spaces in private HEIs. The GoRTT's[59] HE policy goal, outlined in policy texts, is to *train people based on the needs of the economy*. One mechanism for achieving this goal is shifting the approval of new teaching

[59] People's Partnership and the current Peoples' National Movement.

programmes to match “socio-economic and labour market priorities” (NPF, 2015). TT policy-makers positioned higher education as a key driver in the development process to move from developing to developed status, a reflection of discourses of IGOs on the role of HE.

Government policy agendas change with change of governments. Under the Persad-Bissessar government, there was a greater focus on higher education and giving HE its own Ministry was a mechanism to facilitate expansion of access to HE. In the 2015 elections, the new PNM government integrated the former Ministry of Higher Education into the Ministry of Education. The responsibilities for tertiary education are new for the Ministry of Education and the legislation - the Education Act - does not have coverage for tertiary education. The Scholarships Division that was previously located under the Public Service Commission was also moved to the Ministry.

The incoming PNM government cancelled plans of the previous government for expansion of education facilities for all levels in geographic areas that would have provided more access to education. The government also reduced funding for existing HEIs which impacts access for students in those communities, citing financial constraints (MOE, 2015). Schools and tertiary institutions already built were left unopened, and plans to establish a Central and Southern campus of the UWI, which would have brought higher education closer to many low-income, rural communities were cancelled. In 2020, the government considered closing a few TVET tertiary education institutions given reduced revenues from the energy sector.

Government Tuition Aid and Financial Assistance.

Government provides financial assistance to access higher education through three initiatives: the Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses Programme (GATE), scholarships, and government-backed private sector loans.

Tuition Waiver and Subsidy.

GATE provides financial assistance for students pursuing Ministry-approved tertiary level programmes at public and private HEIs (local and regional). If the programme is not on the list of government-approved post-secondary programmes, students will not be funded. TT citizens were able to apply to GATE funds to cover 50%-100% of their tuition.[60] By March 2016, the GATE programme was accessed by 190 000 students since its inception in 2004 (CNC3, 2016).[61] Effective January 2015, the GoRTT amended GATE to no longer cover students whose cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) was below 2.0 at the end of the academic year. The Government claimed that in the 12 years before 2017, it spent $6.5 billion on GATE.

Trinidad and Tobago was the only nation in the English-speaking Caribbean[62] that fully subsidised undergraduate degree programmes for its citizens until 2020. According to government officials, the programme was abused by 'programme hoppers'. Students enrolled in programmes, then dropped out and re-enrolled in other programmes, which resulted in a waste of public resources. The previous GoRTT acknowledged a need to rationalise the mechanisms for public financial assistance to reduce duplication and inefficiencies. The Government appointed a GATE Task Force in 2016 to advise on higher education reform and recommendations that addressed inefficiencies in the programme. These were implemented in August of 2017.

Government changed tuition aid policy, introducing a *means test* for GATE funding from the 2017/2018 academic year, where household income has to be below $10,000 per month for students to be eligible for 100% funding; for income above $10,000 but less than $30,000 per month, students are required to pay 25% of their tuition; household income above $30,000 per

60 TT citizens register with GATE on-line at www.e-gate.gov.tt

[61]CNC3. (2016, March 10). Cabinet appoints Task Force to review GATE programme. http://www.cnc3.co.tt/press-release/cabinet-appoints-task-force-review-gate-programme

[62] Since 2014, in light of economic constraints, the Barbados Government discontinued its subsidy on tuition fees for nationals attending University of the West Indies campuses.

month, students are required to pay 50% of their tuition. The GATE policy change provides differential financial assistance, with the intention of providing cost savings to government, while attempting to make HE affordable to lower income people. Where originally, students could withdraw from programmes, start new programmes and still obtain funding, only their first programme is now eligible for GATE funding and for the standard duration of a programme. If a student drops out, they must pay back the programme fees to the government. If students want to enrol in a second undergraduate programme after completion, they have to pay the full tuition fee.

The UWI's Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD) which manages student financial aid programmes reported that "more local students are seeking assistance, citing new financial pressures linked to the new means test for GATE and the tiered funding system" (Annual Report 2018/19). This suggests that the means test policy is not working properly as it is impacting some students in the lower income bracket. Students who do not live near the campus have to rent accommodations and low-income students must also work to afford rent and other living and ancillary fees.

In November 2020, the Government announced further changes in GATE - removal of GATE funding for graduate students, as the Minister of Education indicated: "adjustments would allow for greater equity in the distribution of precious resources, given current financial constraints, and will focus assistance where it's most needed" (Gouralal, 2020). In addition, the *government signalled the removal of GATE in the long term*, demonstrating that free or heavily subsidised HE can only be sustained when government revenues are high. Challenges face the current government[63] in maintaining higher education funding due to declining revenues from the Energy sector. The current economic scenario indicates a return to the 1980s where affordability for low-income people will be reduced.

[63] The PNM government were elected in September 2015 and re-elected in 2020.

Scholarships/Bursaries.

Government continued to expand merit-based scholarships (Open and Additional) over time for top performing students *based on scores* in the Advanced Level Examination. According to the Ministry (MOE, 2020), scholarships increased from five in the 1960s to 10 in the 1970s; 20 in the 1980s; 261 in 2008; reaching a high of 447 in 2014 and remained around 400 annually thereafter. Open scholarships pay all expenses for study abroad for scholarship winners and additional scholarship winners must study locally. Low-income students' only option for studying abroad is to win a national Open Scholarship. Scholarship winners usually came from the traditional 'prestige' schools, hence the desire by parents to get their children into these schools. However, in recent years other schools have become high performing schools earning a larger number of scholarships than these traditional grammar schools.

From 2016-2019, 400 scholarships were awarded annually. However, in November 2020, further changes in higher education policy led to cuts in the National Scholarship and Bursary Programme. The government chose to offer only 100 (50 open and 50 Additional[64]) scholarships, 10 for each of the 10 cognate groups, which was awarded solely on academic performance. Students who did not win a scholarship could apply for national bursaries awarded based on a *means test, academic performance, and a purpose statement*.

This approach allows for discretion on who gets bursaries and opens the door for nepotism and corruption. On the other hand, it also provides a more inclusive way of assisting students who do not perform well at high stakes testing. The reason behind the changes was financial hardship for the government and the need for a more equitable way of distributing funding support by using criteria other than just academic grades. Merit-based funding for scholarships which utilises high test scores to select students, disadvantages students with learning disabilities and students from marginalised backgrounds who may not have the

[64] Additional scholarships are award for study at UWI and other local HEIs.

supports and advantages to receive high scores, thus excluding them from these scholarships and bursaries. In addition, some students who may not need financial assistance get scholarships. Some parents, however, view the change as a way to cheat their 'bright' children out of scholarships. The issue of needs-based scholarships is not prioritised as an access policy in higher education in Trinidad.

In March 2020, scholarship allocations were announced and 31 of the hundred scholarships went to non-traditional schools, including 12 to Lakshmi Girls Hindu College, and the rest went to the prestige schools. The oldest prestige schools, however, have been struggling recently to win scholarships – Queen's Royal College (1859), St. Mary's College (1863), Fatima College (1945), and St. Joseph's Convent - Port of Spain (1836), together won 8 scholarships, including 2 open scholarships.

In addition, foreign governments and organisations award scholarships to study abroad, where most, but not all, are administered by the Ministry's Scholarship Division who select the recipients of these awards. All students are free to apply but it is unclear how recipients are selected. UWI also offers scholarships and bursaries, but students who need them are not always aware of this option for funding.

Student Loans.

The Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP)[65] is also available to *citizens of TT* under 50 years of age who have been accepted and are enrolled in a tertiary level programme within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) - the regional common market. The GoRTT notes that HELP is "a special soft loan facility made available through the Ministry of Education". The loans cover tuition fees, accommodation expenses, airfare and other transportation costs, personal maintenance costs and living expenses, books and related materials, special equipment costs, and other related tertiary education expenses.

[65] See https://www.moe.gov.tt/faq-3/ for HELP information.

The loans are supplemental for people who need funds beyond the GATE tuition waiver or who have already accessed GATE. These types of soft loans have been in existence since the late 1980s. The programme is in partnership with local commercial banks and students must start re-payment of loans immediately after graduation, if employed full-time. Loans are not income-contingent and unemployed people have to re-pay loans after three months. The banks may create repayment terms which vary depending on the amount of the loan and the person's specific economic situation. If tuition-waivers are not sufficient, low-income students will need to access HELP loans to finance their education. Asking unemployed graduates to re-pay loans disincentivises the poor from accessing higher education. Loan re-payment should be contingent on graduates finding employment or having the ability to-repay.

Access and Equity in Education

Policy and Structures

Gaps in access to education and higher education for students persist despite progress made from colonial times. Campbell (1992) notes that deficiencies in education quality and access requires further investigation. As the secondary school system expanded new problems emerged. Research on secondary schools reveal problems concerning failure and dropout from the secondary school system for low-income/disadvantaged students (Campbell, 1990).

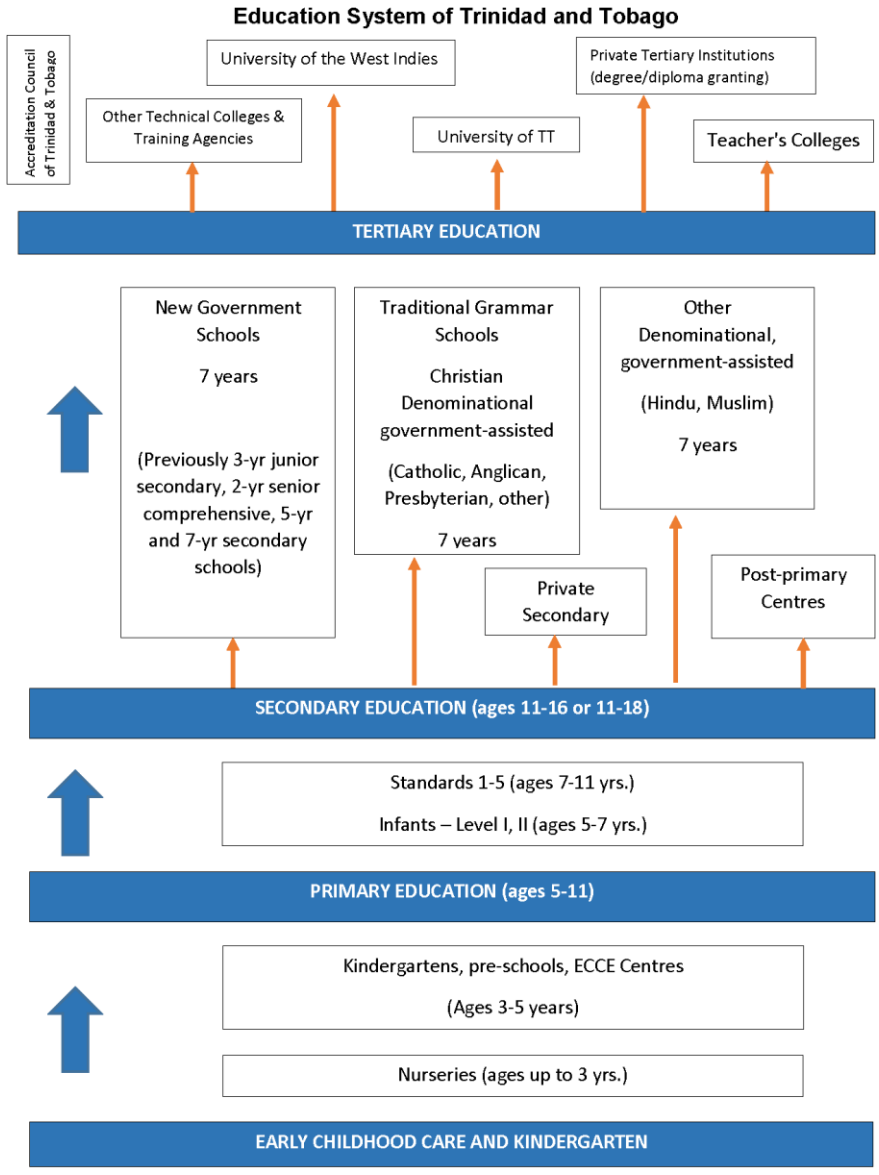
Stratification of Schools.

Structural inequities of the educational system determine opportunities to access a quality education, likelihood of higher education access, and students' life chances which manifest in diverse ways: tiered schools; classroom tracking; the Concordat; and zoning by place of residence, as part of the SEA selection criteria which intersects with race, religion, and income. This is where social sorting and selection happens, as described by Bourdieu. The school system is made up of different tiers of primary and secondary schools – traditional (primarily denominational) and new government schools, and a few private schools where

students get a different quality of teaching and educational experience that impact their educational outcomes and life trajectory (See Figure 2).

Figure 2

Education System



Note*: Adapted from UNESCO, 2006*[66]

[66] See World Data on Education, August 2006, UNESCO Institute for Statistics. See http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/LATIN_AMERICA_and_the_CARIBBEAN/Trinidad_and_Tobago/Trinidad_and_Tobago.pdf

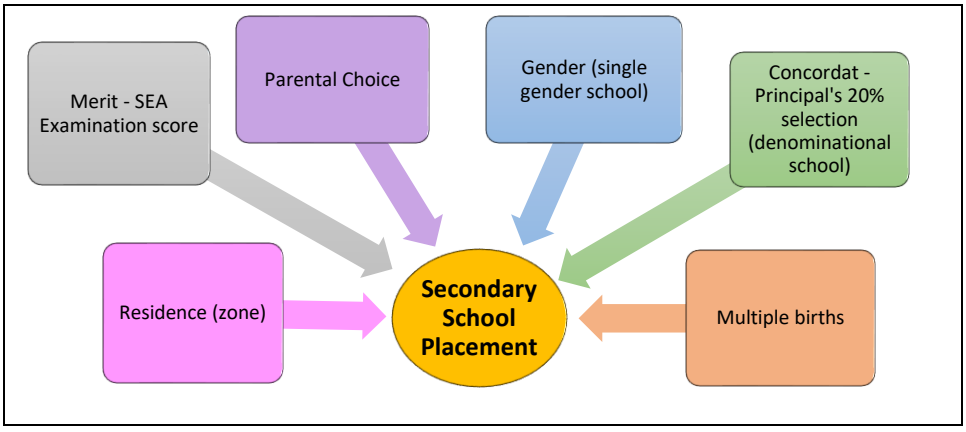
The Concordat.

The 1960 Concordat − revised in 1978 and 1998 − signed between the GoRTT and the denominational boards in the pre-independence era, gave principals of government-assisted denominational secondary schools the right to select 20% of students, regardless of SEA scores. Critics feel that it is an outdated policy that disadvantages students who score high on SEA but cannot get a place in a top tier school which happens to be a denominational school. According to a newspaper article (Augustine, 2019), the Ministry of Education, in response to public outrage (based on charges of over selection by the Churches of more than 20% of students for their schools), noted that SEA placement criteria were based on a *number of factors* - merit (scores students obtained in the examination), parental choice, the principal's 20% selection, gender, residence, and multiple births (twins, etc.) as demonstrated in Figure 3.

The dual education system (denominational/government schools) continues to be controversial. James (2013) notes: "This is largely because these schools are seen to be the higher performing schools, using purely academic criteria as measurements, but they are also viewed as the more disciplined schools and those in greatest demand by parents". The Concordat was under review by the Ministry as part of 2020/21 consultations to reform the education system.

Figure 3

Secondary School Placement Criteria



Other Selection Criteria for Secondary School.

Students with high scores on the SEA test usually get placed in a top tier school, but not necessarily the secondary school of first choice. *Parental choice* means that parents select their top 4 secondary schools, which is considered by the Ministry when placing their children. Teachers usually advise parents and students on secondary schools to select. Students who excel at the SEA need not get a placement based on their school of choice and SEA scores, as other factors are considered as indicated by Figure 3.

The zoning policy of the Ministry of Education comes into play if students are unable to get any of their 4 choices and are placed in schools based on students place of residence. *Zoning* uses a student's address (geographical location) as a selection criterion which means students in marginalised communities are streamed and ghettoised in specific schools in their own or similar neighbourhoods. In Trinidad, geographical areas intersect with race and class, and race intersects with religion. The elite class replaced the former plantocracy and their agents, who live in enclaves in the capital area; mostly minority[67] groups (Syrian/Lebanese, European, Chinese) and mixed-race and Black elites, while the elite Indians tend to live in South Trinidad.

The middle class and lower-class Black people and Indians live in different neighbourhoods with rural areas being among the poorest. Students in low-income neighbourhoods are mostly likely to go to schools in their own or similar neighbourhoods, which tend to be lower tier schools. Middle and upper-class students stay in their geographical zone and have the 20% Church option to help them stay in their zone. In addition, schools have different entry mark requirements. Students with high scores who ask for a transfer to another school, could be granted the transfer by the principal of the receiving school. By the same token, students with low scores but the right networks can have their parents obtain a transfer to

[67] Minority in numbers but not status.

a top tier school. Many parents and students are left dissatisfied every year when students get high SEA scores and do not get into their school of choice.

Classroom Tracking.

Classroom tracking at K-12, a form of academic tracking or selection, is a controversial education policy whose equity impacts are well known (Field et al., 2007). Students are streamed into different classes based on perceived ability (ability grouping) and have different academic experiences (curricula), social experiences (peers with different social and cultural capital), and educational outcomes. At the primary school level, students are tracked, where teachers make judgements based on biases (conscious and unconscious) about student ability in primary school and place them into “A” and “B” classes, where A classes have more ‘gifted’ students.

Currently, Ministry policy does not support streaming in primary school, but teachers still practice tracking (Wellington, 2014). Wellington (2014) notes that some schools give children a test on entry to stream them into 1 of 3 streams, and children who never attended preschool end up in the lowest stream. Teachers create their own tests and stream the students for their entire primary school life. Wellington notes that the streaming process has a psychological impact on students and on teacher attitudes and expectations of students, which has been documented by interactionist researchers in classroom settings.

Equity and Intersectionalities.

The Trinidad government promoted policies on equity and inclusion in various policy texts, such as the Ministry of Education *National Model 2007-2015*, but policy does not translate into funding for improvements in administrative and teaching practices in schools. One policy recommendation regarding higher education in the *National Policy Framework* was to provide incentives to institutions to meet government’s *broadly stated goals of inclusiveness and equity in higher education, especially for underserved groups* (NPF, 2015).

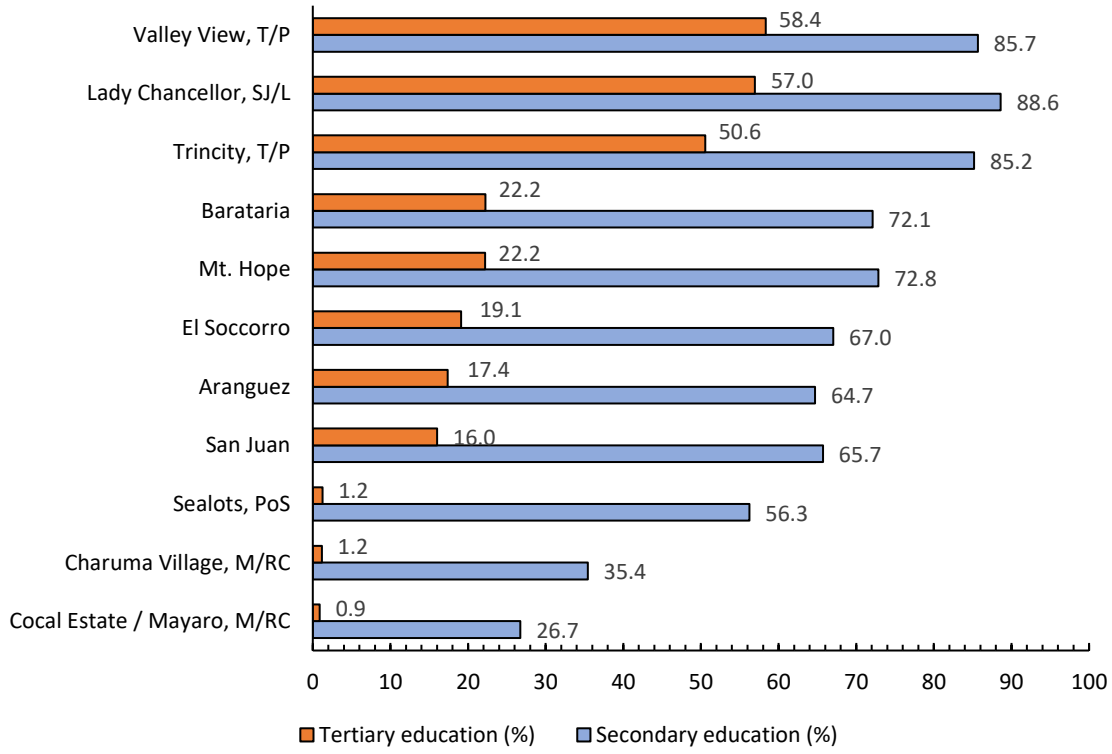
Current educational attainment is reflective of the history of education access in Trinidad, which is based on intersections of religion, race, geography, and class. Demographic and other data on educational performance from K-12 to university (e.g., place of residence, race/ethnicity, religion, citizenship status, disability) are not part of a routine research and reporting process in Trinidad and Tobago. Examination results are released without accompanying demographic data which could confirm or refute some of the perceptions of parents and students or reveal the structural inequality. Considering the structural issues of the Concordat, zoning, and tiered schools, the Census data provides some useful insights on education attainment based on race, religion, and geography, which are also indicators of class.

The 2011 Census data that was published did not allow for a cross-tabulation of race, educational attainment, and geography. Figure 4 presents secondary and tertiary educational attainment in selected communities and Figure 5 shows illiteracy and tertiary educational attainment by ethnicity/race. Secondary and tertiary educational attainment are lowest for people in low-income communities who also tend to be in rural areas, where transportation is also a barrier to access. The most marginalised communities, however, include *urban* Sea Lots[68] and *rura*l Cocal estate and Charamu Village which have the lowest educational attainment. The wealthy areas have the highest secondary and tertiary education attainment levels compared to working-class areas like Aranguez and El Socorro. While Aranguez and El Socorro were once illiterate communities up until in the 1950s, the data show that there has been progress in secondary school and tertiary education attainment. Details are in Figure 4.

[68] A small urban ghetto in Port of Spain near the sea with high crime rate and poverty, and traditionally was a haven for undocumented residents.

Figure 4

Secondary and Tertiary Education Attainment for Selected Low-Income and Higher Income Communities in Trinidad (%)



Source: Trinidad & Tobago 2011 Population and Housing Census, 2011, Central Statistical Office

Figure 5 shows that race is an axis of social inequality as the white and other minority[69] racial groups who form the elite of Trinidad society have a considerably higher share of university level education. The 2011 Census indicates that *East Indians and Chinese have the highest proportion of illiterate people* – no education at 2.3%, compared to all other ethnic groups with Africans at 1.1%, and the minority group of Caucasians have the lowest illiteracy at 0.5%. The share of 2.3% of 'no education' for Chinese people may include more recent arrivals, not the older Chinese population which saw significant out migration during the 1970s and subsequent decades. Caucasians have the highest university attainment at 34.6%, Chinese

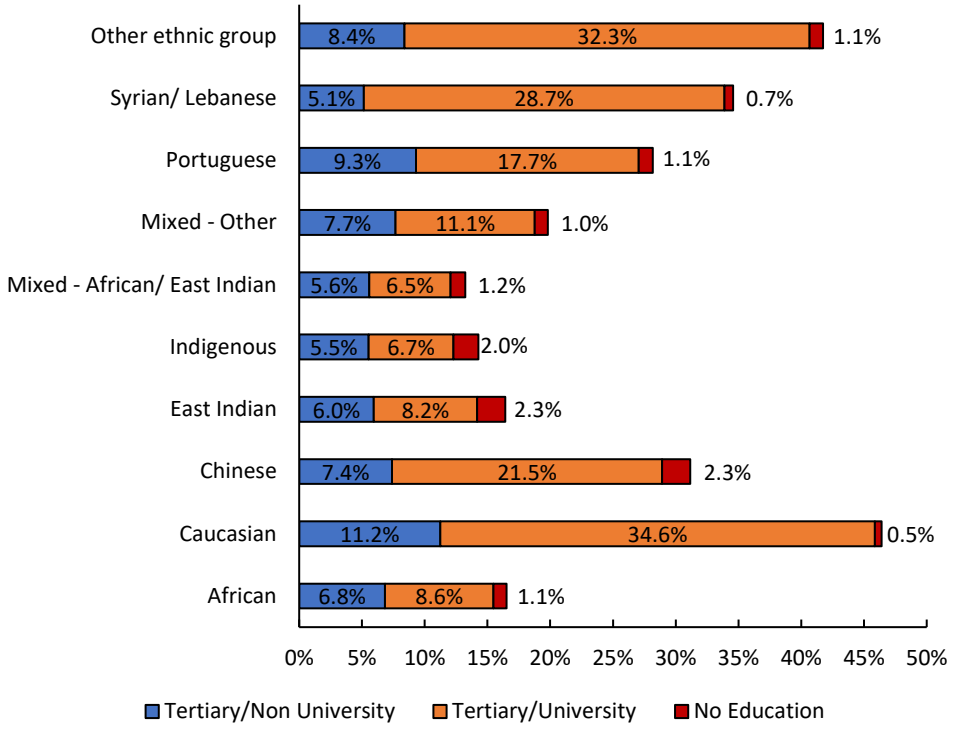
[69] Minority in numbers but not status – part of the elite

have the 2nd highest share at 21.5%; and of the larger ethnic groups, East Indians had a slightly lower university attainment rate (8.2%) than Africans at 8.6%.

The significant levels of illiteracy amongst Indians in the period from indentureship to the 1950s, may explain the illiteracy rate, as it took time for them to catch up to other ethnic groups. Though East Indians had late access to primary and secondary school, the university attainment rate is about the same as the Africans, which is still exceptionally low compared to the minority groups who have high social status. These numbers should see improvements, however, based on Census 2022 data releases.

Figure 5

Share of Illiteracy and Tertiary Education by Racial/Ethnic Groups in Trinidad & Tobago, 2011



Source: Trinidad & Tobago 2011 Population and Housing Census, 2011, Central Statistical Office

Social inequality is reproduced through *race/ethnicity* which intersects with *social class* and *place of residence*. However, rural/urban factors play another role in access to education. While Aranguez had a 17.4% tertiary education attainment, it is lower than the neighbouring

communities and much lower than the wealthy communities. Census data reflect the colonial legacy of the country where a particular race/colour and religion provide a better social status and better educational outcomes. Being East Indian was a basis for racialisation by creole society which impacted education access.[70] Education is a pathway to social mobility and accumulation of economic capital, therefore, the issue of race and access to education must be considered as intersecting with class in the broader social context. The Census data provide context for the stories of the participants.

The government began consultations for education reform for the primary and secondary education sector in various policy areas, in addition to its task force that was set up to reform higher education tuition aid and financial assistance. From November to December 2020, the Ministry of Education hosted national virtual consultations[71] on education, themed: "Transforming Education" via online surveys "to garner public discussion on emerging issues in the education system towards transforming the education system" (MOE, 2020). The ministry noted in its briefing note for consultations:

> Systems, processes, and regulations originating in the immediate post-Independence era and even *extending back into the nineteenth century have become embedded in the education system with attendant norms and associated issues* which are unmanageable and therefore unsustainable. The relevance and role of these structures and institutions to 21st century Trinidad and Tobago, and an increasingly competitive global village, are continually being called into question. (MOE, 2020)

Topics of interest for the virtual consultations included: the conduct of Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) and transition to secondary school; the Concordat[72]; curricula reform; blended learning (more relevant considering the COVID-19 pandemic); the role of

[70] See references to Selwyn Ryan, John La Guerre, and Brinsley Samaroo.
[71] See https://www.moe.gov.tt/nce2020/
[72] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ec4WAwwrQU on the Concordat

parents/guardians in education; the role of the Teaching Service Commission; and teacher training and development.

Evaluating HE Policy

The traditional, rational approach to public policy grounded in a positivist view of the world is that research and evaluation of policy can lead to amelioration of problems with the policy and associated programmes, services, and practices (Diem and Young, 2015). Higher education systems in OECD countries have established performance indicators (e.g., student satisfaction, time to completion, drop-outs or stop-outs, graduation rates, retention rates, employment, and employment relatedness to field of study) to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of government HE policy. TT has not implemented such accountability measures.

The previous GoRTT (Persad-Bissesar Government) had expressed a need for better research to evaluate the success of government education policy and adopted a report for a broad *National Performance Framework 2012-2015,* which involved the implementation of results-based management in government, which included some basic KPIs for human capital development. It is unclear if that approach is being continued with a change in Government. [73] Data on the evaluation of tertiary education or higher education policy to assess HE participation and attainment in Trinidad and Tobago from various academic and administrative aspects could be improved.

Data from UNESCO for 1971, show that TT's GER[74] for tertiary enrolment was 2.5% and grew to 12% in 2004, but data from 2005 to 2020 are missing. The 2011 Census indicated 6.2% attained some tertiary (but not university) and 8.4% achieved university level education, with a

[73] See http://parlcloud.ttparliament.org:8081/PapersLaidViewer/TempFiles/National%20Performance%20Framework%202012-2015.pdf

[74] UNESCO definition of Gross enrolment ratio (GER) is total enrolment in tertiary education (ISCED 5 to 8), regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the total population of the five-year age group following on from secondary school leaving.

total of 14.6% tertiary education attainment. The GoRTT[75] set a target of 60% participation rate in tertiary education and technical, vocational education and training by 2015, and by 2013 indicated that it had surpassed its target with a participation rate of 65%, but there is no public statistics to confirm this claim. This means that there was a dramatic increase in tertiary education participation which could be attributed to new HE policies.

UWI reports publish basic output data such as counts of enrolments and graduates, but not student outcomes. Data on retention were unavailable, as were employment after graduation. Access and equity indicators are not reported by UWI like many HEIs in both developed and developing countries. The success of higher education access policy for widening participation in HE is not clear given inadequate public data on higher education participation and attainment which is not published annually. The Census occurs every 10 years and is the most reliable source of education data. Official data on tertiary attainment levels will be available at the next census in 2022 which will provide some current information on progress in higher education attainment.

Education in Aranguez

Aranguez is in North Trinidad, whereas most Indians live in central and south Trinidad. The 'racial' and ethnic composition of Aranguez, along with its location, affected access to resources and community services, including educational services. The indentured labourers who had come to work on the Aranguez Estates were illiterate on arrival - not speaking, reading, or writing English. They spoke their own dialects and had to learn the local creole dialect. Some did have literacy in Hindi or Arabic. Access to basic literacy came in the 1950s, which was late compared to people in creole society and Indians who had converted to Christianity (mainly Presbyterianism) or other Christians.

[75] Government led by the Hon. Kamla Persad-Bisessar

In the ealry days of the village, preschool was not available to children in Aranguez, and the extended family or neighbours provided day-care facilities or supervisory duties if the mother had to work (KIS, 2017). A few private, unregulated preschools run from people's homes, provide services to the local community. Aranguez now has a government funded ECCE school run by SWAHA, a Hindu organisation. There are also two government funded ECCE schools in El Socorro, which is accessible to families in Aranguez.

Before the 1950s, children could attend *San Juan Presbyterian Primary School*[76] (also referred to as 'Akal' after the longest-serving Principal), which was established in 1904. Originally, the school was a nursery school, which was established in *1901 on the Aranguez Estates* by Canadian missionaries. It transitioned to a primary school that was established outside of what is now considered the village of Aranguez. While Aranguez children attended this school, their parents did not allow them to convert to Christianity. In 1906, the presbyterian school became an assisted school, receiving financial assistance from the Government. Muslim children could access primary school education at the *El Socorro Islamia Primary School*, which had operated as a private school for seven years before receiving state assistance. TIA opened four other schools in Trinidad including the *Aranguez T.I.A. School* which was established in 1951:

> The population of El Socorro and Aranguez was growing rapidly, and many children were unable to find school places in the existing schools. Mr. Mustapha, an Executive member of the Takveeyatul Islamic Association provided the material and assisted in the construction of the shed adjoining the El Socorro Mosque at the corner of El Socorro Road and Farouk Trace, San Juan. Government approval was obtained for the construction of a new school in Aranguez. [77]

[76] See https://ppsbe-tt.com/index.php/component/k2/item/824-sanjuan
[77] See A Digest of Statistics on Education, 1962-1963

The people of Aranguez later attended a government primary school in El Socorro, which had obtained government school facilities before Aranguez.[78] In the 1950s, the *Gandhi Memorial Vedic Primary School* was established in Aranguez. The school was one of nine schools established in 1952 by the Arya Prathinidhi Sabha[79], a Hindu missionary group from India. There were no public or private secondary schools in Aranguez in the 1950s. A few people in the entire country were able to win scholarships through the College Exhibition to get places in secondary schools. These children were drawn from primarily middle and upper-class, Christian families and an occasional Indian child. Aranguez is not a place that produces scholarship winners, then or now.

In the 1960s, there were four primary schools in Aranguez. In addition to the *Aranguez T.I.A. Primary School* and *Gandhi Memorial Vedic School,* the *Aranguez Hindu Primary School*, run by the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha, and the *Aranguez Government Primary* school were built. The Lakshmi Girls' Hindu College, established by the SDMS in 1964, is situated near the UWI and is the first Hindu secondary school to be established in Trinidad, which is commuting distance for people from Aranguez. This was in the 'zone' for Aranguez students who did well in the CEE.

The expansion of Junior secondary schools in the 1970s provided access to secondary school for the children of Aranguez. The *Aranguez Junior Secondary School* opened in 1973. The first cohort of students for *Mount Hope Junior Secondary school*, which included students from Aranguez, had to attend classes at *Curepe Junior Secondary School*, a nearby village in the East, until the Mount Hope school was ready to open as constuction was incomplete. While

[78] Members of the Mohammed family in El Socorro became members of the ruling PNM party (the so-called Afro-Trinidadian) party, as opposed to the Indian-led party – the DLP. Thus, there were people in the corridors of power who could bring resources to El Socorro. Kamaluddin Mohammed was a founding member of the PNM. See https://newsday.co.tt/2019/12/15/remembering-kamal/

[79] Formerly Arya Samaj which was founded in India in 1875.

the schools were new, they lacked teaching staff and the quality of education differed from that offered by the ‘prestige’ schools.

In the 1980s, Aranguez Junior Secondary was still the only secondary school in Aranguez and there was no 5-year or 7-year secondary school. The shift (bi-sessional) system was still in place where students from low-income communities were placed in 3-year schools and then moved to senior comprehensive schools. If students did very well in the CEE, the Ministry would place them in schools in Port of Spain or neighbouring villages such as Barataria or St. Augustine. However, the Ministry of Education also placed many Aranguez children in Aranguez Junior Secondary School, or nearby Junior secondary schools after they sat the CEE, due to zoning.

In the 1990s, *Aranguez Educational Secondary School*, a small private secondary school opened to cater to children and youth who did not place in a government school from the CEE or needed to re-do some subjects at the secondary level for ‘O’ levels, after attending a school in the public system. As government moved to eliminate the bi-sessional system, Aranguez Junior Secondary was converted to *Aranguez North Secondary School* in 2005 and new facilities were built in 2008. Students now attend school for the full 5 years and do not need to transfer to complete their secondary school education. The school has many students living outside of Aranguez.

In the 2011 census, Aranguez had a secondary school attainment of 64.7% and tertiary education attainment (not just university) was 17.4%, indicating some progress had been made since 2000, when the Census indicated that secondary school attainment was 45.1% and university attainment was 2.1%. However, tertiary educational attainment is far short of the 50% - 92% tertiary education attainment level in the wealthier areas of Trinidad. Aranguez has the lowest educational attainment compared to neighbouring villages – El Socorro, Barataria, and Mount Hope. In San Juan, which is the larger locale, the *tertiary* educational attainment is slightly lower than Aranguez at 16%. Table 5 shows education attainment levels.

Table 5

Secondary and Tertiary Educational Attainment in Aranguez and Neighbouring Villages

Community	Secondary education (%)	Tertiary education (%)
San Juan	65.7	16.0
El Socorro	67.0	19.1
Barataria	72.1	22.2
Aranguez	64.7	17.4
Mount Hope	72.8	22.2

Source: Census 2011, Central Statistical Office

Higher education attainment was almost non-existent up until the 1970s in Aranjuez, despite low cost (no or low tuition) and proximity to 'Education City – the area where the University of the West Indies and many HEIs are situated in the North-East and HEIs in Port of Spain. Slow progress has been made in higher education access in relation to the past but progress is poor when compared to neighbouring towns, more middle class areas, and to the broader East Indian population.

Summary

This chapter shows that Trinidad made considerable progress in educational attainment at the primary and secondary level after its independence from England. Some progress has also been made in expanding higher education to low income and middle-class families, but it has been very unequal, with the wealthy minorities and elites having much higher levels of tertiary and university educational attainment. Colonial structures - the dual system of education and other education policies - continue to impede improvements in access and equity in education.

The inhabitants of the village, which is the subject of the case study, have also made slow progress in higher education attainment. The town provides fertile ground for understanding HE access over generations. Given the setting, context, economic and social challenges, and various forms of discrimination that the villagers faced, there is opportunity to examine various factors and the role of various policy actors impacting higher education access.

The next chapter focuses on the analysis that employs the *forms of capital* in understanding the educational journeys of participants and their families and how they impact transitions to higher education.

Chapter 6: Data Analysis - Forms of Capital

Data analysis in this chapter focused on utilising the analytical concepts of social capital, cultural capital, and economic capital to understand the way participants enacted education policy and impacts on higher education access. Various proxies for the forms of capital informed the thematic analysis which allowed understanding of how participants enacted policy with the education system, its institutions, other policy actors, the policy process, and the complex range of interactions involved in higher education access.

Generally, many of the proxies for the forms of capital found in previous research done in a US, Canadian or European context were applicable to this context (see Table 3) and appeared in one or more of the stories. The themes relate to relationships of the individual with other policy actors - their family, community members, institutional agents at schools and HEIs - which impact their educational journey. There were also themes that led to new understandings related to the broader social and cultural context of the village, and Trinidad as a developing country and post-colonial society, which are discussed in chapter 7.

Social Capital

The analysis applied Bourdieu's concept of social capital to understand higher education access through the stories of the participants and how their networks influenced their journey to access or not access higher education. Social capital consists of the social networks and relationships that *individuals can leverage to benefit themselves*. These social networks have value and can be found within the family; in schools and higher education institutions that one attends; in churches and clubs; in the workplace; in the neighbourhood in which one lives or beyond one's local community, which can provide access and privileges for the people in these networks (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu, 1986). The concept of social capital can be applied as *positive or negative*.

Family Social Capital

According to the literature on widening participation in higher education, the people in an individual's social network influences *aspirations* and *motivations* for higher education. If role models with higher education motivate students in the community, students are more likely to aspire to higher education and occupations which they see around them. A person's first social network is their family. The concept of *'family' in East Indian and West Indian communities constitute a different meaning; family goes beyond the nuclear family to aunts, uncles, cousins, second-cousins, nieces and nephews, grandparents, and even neighbours*. Someone called "Tantie"[80] or "Uncle" may not necessarily be a relative.

Several nuclear families may occupy the same physical space or 'yard.' This broad definition of family is utilised in the research. East Indian families were traditionally large and extended with women having multiple children up until the 1960s and early 1970s. Kinship networks include people living beyond the geographical spaces of Aranguez, having moved or married out. With the start of government policy[81] and initiatives to promote population control measures in East Indian communities through local clinics and hospitals, families have become smaller in Aranguez.

Role and Influence of Parents

Parental Education.

In the research of Western countries, *parental education* − a contributor to family social capital − was found to be the most relevant factor influencing educational outcomes of children, especially higher education access (Finnie et al., 2011). Educated parents provide social capital to family members using their knowledge and access to resources and networks to inform, counsel and assist them in making choices about school and career. The research that has

[80] Tantie or Tanty is creole for aunt, a mature woman who one is socially considered family. (See https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Tanty) It is a mixture of auntie and tante (French).
[81] In 2019, there were thirty-two laws and regulations that guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education.

been done on higher education access and parental education tends to be in contexts where educational opportunities were easily available.

Parents provide *inspiration* and *motivation* for children, as parents set the example for what is possible in terms of educational attainment and career. Parental education influences *their expectations* for their children's education and occupational choices, and in turn *children's expectations* for themselves. The probability of parents with higher education having their children attain higher education is much higher. Children are also more likely to follow a career of a parent as they provide an example and have knowledge and information on that career path (Coleman, 1988). These are *psycho-social aspects* of how social capital operates within the family network.

However, the findings showed a more nuanced understanding of the role of parents as policy actors in influencing higher education access. The link between parental education in Aranguez to time periods and availability of schools and HEIs, was discussed in chapter 5. In the 1950s, many East Indian parents were illiterate in Aranguez. In the 1960s and 1970s, most parents only had primary school education. Higher education was not a realistic goal for a few decades since secondary school education was not available widely until the late 1960s to 1970s.

For the participants, the *absence of parental education, low educational attainment* or no *higher education* attainment were influential in K-12 success and higher education access. *Theoretically*, parental illiteracy or parents with only primary school education in an agrarian community, is unlikely to provide the kind of social capital that will influence children to aspire to higher education. The participants in the study were of different ages and attended primary school in different decades; however, none of them had parents who had accessed higher education, not even Jason who was completing his higher education studies in 2019. The findings confirmed previous research on the difficulty with transitioning to higher education for

those whose parents lack higher education, but in this case study, some parents also lacked secondary school education, putting the children at a further disadvantage.

Parental support and involvement.

Parental support and involvement are positively associated with higher education participants like Prem, Renuka, Devanand (mother only) and Neil, even though their parents did not have higher education. Jameela expressed the impact of lack of parental support on her: "When you come home, she [mother] would say go and do your homework. But long-time parents didn't have any education and how to help the children" (Interview, 2017). Boyo's father, who was a farmer, had little formal education and Boyo's mother had no formal education. His sister, who was the eldest, only went to primary school, like Prem's sister. However, Boyo had no aspirations to be a farmer like his father and ancestors. Boyo tried the family farming business for about six months and left it. He used to help them plant and reap the rice that they grew for their own consumption but did not want to become involved in the business side of growing crops for sale.

He failed the CEE and noted that *only one child passed the examination*, which was his friend, an Afro-Trinidadian child who was very spiritual, "always carrying his Bible with him to school" (Interview, 2017). These findings show that the probability of children in the Aranguez community passing the CEE at the time was exceptionally low. It is highly unlikely that all the children in Boyo's class failed the examination, and failure rates may have had more to do with the lack of availability of spaces in secondary schools at the time, and social sorting mechanisms - the role of the education system in social reproduction.

As secondary school spaces expanded in the 1980s, failure rates at the CEE came down and students found places, even if it was in Junior secondary schools. Nevertheless, generations of students did not have an opportunity to further their education beyond primary school because of lack of schools in Aranguez and its environs. This is a dilemma that many

developing countries faced and continue to face as they seek to achieve universal primary and secondary school education.

Boyo's father was invested in his children's success including helping them move away from farming. The options were limited after failing the CEE – look for a job; attend a private career college; attend private secondary school to try and sit Ordinary ('O') level London University examinations; or learn a trade usually through informal apprenticeship with a small business. Cambridge University 'O' level examinations[82] were done in the government secondary schools at that time. He asked Boyo if he wanted to go to "commercial school" (secretarial school) to learn typing and shorthand at a local private career college:

> I tell him "No". Because I tell him, if I go there and me eh do good and he digging this land here, and me eh do good, he might want to kill me. It don't matter how small the money; it was *plenty money*. So, I say, before dat I tell he, because he had the piece of land over the highway, and I only checking motorcar. I tell him I want to go and fix car because I check out ting dey. Because I wasn't stupid. You take three months to get a crop. And then you ain't sure it coming. And then it have so much flood. …*For a man who used to plant garden, he doh want he children to plant garden too*. He used to tell me. So, when I say so, he didn't hesitate or nothing. … He wasn't disappointed because he always say, "*A coal seller doesn't want he children to become a coal seller*". (Interview, 2017)

Boyo's father wanted a better life for his children. He also paid for Boyo's youngest sibling (brother) to go to a private secondary school, after he failed the CEE: "I think was $25 a month but that was plenty money" (Interview, 2017). His father was able to financially invest in his children's education at a time when other families could not afford to pay for private schools

[82] Cambridge Assessment was formed as the 'Local Examinations Syndicate' by the University of Cambridge in 1858. The first Cambridge international exams were taken in Trinidad in 1864 by six candidates. See https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/what-we-do/facts-and-figures/#:~:text=Cambridge%20Assessment%20was%20formed%20as,in%201864%20by%20six%20candidates.

when they failed the CEE.[83] Despite the supportive stance of Boyo's father (moral and financial), Boyo's siblings did not do well in primary school and stayed in farming which suggests *there is more to transitioning to higher education than just availability of parental and financial supports; individual agency* is also critical and maybe *community habitus.*

Boyo had a hands-off approach to his own children's education, leaving them to make their own choices, "*I not forcing nobody to go and do nuting dat dey ain't want"* (Interview, 2017). In the same way that his father did not force him to continue his education, he did not force his children to improve their secondary school results or go on to higher education. Boyo trained his two sons from a young age to do automotive repair, "I used to learn him [older son] a lil ting. He used to be hanging around and he used to be fixing little ting. I used to show him what to do. Plus, he used to get he own customers too, because he used to fix tings in de mornin" (Interview, 2017). When Boyo told his father that he was interested in automotive repair, Boyo's father reached out to the owner of a local automotive repair shop to take Boyo on as an apprentice.

The idea of a parent, relative or a community member (in Boyo's case) providing apprenticeship training in an informal arrangement harkens back to early industrial times in Western countries, but this practice is still part of the education and training system in developing countries. This pathway to learning is minimised in developed countries as formal credentials are prioritised over learning and actual skills.

Boyo noted that "the only *expectations* I had was for the last little fella [younger son]. He supposed to be the mechanic. That is the only man. I tell myself; he will have to be the mechanic … I tell myself he would be the mechanic. He would be carrying on" (Interview, 2017). Boyo did not impose his own expectations on his children in terms of *formal education* or *career*,

[83] These private schools in San Juan were low tier schools. Generally, private schools do not carry prestige as in other countries but rather is seen as a place for children who could not succeed in the public school system.

although he had hopes that his younger son would carry on his legacy. However, it turned out that both of his sons opted to follow in their father's footsteps as automotive mechanics.

Boyo asked his older son, Gopaul, if he wanted to go back to school but Gopaul declined. Gopaul went to the local Government primary school, a Junior Secondary, and a Senior Comprehensive school in a nearby village. He was in a woodworking class, which he did not like, and the teachers failed to understand that he wanted to be an automotive mechanic like his father. He used subtle techniques to *outsmart the teachers* and study in the subject area that he wanted, as Boyo noted, "He tell the teacher that he does suffer with sinus. But he lie, eh. And they put them in the mechanical field. After that, he gone clear" (Interview, 2017). Gopaul learnt how to use the system to work for him since the insitutional agents were not focused on his learning interests. Boyo's daughter, Renuka chose the academic route and completed an engineering degree at the local campus of the UWI and later, she completed her MBA, part-time at a private HEI, earning a credential from a UK university. Renuka is a separate participant in the study.

Boyo's branch of the family has left the life of a *peasant farmer* (the tradition in Aranguez) behind; however, his brothers did not do well in school and remained farmers and their children became farmers. They sold their land inheritance from their father, and they are now working for other people, becoming landless peasants like their indentured ancestors on arrival in Trinidad. Boyo's sister is a homemaker, and her husband is also a farmer in Aranguez. Their children completed secondary school. Boyo noted, "Everybody have their choices. Like I tell you. I didn't like to dig de dut [dirt], so when I used to do mechanic … that is why dem children pick it up (Interview, 2017).

Boyo's eldest son, Gopaul is married, and Gopaul's son went to the local Vedic School unlike Boyo and his children who attended government primary schools. Boyo beamed with pride when he spoke about this grandson who was attending a 'prestige' secondary school and

is doing well in academics and extracurricular activities, “He is a bright fella, you know” (Interview, 2017).

There is pride in the educational achievements of children and grandchildren but *no pressure* for them to achieve in school. This is unlike middle-class parents who have great expectations for their children’s education, whether it be in Trinidad, the UK, or North America, “When it comes to children, parental responsibility has no limits and indeed seems to be continually expanding” (Ball, 2003, p. 266). Middle-class parents deploy their social, cultural and economic capital to provide advantage in the ‘education market’ for their children to excel.

Manny did not continue his education past secondary school, “I leave school after that, and you just end up in de garden. That was de normal ting. It come like you get a big boy. So, dais wha’ happen” (Interview, 2018). There was a fatalistic attitude where he saw no other options open to him in Aranguez. There were *no aspirations* or thoughts about any type of career beyond helping in the family farm. However, he commented on the aptitude of his siblings’ grandchildren since he had no spouse or children, “Nowadays children, they real smart, you know. From small coming up, they does be talking. My sister daughter have a little child. When you see the child sit down and talking, you think is a big person talking. And well bright” (Interview, 2018).

The participants who did achieve higher education were operating at a disadvantage as their parents did not have the insights into the higher education system to advise their children. Their stories reflect an *agency* and *motivation that was internally driven.* Devanand, a first-generation student, did not have educational guidance at home given his parents and family’s lack of secondary school education. He was on his own when he had to make curriculum choices:

> We didn't know much about technical/vocational subjects and all these kinds of things. So, when they went for subject selection, they saw the engineering thing which is more

> technical/vocational. We choose that subject; both my sister and myself, because we were in the same year". (Interview, 2018)

His parents thought choosing technical/vocational courses would lead to a professional career as an engineer when, in fact, it was not the academic stream and led to postsecondary TVET and non-degree certificates.

Prem was Boyo's classmate in primary school in the 1960s. He earned a PhD at age twenty-five in the 1970s; a time when most people were only completing primary school in the community. However, unlike Boyo's brothers who only had primary or secondary school education, his brothers went on to higher education. Boyo stopped his formal education after primary school, which contrasts with Prem's educational and occupational trajectory.

However, Prem's own parents had primary school education which *disrupts the theory that parental education is key to children accessing higher education*. He held his father in high esteem and admired his learnedness in the Hindu scriptures. But it was his *mother* who encouraged him and attended his school activities as his father was busy with his priestly duties, "For prize giving in primary school, she would go out with me in the school. She was very keen on that. He was always there. But he wasn't so hands-on" (Interview, 2018). Prem is an *outlier* for his educational and career achievements in Aranguez, at the time and even in present day. Prem had the *involvement, moral, and financial support* of his parents who were invested in his success, which offset their own low educational attainment.

Intergenerational change in education and higher education access came early to Prem's family; his siblings all accessed some degree of university or professional education and became teachers. His daughter became a medical doctor which demonstrates the *value of parental higher education* in the aspirations of children when it is present. He had the knowledge and experience to advise in her journey as he is a professor and a higher education administrator and understands the HE system. In addition, he served as an example to *inspire* and *motivate* her. *Social capital is positive from the family perspective*. He also had the financial

wherewithal (*economic capital*) to support her educational ambitions because the study of medicine is an expensive programme, even if subsidised.

In the 1980s, Devanand had *support - moral and financial* - from only his mother, but none from his father. When he did well at school, she was happy "because she was the driving force behind all this" (Interview, 2018). His father didn't participate in his educational development, as they had a poor relationship and he was abusive to Devanand, but not his siblings. The *mother's role is significant,* while his father's ill treatment did not matter to him. For Devanand, going to a "prestige school" or even a "respectable" government secondary school was not within educational aspirations for himself and his siblings. They had *low self-esteem* and saw others as "brighter" than them, which could be related to their social class and home life. Their parents had no higher educational expectations for them; only that they pass their CEE and got into secondary school:

> They didn't tell us anything, you know. They were contented that we passed. So, it didn't make a difference. In fact, I'll tell you quite frank, college and stuff was nothing to us. We used to look at people who go to a college as extremely bright and something beyond our reach. We would hear of people. I still consider myself … in primary school, I was one of the low performers in my class. (Interview, 2018).

Even though Devanand's father was not supportive, after he started doing well in school, his father became very boastful about him and his *expectations of Devanand changed*, "After realising you had some potential for school, … he would say at work, 'I want my son to be an engineer' (Interview, 2018). Devanand noted about his father's expectations:

> He had high hopes especially when he was *drunk* and so on. We always hear dem talking that dey want us to be engineer and we look at those high-end jobs, not knowing that basically, *we were ignorant about academics and vocational areas* in all these kinds of things. So, when you see engineering, you are thinking big, you know in those days,

> and not guided by any adults. We had nobody in the family who went to university or who had tertiary education. (Interview, 2018)

His father's boasting about him to friends and neighbours, infuriated Devanand because of the suffering he had experienced at his father's hands:

> I remember for graduation, he was drunk and making a big scene, 'Oh, my son is graduating from university' and this kind of thing. But he wasn't saying anything about going UWI, but he used to be boasting a lot. He was proud to have a son going university. So, in his workplace and so on, when the workers – his friends – come home and so on, he would boast about his son. I was indifferent. Honestly, it didn't make a difference to me. I was just mad, in fact, I used to be *mad because of lack of support and you didn't contribute anything.* But I never had time to take on that because you busy with work and so on. (Interview, 2018)

The abuse from his father made it much more difficult for him to do well in school and go on to higher education.

Parental pride and support was key for Renuka who noted about her parents (Boyo and wife), "They were very proud. They have always been *very supportive* of me doing well. My parents, they were very *committed to me* doing education. Not what I did but getting an education" (Interview, 2017). Renuka's parents *allowed her to make all her own decisions about schooling*, which she did not think was necessarily a good thing, "I think it could have been more balanced" (Interview, 2017). She felt that *not having any pressure from her parents was not the best thing for her*. Renuka selected her programme on her own, "based on my grades and my grades, it allowed me to get me into engineering and I liked chemistry, so I chose chemical engineering. I could have selected natural sciences as a second option" (Interview, 2017).

The hands-off attitude of Renuka's parents is a recurring theme with the participants and may stem from their lack of knowledge about the higher education system, and also reflects

Ball's findings in the UK of similar behaviour of working-class parents. However, both showed *interest and pride* in her accomplishments, "There was lots of interest. Lots of support. Lots of checking on my reports. How I'm doing in school. But not the choices of what you want to do. And very, very committed to making sure things were in place to make you a success. But the choices were left up to me" (Interview, 2017).

Suresh mentioned that he lacked interest in school and did not do his homework which drew the wrath of his mother who quarreled with him. Common parenting tools in Aranguez were *quarrelling* and *beatings*. His parents would look at his report, cards but that was the extent of *parental involvement* in his education. He laughed when I asked him what his parents said when they saw his report cards.

Neil's parents provided *moral support,* and his father also provided some *assistance with homework* when Neil was a child, since he had secondary school education. His parents recognised that their child was 'bright' and he knew *their expectations of him were high*:

> They would ask to see my report card, but they would never say, 'Why did you get 90? Why didn't you get 100?' There was no pressure. But there was pressure to come home and do your homework, to do your revisions, do your times [multiplication] tables. *Mommy made sure there was time regimented for everything*. There was time to play when you get home with kids in the neighbourhood. Daddy was always more passive, but he would also check the book, check the marks. He would be the one picking me up in times [multiplication] tables. Eventually it got to a point, it would have been in primary school – standard 3 or standard 4 or so, where I was on track by myself. (Interview, 2017).

This discipline required by his parents could be a factor in his success. He was the first in his extended family (maternal and paternal) network to be awarded a PhD.

Parental response to how their children are performing in school is also important whether that performance is good or bad. In Neil's case, his outstanding grades in primary school, secondary school, and university made his parents proud:

> Mommy and daddy was always really proud and supportive. Mommy is more vocal and supportive, and she would come and scratch my head and say, 'Oh, I am so proud of you.' Daddy would cry. He would just cry. The little things that you can't hide. The emotions that you can't hide would come out. (Interview, 2017)

The support provided to these participants contrast with Jameela and Rohan both of whom went to Junior Secondary and Senior Comprehensive schools, and *did not have similar parental support*, even though they needed it more, given that the schools that they were attending were low tier.

Jameela took more interest in her daughter's education than Jameela's mother did in her education. Jameela had educational and occupational aspirations for her own children. She wanted Alicia, her older daughter, to do 'A' levels and become a lawyer:

> I does tell her every day that I want her to do good. Because now you have to have a good education to be something. It's not like long ago, you could just go and look for work. Now you have to have education to get everything. I want them to be in an office. She aware of the garden [farming] so, if she do bad, I tell her: 'You not performing, so where you want to go? You want to go to a Junior Sec? What, you want to stay home and go in de garden and work?' Then she will start to cry. (Interview, 2017).

Jameela recognises that both her girls have different capabilities but would like them to succeed educationally and have a better career than her relatives, whose lives as peasant farmers resulted in low income, "But is all about the children – what their brains can take. I not pushing them. Is what they want to be. But I just, I does tell them, if you want to be a gardener, just stay home, and go and do gardening. It don't make sense wasting money now because everything is money in schools now (Interview, 2017).

She used shouting as a ‘motivational’ tool with her daughters, and the threat of being a peasant farmer, like their grandfather, great-grandparents, and uncles; but she also seemed to accept that they would achieve based on their own capacities.

Lessons - Risk Reduction in High-Stakes Testing

The main way that parents support their children in school is to provide tutoring services or “lessons” for those doing high-stakes testing and most of the participants went for lessons. This practice is a recognition of their inability as parents to tutor their children themselves given their educational background which ranged from illiteracy to secondary school education. Although, the parents of the participants were lower-class, they had similar *hopes* of middle-class parents where the secondary school that their child attends was about – “getting from the present to a particular kind of class and social location in the future” (Ball, 2003, p. 273). But for the parents in Aranguez, it was without the “emotion and intensity” found in middle-class parents in Trinidad or in the UK research done by Ball (2003).

Depending on the school, students may not get any extra support or may not have good quality teachers, and their parents sought outside help to improve examination scores. Participants mentioned obtaining additional help beyond normal classroom hours, where their teachers provided extra classes – paid or unpaid – for the CEE/SEA and the GCE/CXC ‘O’ and ‘A’ level examinations. These lessons do not cost much money and is an additional tax-free income source for the teachers. Tutoring was a later development, as the older participants never had extra tutoring.

Devanand noted, “our teacher used to keep us back an hour after school to do some extra work” (Interview, 2018). Jason’s parents got him tutoring as they were aware of his struggles in school, “It had the telephone book, showing you who you could call and what they specialise in. That is how they get people” (Interview, 2019). His tutor was from El Socorro, the nearby village, and she tutored him for 2 years in all his subjects – Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, and English - to help him pass his CEE.

Jameela got extra tutoring for her daughters - Alicia was taking accounting lessons from a tutor in a nearby town and Mathematics lessons from another tutor. Her mother found the Mathematics tutor and her cousin had used the accounting tutor. Jameela noted about her own situation, “We didn’t have to go for any lessons. Long-time [long ago] children didn’t have to go for any lessons and all dem ting” (Interview, 2017). This was not true because people older than her in the participant group had obtained extra lessons. It was simply that her parents had not gotten her the extra tutoring, although she had needed the additional help. Finances may have been a factor. Suresh did not ask for lessons. For students like Jameela and Suresh, it could be that they were not interested enough in school to ask for lessons, or their parents did not take enough of an interest to get them extra tutoring.

Valmiki had to do lessons for English Language in preparation for the CEE and his parents found him a private tutor in the area. Valmiki said *his mother showed more interest in his education* but thinks that his father’s farming background led to his father’s disinterest. For ‘O’ level preparation in secondary school, his mother saw an advertisement in the newspaper of a private school nearby that gave weekend classes. He did supplemental classes in Mathematics, English, Principles of Business and Accounting at this school. The extra tutoring was done in addition to any extra lessons that teachers would provide in the primary or secondary schools, leading up to examinations. Some parents recognised their own inability to help their children and sought help for them to succeed, while other parents did not show much interest.

Devanand noted the *lack of involvement of parents from low-income families* since he taught at one such school:

> We have a regular ‘We have a Parent’s Day because they have to choose their subjects for Form 4. ... We try to meet at least once per term, every age group. But like in our school because of economic reasons, where *everybody parents have to work and so on, the turnout is poor* (Interview, 2018).

The phenomenon of the *uninvolved parent* is also related to economic capital. In this case, the school where Devanand was a teacher in Port of Spain (Jameela's alma mater), which had mainly low-income students, parents taking time off to attend school affairs could be problematic. The relevance of economic capital in facilitating higher education achievement will be discussed later in the chapter.

Balancing Work and School

The participants were expected as children to contribute their labour to the household. There were various levels of parental expectations in the participants' educational journey in terms of completing chores versus a focus on schoolwork. Tasks included doing housework or caring for animals, doing farm work in the fields, vending, helping in other types of family micro-enterprises, and odd jobs to supplement family income. Participants (Prem, Boyo, Jameela) who had their own children had less expectations for them doing housework than their own parents had of them. These chores could sometimes intrude on time spent on studies and homework, especially for those trying to excel.

Jameela noted that from nine years old or younger, she did chores at home and started cooking for the family when she was 11 years, after she did the CEE. Her parents did not seem to understand that her household duties were impacting the time needed to prepare for high-stakes examinations. Jameela compared her experience to that of her own children:

> … long time, it didn't have anything like young. Dem [her children] have nothing to do. In we days, we have to get up, clean up, wash wares [dishes] and do all kinds of things before you go to school. I had to come home from school and do work. That was my days. I had to do plenty work. (Interview, 2017)

Valmiki had to help his father in the vegetable farm before and after school, "You get up at four o'clock in the morning and go and do some watering or spraying and then come back home and get ready for school and go to school. Come back home and go back again in the garden" (Interview, 2018). He studied on evenings after chores, "School finished about two

‘o’clock or 2:30 p.m. so, about three o’clock – you home. So, you either eat something or you go again at it, straight to the garden” (Interview, 2019). He had to study until about midnight which was tiring and impacted his studies. He told his mother, but to no avail. Eventually, when he got to Form 4, he had had enough, “I stop going to the garden and I put more on the books” (Interview, 2019). Valmiki did not have the support of his father in terms of giving him the time he needed to study, as schooling and academic success was not a focus but carrying on the tradition of farming.

Devanand and his sibings also had many chores that took up their time before and after school:

> “… daddy always busy with work and in addition to that, he used to mine [rear] a lot of animals; do carpentry and plumbing on the side line; and from a tender age we each had to go with him. We had to get up early in the morning and go out and tie up goats. In the streets where there is pieces of grass and some pieces of empty land, you go and have to tie them goats and them. In the evening you have to bring them back” (Interview, 2018).

The children had to take care of the goats, ducks, chickens, and German Shepherd dogs that his father had and help him with his other part-time jobs. The chores that Devanand, Jameela, and Valmiki did were tiring and affected their schoolwork, something with which Renuka and Neil did not have to contend because their parents wanted them to focus on school. Renuka and Neil did not have to do chores when they were in high school, and their parents would cook and bring food to their rooms while they studied.

Manny noted that he and his siblings had to go to help with the vegetable farming. Attending a bi-sessional school allowed him to go to the farmland in the morning and go to school in the evening shift. However, Manny was spoiled by his mother, so he did not really do any work in the fields, “I used to bring the food for my father, early in the morning and I would

stay and lime [hang out] and come back. Me really never used to do nutten, eh. Meh mudda was a very supportive parent, both of them" (Interview, 2018).

Educational excellence in Trinidad means passing examinations, getting 'A' grades and possibly winning scholarships to study abroad. This definition of success in education can be impacted by demands on children's time to do chores. Allocating chores to build discipline and character in children is different from low-income families who need to have their children contribute to the household, either through housework, fieldwork, and other duties, paid or unpaid. These extra duties may tire children who must study in the evenings, especially for high-stake examinations which is a stressful event in a child's life. The ability of parents to allow their children the time and space to study, varied with the financial circumstance of the family but also the expectations of the parents.

Parental expectations around chores could have been a factor in how well students performed. The parents of Renuka and Neil who accessed higher education, did not allow their children to contribute to the household, while parents like Jameela, Devanand and Valmiki expected their children to help at home. Of those who had to contribute to the family chores and/or income, only Devanand accessed higher education. On the other hand, Manny, who did not have any chores, did not participate in any higher education studies. This is another factor, in the way that parents can affect a child's trajectory from a psychosocial perspective, when there is a lack of responsibility developed in the child.

'Parental involvement' was a topic for education consultations launched (see chapter 5) by the Ministry of Education in late 2020 and early 2021, which suggests that the research on the value of parental involvement in their child's education is having some impact on education policy-making.

The findings supported the literature which has shown that students with parents who do not have higher education are challenged to go on to higher education. But the research also demonstrates that parental education was not the most important factor in students going on to

higher education. *Lack of parental education need not hinder a student's aspiration* to higher education and the research sheds light on *how family social capital operates* for an individual in these circumstances to help them access higher education. The research supported previous findings (Coleman, 1988; Ra, 2011) that *parental expectations* and their *involvement and support* for their children's academic success are part of family social capital.

Parental involvement and support can *influence and motivate* children to higher education, regardless of parental education. The way that parents got involved in the education of the participants was through *praise* when successful and *support* when not successful; *assistance with homework; attendance* at school events; providing *financial support*; providing extra *nourishment* during examinations period; removing the *burden of mundane* chores so that they could focus on homework and high stakes testing; provide *tutoring services*; and discussing *occupational options and goals*.

There was a lack of involvement of the parents of Manny, Rohan, Jameela, Suresh, Shanti, and Valmiki who had poor educational outcomes - their secondary school achievements were poor and they did not continue their formal education after secondary school. Prem, Renuka, Devanand, and Neil had various forms of parental support which may have contributed to them accessing higher education. An interesting finding was that *maternal support* seemed stronger than paternal support for their children's schooling.

Siblings and Extended Kinship Network

Family social capital was much broader in the village compared to the literature. Support and assistance from siblings and 'extended family' provided greater family social capital. A few participants had relatives other than parents to whom they could turn for academic support, within the nuclear family network, as well, as within the extended family network (aunt, uncle, cousin, close family friend) and they in turn assisted their siblings or relatives, when the opportunity arose.

Prem's sister had primary school education, so she would not have been an influence on his educational ambitions, but his older brother had partially completed a university degree. He wanted to go to university from young and noted that his older brother's attendance was not a factor in his own decision to attend university. Manny had only one sibling who could assist him with schooling, "I used to assist myself. But my brother, Lalloo used to assist me too. He went to school, and he know dem ting too. He didn't pass Common Entrance. Meh mudda did pay for he to go to school" (Interview, 2018).

Jameela's older brother could not help her, but she got help from her cousin, "*So we used to get help from like bigger cousins* … Coming down to Common Entrance, she had a booklet and she used to give me work to do and she used to correct it" (Interview, 2017). This cousin also helped her when she started secondary school:

> Well, I had my cousin …. and I was going Junior Sec. So, when we come home, I used to go across with my books, across the road and we used to do homework together.... she used to help me plenty with my homework and ting. And then when she leave and went, I tink that is when I drop...*I start to go down*. That is true you know" (Interview, 2017).

With parents unable to help her with homework, she relied on her extended kinship network. Her education suffered once her cousin moved away.

Jameela's ex-husband only completed primary school and did not sit the Common Entrance, "He tell me he used to drink and lime [hang out] with the principal" (Interview, 2017). However, his siblings' children, who lived at his parents' home outside of Aranguez, were doing well academically. They were doing 'A' levels and one nephew was an engineer who worked in the civil service. Jameela's ex-husband was strategising about how to leverage the influence of his family's social capital to help his children in school. He thought that if his children spent some time around his family, that they may be influenced by their cousins, as Jameela noted, "So, he was saying. If they go up there, … they will have something to compare to, you know"

(Interview, 2017). Jameela recognised the importance of having a network of educated people around her children to inspire them to success based on her own experience:

> It's only when they call him and tell him they doing bad, then he will call and talk to them. Like for instance, today he's saying he will take them. If he feel, he will take them and it will make a difference, I tell him, go ahead, and take them. … you know when you have children around you going to school, you tend to do better. Now, here is just me and two of them. It have nobody else go to school here. No young kids. Up there now, he have his nephew. He is a geomatic engineer. He have his niece coming to live there from month end. But his other nephew, downstairs – one going Hindu College and one going UWI. I don't know exactly what he is doing in UWI, but he is doing good. (Interview, 2017)

She was open to the idea of her ex-husband taking the girls to live with him and his family, however, the move did not happen, and the children stayed with her. She was left on her own to raise the children, while her ex-husband took a hands-off approach.

Older siblings can be influential in different ways in the educational journey - homework help, finding a school or HEI, and assisting with career choices. One's *position in the family* as middle or younger siblings can be advantageous. Suresh did not mention much about his primary and secondary school experience but noted that his siblings did not really help him with his schooling. But when he completed secondary school, his sister intervened and registered him for a welding course at the John Donaldson Technical Institute which later became part of the UTT. Renuka registered her younger brother to do accounting at a private HEI. According to her father, Boyo, "He sister used to be on him [Ramu] to have some education" (Interview, 2017). They were both older sisters who *adopted parenting roles* for their younger siblings - intervening in their education where their parents did not. This could be due to their own experiences of not having parental support and a better understanding of the value of higher education.

Extended family beyond parents and siblings were also important in the educational journey for some participants. As the older sibling, Jason did not have any immediate family to help him with his schooling as his parents had only completed primary school and his sister was in secondary school. He is a first-generation student who was completing his engineering diploma in 2019. He had aspired to going to UWI to do Electrical Engineering but he did not feel *confident* that he would succeed given his past struggles with school. His sister was also struggling in secondary school like him, but he tried to help her. Jason asked his maternal aunt (who had a UWI degree) for help with school, "She used to help me when I come home from school, she used to help me with my homework and help me to revise when test was coming up" (Interview, 2019). When Devanand was desperate to find a 6th Form place in a secondary school, it was a distant relative, his uncle-in-law, who lived *outside of Aranguez* who helped him get into a school.

Renuka spoke about her paternal grandparents' influence whom she lost when she was in secondary school, "I was very close to them, and my grandfather was very committed to educating his children and grandchildren. And I think East Indians in general in Trinidad. They talk up about that a lot. They would always ask about school, just like my parents" (Interview, 2017). Renuka's maternal uncle is a professor at a university in Canada and she mentioned that knowing him through occasional visits to Trinidad also raised awareness that university was an option for her, suggesting that geographically distant relatives could be inspirational in one's education, as well. She mentioned her neighbours also had people in their household who went to UWI and was an influence on her.

The research shows that other policy actors in their social networks besides parents are important in a child's educational journey. The *definition of family is a cultural construct which changes depending on the context*. In Aranguez, *broader kinship networks that include non-blood relatives* can provide the inspiration and support needed for educational success at secondary school and higher education. Relatives and non-kin agents who are considered

family, contributed to their educational journey – Devanand's links with Prem and his brother; Prem and his nephews; Renuka and her uncle and her neighbours; and Jason and his aunt, and his 'uncle' who set him on the path to higher education with a job in a related field.

The findings also demonstrate that *position in the sibling network* is also important as older siblings advised and supported younger ones. The research provides new insight into how first generations students' parents support them or hinder them from transitioning to higher education, and the importance of *extended kinship networks*.

The Relationship between Family Occupation and Educational Aspirations

The influence of family occupation on educational aspirations and choices were apparent for a few participants. Part of family social capital are the occupations (and the educational requirements for such occupations) of parents and other family members. Parents provide an example of possibilities and can influence career choices, which is the reason that the children of professors tend to access higher education and children of professionals (doctors, lawyers, dentists, etc.) become professionals. In a closed, farming community like Aranguez, becoming a vegetable farmer was the main occupation for decades.

There were others who were not involved in farming who followed in their parent footsteps - the children of the pandit[84] became pandits (Prem and siblings); the sons of the automotive mechanic (Boyo) became mechanics; the son of the maxi-taxi[85] driver became a maxi-taxi driver (Rohan's brother); Valmiki worked in an agriculture-related job outside of Aranguez, like his father and cousins.

The influence of Boyo on his sons, demonstrates the impact of parental occupation as inspiration for education and career. Their occupational goal was a direct result of their father's

[84] Pandit was derived from the Sanskrit - pandita, which means "a learned man or scholar. In Trinidad, a pandit is a Hindu priest who belongs to the Brahmin caste, although there are people from other castes who now practice as pandits. Female pandits are not accepted although there are a few now. See https://www.guardian.co.tt/news/female-hindu-pundits-making-strides-in-tt-6.2.1250219.951e361ba7

[85] Maxi-taxi is a minibus taxi

influence, helping in his garage from very young. Boyo provided vocational training to his sons. A formal college education was redundant. They followed in their father's footsteps after secondary school, opening their own separate automotive repair small businesses. Boyo's sons were motivated to be *self-employed* which is what the skilled trades offer and rejected *formal academic education and skills training* which did not appeal to them. This occupation lent itself to self-employment. Boyo pointed out the attraction of independence and *autonomy* of self-employment for his sons:

> His sister try to make him ah accountant. He had one more subject to be a chartered accountant and he leave it. He get good work all in de airport. The man tell me, "You see Mr. Man, I not getting up 7 o'clock in the morning to go and work for nobody". I never tell he a word. You could do your accounts and run this shop". Like what he take enough there; he could check he own money. He could do he own accounts. But he does hire somebody. He say, he not going to answer to nobody, "Good morning, sir". And he not going to leave here in the morning to hustle and go and do nobody wok[work]. I not forcing nobody to go and do nothing dat dey ain't want. But he sister used to be on him to have some education. She quarrelling with him. Up to now, when she come[86], she blow him up to go and finish it. She does call him sometimes (from England) and tell him, "Boy go and finish it up". She eh like him doing the mechanic work. She say, 'You could have your ting dey [ACCA qualification] and do your mechanic too. You could do your accounts and run this shop. (Boyo, Interview, 2017)

She wanted her little brother to follow a more *middle-class career path* like her, but he chose a blue-collar occupation, like his older brother and father, and *autonomy and control* of his destiny as a self-employed person.

[86] She was visiting from England when I did the interview with her.

Parents can also intervene in children's occupational choices which in turn influences their options for post-secondary education. Shanti's brother wanted to become a police officer and had applied to enter the police service. However, Shanti noted that their *mothe*r intervened:

> He did get through with the police before the teaching. When he get through with the police dem, it was only time to go into training and mom tell him, 'No'. She say she don't want her son to get damage or shoot. That was around 2000 and something. My father say he could have just go and do the training. And she said "No, not even the training". (Interview, 2018)

Shanti's brother was *pressured by his mother* into giving up his career goal to be a police officer and instead, he applied to be a teacher, attended teachers' college, and currently teaches in a primary school. Shanti was also pressured by her parents to stay at home and not continue her education or seek employment.

Occupations in the family network are therefore a *major influence on educational choices* and occupations of children, leading children to follow a similar path or discouraging them from following that path. In addition, parents can force occupational choices on children which affect the education and training that they receive.

Community Social Capital

Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) and Coleman (1988) noted the importance of community in higher education access, where community can influence attitudes and aspirations in having 'reasonable expectations'. Community social capital consists of non-kin agents - neighbours and friends and acquaintances in Aranguez and environs.

The sugar cane plantation was central to building community among the Indentureds as they lived and worked on the plantations. The people of Aranguez never left the plantation, but instead, the plantation became their community. The community was close, as Boyo noted, "All

of we used to live like one". These were bonds (jahaji bai/bahen) forged on the ships from India[87] which persisted on the plantations and then in transition to village life.

The Indentureds were housed in the former slave barracks (a wooden building with 8-10 small rooms) on the estates on what is now the Savannah. Each family would live together in one room in the barracks. A tight-knit community evolved in Aranguez,[88] where members helped each other in challenging times when crops failed, and households were facing food shortages through sharing food; activities such as community revolving loans[89]; or assistance with wedding or funeral expenses.

After closure of the sugar cane factory, the Estate continued to exist as a legal entity and employ people to farm the Estate lands. Manny noted that people who used to work for the Estate back in the 1950s used the Savannah - a large open field belonging to the Aranguez Estates - as a gathering point where everyone were "real pally-wal. All of them used to be together liming"[90] (Interview, 2018). The Aranguez Savannah was a principal place of gathering for informal "panchayats"[91] to discuss community activities and issues (Interviews, Manny, 2018; Boyo, 2017). Even though the economic role of the Estate declined, the Savannah remains as the centre of community life for religious celebrations (Holi, Diwali, Ramayana readings), mini-Carnivals, and other community and sporting events.

Indian-dominant political parties held rallies in Aranguez Savannah to energise their base for elections. Spaces for community connections can be found at the Savannah, in the sports and cultural club, bars, mosques/mandirs, weddings and funerals, community festivals, and in local workspaces – farming and non-farming. Neil noted, "The sense of family and

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[87] *jahaji bhai/bahen* – brotherhood/sisterhood of the boat
[88] This assessment is based on lived experience and oral histories about the community.
[89] Sou sou- a group of people who pool their savings by making regular contributions to a fund which is then paid out to each member of the group according to an agreed upon schedule. In Aranguez it is based on lack of access to capital, trust in the community and distrust of mainstream financial institutions. It originated in West Africa and gets its name from the Yoruba term "esusu." See https://www.essence.com/news/money-career/what-is-a-sou-sou-savings-club-facts/.
[90] hanging out
[91] informal village gatherings of men to discuss community affairs

community that you get down there [Aranguez] is just a lot more. You just feel a lot more warmth and everything is a lot closer. And maybe it is because everybody knows each other. Everybody just right there, next to each other" (Interview, 2017).

Community networks provide access to information, knowledge, resources and helps to sustain members. Community social capital is also important for educational support and accessing the labour market. Social capital can exist in any community even if it is not part of the dominant class. There was support to family and neighbours which demonstrates another form of social capital in the community that is overlooked by social capital deficit theory which has been applied to low-income, racialised, and marginalised communities. Neil's father, who was from Aranguez continued to be a part-time farmer there, not only for extra income but to provide work for his family, friends, and neighbours in Aranguez; "… he would always have people working for him. Daddy is the kind of person, he wouldn't say it, but they kind of need the work too" (Interview 2017).

Devanand's network within the community of Aranguez, proved to be more useful to him than his kinship network for inspiring him to pursue higher education. Prem's brother, Krishna, was his friend and his classmate in the local Junior secondary, as he noted, "I don't know if it was miracles or what, but the first test - me and Krishna - was in the same class and he came first in the first term; a girl came second, and I came third". Devanand's friendship with Prem's brother led him to higher education, "Krishna and I were very close, and he had a lot in terms of *influencing me or educating me* about getting 'O' levels and moving on to 'A' levels" (Interview, 2018). Devanand depended on his friends in the local community and beyond to help him learn about the education system and how to navigate it:

> Well, you know as you go higher, you learn more about the next level. So, after 'O' levels, you went to the ''A levels. You heard about it and the next step was university. So, it was basically what I learnt on my own and from *people I mingle with in school, and teachers and so on*. And again, with Krishna's influence, knowing what are the next

stairs you have to climb. And of course, after I finished, I apply to university. (Interview, 2018)

Krishna also helped him with *navigating the application process* to apply to university at UWI. Devanand applied to the government while at university to become a teacher. He also learnt about this process from Krishna who had already applied to the Ministry of Education to become a teacher, "I think it's through Krishna again. And *then interacting with different people at UWI and so on*. You could apply when you graduate; then you send your transcript. … So, I applied when we were coming to the end of the second year in UWI" (Interview, 2018). Social capital - knowledge about how to navigate the hiring system from contacts in the public service - also impact ability and timing in accessing teaching jobs. Devanand was lucky to know Prem's brother who 'knew the ropes' of how the Ministry and public service worked from his own brothers, and helped him as a student and in getting into a teaching career.

Jason's educational choices and career were directly influenced by his community network in Aranguez. He found out about UTT from a *friend* in his street, "He ask me what I want to do, and I say electrical engineering and he advise me that UTT is one of the best schools to do electrical engineering" (Interview, 2019). This friend had attended UTT and had his own company. In addition, his 'uncle', a family friend, "used to come and lime[92] with the family" and he owned an electrical installation business. He hired Jason, providing *on-the-job training*, "hooking up plugs and switches, busting walls, cutting walls. He started me off from basic and then let me work my way up" (Interview, 2019). He did this for a year after leaving secondary school and then he went to UTT to complete his electrical engineering training. His parents did not have the knowledge to assist him with school and advise on higher education given their education levels. Jason also did not see a need for UTT's assistance in finding work, since he was already working with his 'uncle.'

[92] To lime – to hang out. Liming – hanging out.

However, there were limits to the community's social capital and its impact in assisting individuals with decisions about educational choices and career possibilities. The village's geographical *location in the North posed limitations*. Its historical ghettoisation and marginalisation resulted in limited access to information and opportunities in the broader society. When Renuka got a job working in the South of the island, she noticed its difference from Aranguez; the South was less diverse and predominantly East Indian. She also realised that people in Aranguez were disadvantaged in their *lack of information or access to the jobs* in the Energy sector in the South:

> The people down there [South Trinidad], they are more aware of what's available and they apply for it. And they are quite well-educated as well. And they go to school there. I would say 80% of the population of that company was from South or Chaguanas. Because we'd been unaware of it, you see. And, so in South, culturally, everybody in a community, where you have a couple people in a community who would work in that industry, they would *network*, and you would know what job is coming up. You all studied this to get this job if you want to be a technician. Whereas in Aranguez, we don't have that knowledge. (Interview, 2017)

Renuka was unaware of the job opportunities in the energy sector in the South until she went to university. So, while *her selection of a field of study and eventual job was more random*, her university classmates from the South were deliberate in selecting their academic programmes in engineering to work in the energy sector. Her friends at university encouraged her to apply for a job in the energy sector. Her community of Aranguez did not provide that informational resource. Renuka's reflected on her *hometown's habitus* which impacts people's orientation to school and higher education:

> I think the people are generally good people you know. And they want to do the right thing. So, you have a lot of moral people in society which is good. I think it's a *laid-back community*. And I think it's because… you know, *we don't have a lot of opportunity*. I

> think as well in Aranguez, because we are on the outskirts of Port of Spain, we have the *distractions* that the people of the South don't have. I think the people in South are just more *focused on pure education*. Whereas I think we have a little more distractions. (Interview, 2017)

She felt people did not have a drive to achieve and were not ambitious. She also did not understand the *love for the agrarian life* that her late grandfather had, "I was aware of it, but I can't say I understood it properly".

She noticed that her university friends who were from the South were more focused and aware of job opportunities and the education required to find work in the Energy sector, although their parents were from agricultural backgrounds, as well:

> A lot of them was in agriculture. A lot of them came from deep South like Penal, and Rio Claro. But again, the people in those areas, because there is a big energy industry in South, they are *very, very aware of it*. And they knew why they needed to do engineering and why it's good to do it. (Interview, 2017)

Renuka was an outlier in Aranguez for the job that she had, but also an outlier in her company as she was an Indian from the North.

The social network of the community is important for aspirations to higher education access through awareness and aspirations for occupations held by people in the community. Aranguez people, generally, still do not have professional jobs requiring higher education. Aranguez has no ties to the larger, wealth generating part of the economy because of its *geographical location in the North*, so it was easier to retain the agricultural traditions and *habitus of an agrarian, pre-industrial society*. As Boyo noted, *"You have to come out of the network. You have to branch out*" (Interview, 2017) beyond the network of Aranguez. This was

true for participants with higher education who had to operate outside Aranguez to get a job[93] and even migrate abroad to further their career.

The findings support research (Parker et al., 2013) that demonstrates that it is a policy challenge to have a broader shift in educational aspirations towards higher education, intergenerationally, for people from low SES communities, since they look to their family and community networks first, as inspiration for educational and occupational choices. If the majority are working and doing fine with lower levels of education, there is not a perceived need to do something different from the previous generation.

While individuals were able to access higher education with the help of parents and kinship networks, Aranguez still provides a challenging environment to aspire to higher education given the educational attainment of community members, low-income, agrarian habitus of the community, criminal elements, and lack of access to information and networks in the broader economy and society. Even though time has elapsed, and education policy has changed to provide free, universal primary and secondary school, as well as tuition-free higher education, university attendance, in particular, is still uncommon in Aranguez, according to the Census data on educational attainment.

School Social Capital

The policy actors (teachers, principals, counsellors, peers) at the educational institutions that one attends are important to higher education access by building social (and cultural capital), as the research literature has demonstrated; impacting student experience, quality of education, student success, and providing access to networks for continued success beyond secondary school, including the type of HEIs that one can access. As discussed in chapter 5, within Trinidad's stratified school system there are various tiers of secondary schools with

[93] the definition of a good job is subjective, for instance, it can be measured in terms of income earnings, or a job related to one's training, or both.

distinct types of social capital, including negative social capital and institutional habitus that contribute to student success, and impacts transition to higher education.

Student Placement and High Stakes Testing

The education system, modelled on the English system, is built around high-stakes testing – the SEA (former CEE), and 'O' level and 'A' level examinations. Scores on the SEA/CEE is a key criterion in placing students in various *secondary schools*, and the latter plays an important role in the likelihood of students moving on to higher education. Testing is used to select and stream students to various tiers of schools – traditional grammar schools and new secondary schools. The educational life of a student is built around summative assessments and performing well in examinations.

Nadira's daughter cried when she was placed in the local Junior Secondary school unlike Jameela, Devanand, and Rohan who attended the school. Nadira's parents disapproved of the school for their granddaughter, but they had the economic means to send her to a private school which was beyond the means of most families. For students like Jason who did not have family to assist him and who had always struggled in school, the 'O' level examinations were a source of great anxiety:

> Actually, coming towards the end of form 5, I end up going for other lessons in the area. And from there on, after lessons, I used to push myself because you know, after coming to form 5, *this is life changing*. This is the biggest exam. You have to do good in it. So, I do that, lessons, and I revise straight through, and I ended up passing all my subjects. (Interview, 2019)

Neil was astute enough to realise that examinations did not properly assess learning:

> It's how well they remember the homework. I didn't blank on it, but I was just sour during the whole exam. And afterwards, when we got the grades back and I got a B, all the people who I was helping, they got As. It wasn't that they got better marks than me that was bothering me. I just thought *it was an unfair way of assessing*. I could have aced the

> exam. It was a written exam. And I know I could have aced it. I think out of principle, it was so unfair. Everybody's going to do good and that is the numbers that is going to get reported. It's playing with the stats. (Interview, 2017)

Testing is easy to administer, but there are several issues to consider that impact students from marginalised backgrounds. First, testing and ranking of students make them judge themselves by their performance in the examinations and shapes their *self-esteem* and *self-perception* negatively, as happened with Devanand who saw himself as a 'dunce.'

Second, high stakes testing is an axis of inequality and inequity. Au (2013), in the context of the US, noted tests are presumed to be objective and educators see them as an accurate sorting mechanism that accurately measures ability. Considering these tests as objective and value-free, ignores different axes of disadvantage (culture, ethnicity, race, disability, and class), and thus justifies differences in school performance and the impacts of existing socioeconomic inequalities. Students with mental health issues such as anxiety and learning disabilities are put at a disadvantage, resulting in lower scores. Testing also has cultural bias that privileges the dominant class in society.

Third, examinations do not assess learning but skills in examination techniques and memorisation and rote learning of curricula. Fourth, teachers also use tests to label students and their capabilities creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure. The system echoes the banking concept of education of Freire (1970) where teachers deposit information in students and do not expect critical thinking; education becomes an instrument of oppression which is central to colonial education for the colonised people.

Findings show that the CEE/SEA and secondary school examinations scores were a source of anxiety and stress for students and parents, especially for the younger students, since it determined their future educational pathways, opportunities and life trajectories. Students need to perform extremely well on examinations to be able to attend top-tier schools. Despite research (Froese-Germain, 2001) that has shown the detrimental effects of high stakes testing

and its inequitable outcomes for disadvantaged students, Trinidad has not been able to move away from this colonial legacy which perpetuates inequities in the education system.

School Choice and Streaming

The issue of "school choice" for secondary school arose in the findings which demonstrates the pathway and challenges to get to higher education as a resident of Aranguez, which is largely limited by Ministry policy, as discussed in Chapter 5. But the linkages in the education system from kindergarten to primary school to secondary school that determine the probabilities of transitioning to higher education cannot be ignored. K-12 education policy is the basis for higher education access, and it is from primary school that streaming happens – social sorting based on grades but also on a demographicl level – race, religion, class, gender, ability, place of residence. All the schools that one attends has implications for whether one makes it to higher education.

In Trinidad, parents have a choice in where they want to send their children for *primary schools*, but not so much *secondary school*. Students go through the school selection process before they sit the SEA (former CEE) to enter secondary school. However, most of these children do not get their *first or even second choice school* for four reasons: (a) they may not get the high scores; (b) denominational schools have first preference of who enters their schools within the 20% allocation of seats for students from the church; (c) school principals still have the power to decide who enters their schools in terms of transfers from other schools. An informal process of using *social networks* with teachers, principals ("contacts") and Ministry staff operate to help students get into a school of choice; and (d) students get zoned into their geographical area. Geography (place of residence) functions as an axis of inequality and inequity – factoring into the Ministry of Education's zoning policy for placing students in a secondary school. The type of secondary school, in turn, impacts quality of education and academic performance and the likelihood of moving on to higher education.

Primary School Choice.

In the 1950s, when Nadira was attending primary school, the College Exhibition[94] was the examination that students sat for the limited secondary school spaces for children across the country. But she never sat the examination. After Nadira's primary school, a Presbyterian school in San Juan, was destroyed by fire, Nadira's parents sent her to a *private Catholic primary school* (on the outskirts of Aranguez), which speaks to the *economic capital* of her family to afford a private school. This decision was because her mother had also attended a Catholic primary school, although the latter was Hindu, and the former was Muslim. Prem and Boyo attended the government primary school in El Socorro, the neighbouring village.

Parents had more choice of primary schools for their children from the late 1970s, as more schools were built in Aranguez. They could choose among government or denominational (Muslim or Hindu) primary schools. Manny noted: "Well *where we mudda had for, there we went*" (Interview, 2018) demonstrating again the prominent *role of the mother* in the children's education. Renuka and her brothers were sent to the local government primary school as it was *geographically closer to home*, but she felt that the Hindu school provided a better-quality education, "parents in Aranguez choose what's easiest for them instead of what is best for the child".

Renuka felt that her parents were a little too *laissez-faire* about her early schooling which lays the foundation for future educational success. Shanti felt that *religion* and *family tradition* were factors in parental choice of primary school. Her family went to one of the local Hindu schools in Aranguez, "Is what the *parents choose*. Plus because of the *religion*" (Interview, 2018). Jameela's big brother and cousins also went to the local Government primary school because of *family tradition*, "So it was probably because of that they sent me there because I would have the company" (Interview, 2017). Devanand and Jason's primary school selection

[94] Later became Common Entrance and then Secondary school assessment (SEA).

were also related to *tradition (*family had attended it) and the school's *reputation*. Jason noted, "*The students who came out of Vedic*[95] *went to very high qualified schools*. It was considered a very good school. Most of the students who came out of Vedic, *went on to achieve plenty*" (Interview, 2019). The primary school that participants attended impacted the secondary school that they attended, which determined their chances of going on to higher education which speaks to the *quality of education* and *habitus* of primary schools.

Secondary School Choice.

As discussed in chapter 5, SEA criteria for placement in a *secondary school* include several factors – examination scores, parental choice, the principal's 20% selection, gender for single gender schools), place of residence for zoning, and multiple births (twins, etc). Zoning by the Ministry of Education based on location of students limits school choice. The participants who went to secondary school were placed in their own or surrounding neighbourhoods, or in Port of Spain in lower tier schools located in low-income neighbourhoods.

However, a few students do get placed in a prestige school, such as Boyo's grandson, based on high scores. Students in affluent neighbourhoods have access to the prestige secondary schools, especially via the Concordat, if students attend the related denominational primary school or belong to the religious denomination of the secondary school. Parents and/or teachers advise students which schools to select for their 4 school choices. Parental choices for secondary school continue to be limited to one school in Aranguez. None of the participants had attended any of the traditional prestige schools – mainly Christian denominational schools. Prem and Renuka who attained post-graduate education attended government co-educational secondary schools in nearby villages. But Neil, whose parents moved, attended a Catholic boys school with a good reputation in Central Trinidad.

[95] Gandhi Memorial Vedic school in Aranguez.

Prem was strong minded and focused from a young age on his educational options. On reflecting on his educational trajectory, he noted:

> "I was always maybe weird. Since I small I told my father flat, 'I don't want to go to any Catholic School, any Anglican School. I want to go to a government school.' The teacher in fact told my father … she insulted him. He got angry, eh. When he told the teacher, the school, the first choice, she was angry with him". (Interview, 2018)

The teacher felt Prem could easily place in a top tier secondary school which, at that time, were Christian denominational, single-sex schools, but he chose the government secondary school. The teacher felt that the parent had made the wrong decision as it would affect his future. However, Prem was placed at his first-choice school, and it did not impact his educational and career trajectory since he became a professor. His story showed that he had *agency* in his educational journey and future, and his decisions were not influenced by what teachers or his parents wanted. It also demonstrated that attending a top-tier school was not a requirement for higher education access.

The findings demonstrate the streaming of children early in the education system where some students (like Prem and Renuka) are considered smart or 'gifted' and encouraged to work for better grades and to select better schools, while other students are streamed into a "B" class in primary school and technical/vocational classes in secondary school. Renuka was not placed in her first choice, but she decided to stay there, "I didn't bother with transfer because I tell myself, *it nearby*. Her concern with proximity to home was the same as her parents when they chose her primary school. Personally, I think it was good for me. They did try to transfer me to SAGHS[96], one of my teachers in form 3, but I was comfortable there" (Interview, 2017). Her parents left the choice up to her to stay or move and she chose the easiest option like her parents, "I think they didn't want the change. It was too much trouble for them. I did not want to

[96] St. Augustine Girls High School, a Presbyterian school.

move so I did not push it. I liked it. It was a very, very good school. In Trinidad, in the smaller schools you get a lot of good attention from the teachers" (Interview, 2017). The findings support previous research which showed that *working class* parents tended to cede school choice to their children" (Ball, Bowe & Gerwitz, 1995).

Devanand did not get a place in his first choice school either; instead, he was placed in the local junior Secondary school. He noted that there were a few outstanding students in his primary school class who he thought were more academically capable than him:

> We had about five students in the class who stood out to some extent. I wouldn't say extremely, being a teacher myself, but they were the better students in the class. They eventually passed for college, St. George's College; all of them went to St. George's College. Strangely enough in our class, those schools were not in people's minds, like QRC and St. Mary's College. People didn't think about those things. St. George's was like embedded in us by the teacher. You have to pass for St. George's College; you know, the *bright children.* (Interview, 2018)

Students did not aspire to the prestige schools, according to Devanand, and *the teachers were part of the reasons that they did not*. Devanand got placed in a Senior Comprehensive school in San Juan after sitting the 14+ examination which did not have an 'Advanced level' class, so he had to look for another school to do his 2 years of A-levels.

Another Senior Comprehensive school in the East used to admit a few students into their A level class, but he did not get into the school as he explained:

> Two things. In that particular sitting, I was the *only child in that school to get a full certificate* that qualify me to do A levels. There was nobody else. The only student at that school. Unfortunately, because of rivalry in football; there was a fight in Inter-Col between [his school] and [the other school] and the Principal, Mr. X at the time, said he wants nobody from [my school] to come to his school. (Interview, 2018)

Institutional agents (teachers and school principal) impacted Devanand's school choices. His parents were not in a position to advise him given their level of education. It is noteworthy that out of the entire 'O' level class, he was the only one to get at least 5 'O' levels, the prerequisite to do A levels (pre-university to get into UWI), which is an indictment of the *school administration* and *teaching quality*. In addition, the school principal that refused to take him *demonstrates the power school principals wield* and the *lack of accountability* for his prejudice to students from other schools. None of Devanand's younger siblings (sisters) went on to higher education but attended 'commercial school' for TVET training - shorthand, typing and other clerical subjects.

Jameela's mother went to her primary school to select secondary schools, but her *teacher intervened in selection*, "And the teacher tell meh, he say is either Mucorapo or dere [Aranguez Junior Secondary]" (Interview, 2017), making the decision for the parent and child. Both were Junior secondary schools which is how the teacher saw the future for the child. Neil was assisted by his *mother* and his *primary school teacher* to select secondary schools:

> It was a tough decision. It was more about what you heard people talking about - family, teachers, cousins, what you would read about in the newspaper. Everybody and nobody was saying the same thing – X is the best school; Y is the best school. Which one you want to go to? It was a tough decision at the time. (Interview, 2017)

He passed for his first-choice school. *Geography* was the key consideration for Valmiki's mother who was concerned with *distance from home*:

> When time to choose schools, my mom tried to choose schools close to home. So, she choose San Juan Secondary, St. George's, San Juan Comprehensive, Mount Hope Secondary, and Aranguez Secondary. He [Valmiki's father] wasn't so much into the education with us. Mom made the decision, together with my brother, which schools to select. (Interview, 2019)

Suresh decided to select secondary schools based on what his *peers* were doing instead of consulting his parents or siblings, “The decision to go there was *with friends*. Everybody wanted to go there at that time. It was a good school. Most of the people from my class that came out from Standard five who went secondary school went to [X] Senior Comprehensive” (Interview, 2017). It did not occur to him to consult anyone, even other relatives about his educational choices.

There is an illusion that students and parents have choice when only a select few, who get very high-test scores, get placed in their first-choice secondary school. When Valmiki was asked if he was disappointed with his CEE placement, he noted, “Yes, I was. At the time, there was *zoning* of the children, so they put the closest school possible”. Valmiki pointed out the impact of zoning where he felt that students are simply placed in a school, “because if you look at some of the grades, the grades high but they not passing for the schools that they should be in” (Interview, 2019). Valmiki, Devanand, Jameela, Shanti, and many of their relatives ended up being placed in the local secondary school, which suggests that the *zoning criteria* to place students in secondary school was the main selection criteria by the Ministry.

Space and time are considerations in school choice. Parents want children closer to home where they can walk to school given transportation challenges along with concern for their safety. This is similar to UK research, where lower class parents preferred to select schools closer to home, “Family life, and things such as school choice, are played out within and over and against, a space and time budget” (Ball, 2006, p. 163). Access to schools and HEIs is impacted by *student mobility* and *locality*.

The idea of zoning to keep students in schools close to home, seems rational when it comes to transportation and mobility, as students can easily travel to and from school. Ball, Bowe & Gerwitz (1995) note that access to a car or availability of public transit can affect school choice. Investments in public transit as a social welfare policy can improve access to schools for low-income people who do not have access to private vehicles. The transportation system is

poor across the island, despite the significant government revenues from the Energy sector generated since the 1960s, which could have funded a good public and school transportation network across the island.

The importance of a good public transportation system for low-income people is demonstrated in the case of Devanand, who was unable to find a Form 6 space in a school in the North and ended up going to a school in the South of the island. The long commutes by bus and private route taxis each day led to fatigue, stress, and physical illness, which impacted his school performance. The travel costs created *financial challenges* for his mother, and he was always *hungry and tired*. He was so burnt out after completing secondary school that he had to take time off before starting university.

Children choose between walking to school, taking what public transit existed, using publicly funded drivers[97], and more recently, parents opt to hire private drivers. Private transportation of students has become a business, attributable to the poor public transportation system and the rising crime in the society.

In summary, selection criteria for schools (primary and secondary) in Aranguez involved several considerations: agency of children to make school selection; the school's proximity to home and transportation concerns; parental fear and safety concerns; custom and tradition (family members attended); school reputation for success in high stakes testing; teacher control and intervention; religion (denominational versus government); peer influence; and racial composition. The stories also demonstrate the extent to which choice could be exercised within Ministry policy which supports social reproduction of inequality.

Classroom Tracking

Classroom tracking labels and streams students within their school. Classroom tracking seems to have occurred in the transition from Junior secondary school to a 5-year secondary

[97] In 2019 during field work, the Maxi-Taxi Association of School Transport Concessionaires had failed to pay school maxi-taxi (minibus) drivers $15 million owed to them.

level based on Jameela's experience, "I used to hardly go to school. Now and den, now and den. I didn't like [the school] because I used to feel that the class that I was in was like wayward. The class on the whole had watless [worthless] children" (Interview, 2017). What she meant was that the students in her class were disengaged and uninterested in school and the habitus of the school did not motivate her.

She was placed into a secondary school after sitting the 14+ examination. All the students in her class came from Junior Secondary Schools. This meant that the Junior Secondary students were streamed and grouped together and not integrated into the classes with the other students. Consequently, they did not have diverse influences or experiences with students from other backgrounds and neighbourhoods. This is streaming and social sorting by social class through the 'school class'. This *segregation* limited their social networks and quality of student experience, "We were just in the same class, but yeah with other students from other schools. But not with students from that school. The only class we had mixed, was English" (Interview, 2017).

For Junior secondary school transfers, in addition to social segregation, the curriculum offered to them was too limited:

> I feel like we class, we *never had the option to choose*. We just do Maths, English, Agri. Science, and Dressmaking. We didn't get to choose subjects. Remember, we now went in so we just had to do a few. Whereas when you going to the school from day one, you could choose French, …". (Interview, 2017)

Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) wrote of this separation of working class and higher-class students in the French school system where the working class were streamed in specific subject areas and specific programmes, as well as specific HEIs. This is an example of *academic tracking*, a policy that judges the intellectual ability of students based on social criteria (low SES, place of residence or race) and creates inequitable access to education. Students who entered this secondary school from Junior secondary schools were offered a lower quality education

which impacted their ability to move on to higher education. This social sorting demonstrates social reproduction through the education system.

Access and Quality of Education

As discussed in the literature, social capital of the school or HEI can also be measured through the 'organisational habitus' which each school possesses (Ra, 2011) and the quality of education provided. Schools in a stratified or tiered system will vary in organisational habitus and quality of education that they offer. Participants raised issues of the quality of education: teaching quality, teacher and administrative staff support and guidance, quality of school facilities, school safety, and overall student experience. Some of these issues relate to the situated context of the school, "those aspects of context that are historically and locationally linked to the school, such as a school's setting, its history and intake" (Ball, et al., 2012, p. 21).

School Habitus.

Tranter (2003) notes that institutional habitus is acquired over years from a school's particular *history, location, neighbourhood resources and issues, student mix and staffing*. The organisational habitus of a school may reflect the community in which it is located, impacting school culture, ethos, and student experience. The interaction of the ***student's habitus*** with the *institutional habitus* operate to determine whether students enter higher education.

The findings demonstrate how school habitus relates to the tier of school and the neighbourhood where the school is located. While geographic location offers opportunities and advantages to a school with students from middle-income and high-income areas entering a school (Ball et al., 2012), this also works against students from low-income areas. The zoning policy places students at secondary schools in their *local communities* serving to ghettoise students with low SES. Students do not get the same quality of education as the "prestige" or high performing schools and are set up for failure early in the education system.

Jameela came from the poor community of Aranguez and was placed in a school that was in an even poorer neighbourhood in a high crime area of Port of Spain which negatively affected her student experience and education:

> First to begin, the school is in a *bad area* because some time, you will hear *gunshot.* Fighting in front the school. *Vagrants* around the school. Now if you go to the back of the school; we used to go there for our subject … and you watch through the windows, you will see the vagrants on the road because … We were on Nelson Street. That was the 90s. You will see those vagrants in the back there, homeless people. You'll see them urinating and doing number 2, naked. You'll see dem making love. In front of the school, sometimes you hear gunshot because 'The Plannings' right there. I didn't like that school, to be honest. (Interview, 2017)

The neighbourhood had many undocumented residents and also "…plenty gang members living there. Because dey living in a little, little room; however, they have the best car. The best clothes. Is either coke or weed or something and all that …" (Interview, 2017). The external environment impacted the school habitus or culture which was not conducive to learning. She was not able to transfer out of the school and her educational results was poor affecting her trajectory towards higher education.

Access to Quality Teaching and Academic Advising.

Part of the school's social capital is the quality of teaching, information, and guidance from institutional agents within the school network to help students succeed and transition to higher education – teachers, school principals, and support staff. Stanton-Salazar (2011) note that the institutional agent can affect access to highly valued resources (e.g., high school course requirements for admission to 4-year universities). For first-generation students, institutional agents become more important in providing information and advice that facilitate higher education access. Teachers and staff have a significant impact on student experience and

educational outcomes in their attitudes, their pedagogical approach, the subjects they teach, commitment to students, and equitable treatment.

Ball et al. (2012) refer to 'professional cultures' in schools such as values, teacher commitments and experience which aligns with 'institutional habitus' and social capital in the school. Teacher commitment, attitudes and teaching ability were important in student experiences and educational outcomes. A few of the participants spoke about teachers having a significant or positive impact in their lives - Devanand, Renuka and Neil. Teachers made choices on who to focus their attention - the high-performing students or the average or low performing students.

Renuka and Neil received special attention from teachers because of their good performance at both primary and secondary school. Neil praised his primary school teacher, in particular:

> X is one of the most dedicated teachers that you will meet across any platform. He invest a lot of time and effort in all of his students. He used to have lessons every evening. The lessons were $10 a week or something. But depending on the financial situation of the family, you get free lessons. We pay the $10 but a lot of other kids didn't pay. For him, lessons were mandatory. If you are in his class, you have to take lessons. (Interview, 2017)

The teacher's dedication resulted in "… the best results that the primary school had ever gotten. A lot of 7 year passes and a lot of five-year passes. Before students would get placed in X Government Secondary and X Junior Secondary" (Interview, 2017). Renuka thought her teachers in primary school were good:

> They were quite committed to myself, personally. I think the top ten students in the class, they were very committed to them. We got a lot of special attention to get things done properly. Mr. X's daughter [a teacher] was in our Common Entrance class, so we had lessons and everything. It was extra focus. They become alert. (Interview, 2017)

Her teachers' advising impacted her higher education and career choices - suggesting she opt for the *Science stream* - which led to her choosing a degree in chemical engineering that led to a career in the energy sector:

> They tended to push them towards science. So, they sort of helped me with that even though I liked languages more. But I did Spanish because that was on offer at the school. Again, I wanted to be a linguist, a translator focusing on Spanish and literature or something, but my teachers told me that I should do Science. So, for A-levels, I did Science. They advised me to go St. George's actually, one of my teachers. Those teachers were good. They spent a lot of time with me, *coaching me*. They said the job opportunities would be bigger. (Interview, 2017)

Devanand had fond memories of his primary school life and remembered all the teachers, but one teacher had a soft spot for him, "She used to *pay attention to me a lot*. And I remember, my handwriting was very bad and she used to help me out" (Interview, 2018). Devanand's teacher was astute enough to realise he needed extra attention to succeed. He, however, had a poor student experience in the senior comprehensive school that he attended. Given the knowledge gaps at home, he needed more support and guidance at secondary school, "So we don't know much, going with the flow of things, as you see it; making your own decisions" (Interview, 2018).

The reason he decided to select business subjects was not because of advice from teachers or staff but a fellow student who also happened to be a neighbour:

> Our neighbour across the road, she chose the Business cluster in school, and she always talking with us. She used to travel [take transit] with us, and I saw them doing work and we there doing nothing, so we just said okay. We want to go into that cluster.
>
> So that's how we ended up in the Business cluster - *coincidence.* (Interview, 2018)

Given the lack of information at home and from teachers, he *randomly* selected his subjects based on his neighbour's choice. This demonstrates how schools and teachers fail students

whose family and community networks do not have the knowledge and information to help them in their decision-making.

Valmiki attributed his failures in 'O' levels to *poor teaching* at his school. Jameela had two different experiences at her schools. Jameela liked her experience at the local Junior Secondary School, "Well in dem days the school was good. It not like now, where it have *fighting* and ting. It was good" (Interview, 2017). Her secondary school experiences with teachers were mainly negative, "The only teacher who was nice was my dressmaking teacher. She was the nicest teacher" (Interview, 2017). Jameela mentioned that they could not understand one teacher, as he was from another country: "Children used to mock him, and he used to get vex and *he never teach us and he put the whole class for 'basic'.* So, he made me write basic" (Interview, 2017).

Students generally write the secondary school 'O' level examination at the 'general' certification, but *teachers have the power* to determine whether students write 'basic' examinations. Students assigned to do 'basic' are viewed by teachers as less competent. Employers do not consider this 'basic' level of certification when recruiting nor is it useful for entry to 'A' levels. In this case, by forcing all the students in the class to sit the 'basic' examination, he had a profound negative impact on their educational options in the future. There was no accountability for the teacher's behaviour and the students' quality of education suffered from his language competency, teaching ability, and indiscriminate use of his *power over students*. The issue that could be also raised also is why this *two-tier level of examination* (general and basic) exists in the first place, which supports labelling and streaming of students.

Teacher training is also an important aspect of the quality of education in the stratified education system. The experience of Prem, Devanand, and Shanti's brother, as educators provide some insight into teacher training and attitudes which is directly related to student success in marginalised communities. Teachers have different certification and educational

requirements depending on the level of schooling – primary, secondary and HE. Teacher training or lack thereof, may be a factor in the quality of education.

According to Devanand, primary school teachers only required five 'O' level subjects to enrol in teacher's training colleges, which are now under the umbrella of UTT[98]and secondary school teachers do not require a teaching degree, just a subject matter degree. Teachers can now upgrade with a Bachelor of Education at Teachers Training College. Shanti's brother was a primary school teacher, but he also did his own upgrading at UTT, "plus he did this psychiatrist course"[99], Shanti noted. Devanand had a degree from UWI, and he applied for a teaching position at the Ministry. At his interview at the Teaching Service Commission, he was questioned on the content of the syllabus for the subject area, classroom management, record-keeping, and other matters. Since secondary school teachers do not require formal teacher training outside of their subject matter degree, it is unclear how they expected a university graduate to know how to answer some of these questions.

To become a Dean or to move up to Vice-principal, Devanand completed the Diploma in Educational Administration at UWI. He raised the issue of teacher education and recruitment in a paper that he wrote for his Diploma, based on his experiences as an educator. Outdated enrolment policies forced him to withdraw from his master's programme in order to complete the diploma, as the University policy did not allow him to be registered in two separate programmes. This policy impeded upgrading his credentials and is not in line with practice in other jurisdictions like Canada, where a student can enrol in a degree programme and diploma programme concurrently. He never ended up completing his master's programme.

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[98] See Becoming a Primary School Teacher in Trinidad & Tobago, Part 1: The Curriculum in the Teachers' Colleges. See http://www.nzdl.org/gsdlmod?e=d-00000-00---off-0muster--00-0----0-10-0---0---0direct-10---4-------0-1l--11-en-50---20-help---00-0-1-00-0--4----0-0-11-10-0utfZz-8-10&cl=CL2.1&d=HASH9311d0ab8dc2a264ab2fd8.5.3&gc=1

[99] Special education

Devanand is an educator at the same school that Jameela attended in the 1990s. He is committed to his job and student success despite the challenges. Shanti's brother taught in The Beetham for a year, "where the bad people is" (Interview, 2018). It is one of the poorest, communities in Port of Spain and Trinidad, located across from the city's solid waste management site and is a high crime area. He asked for a transfer to another school, even though the children were fond of him, as *he did not feel safe in the area and his mother was worried for his life*. This staff turnover contributes to a poor quality of education when good teachers leave the low tier schools. Children who live in the most marginalised areas need teachers who are well trained and committed to them, but operating in high crime areas can be stressful and lead to burnout.

As a student, Prem had no need for help from teachers but as a professor, he was interested in students' developing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The findings showed that the training, attitudes, and level of commitment of teachers impacted the quality of education that they provided to students.

Career Guidance and Counselling.

While teachers play a key role in advising parents and students, guidance officers are also employed to help students with careers and psycho-social issues. None of the participants mentioned that career guidance counsellors had assisted them at secondary school. Renuka, Devanand, and Suresh mentioned that they did not have any formal career guidance at school. A Guidance and Counselling Unit was set up in the Ministry of Education in 1980. Counsellors intermittently visit secondary schools to provide career guidance to students. These services have evolved and in 2004, the Student Support Services Unit was formed "to meet the growing *psychosocial demands and challenges* that were emerging in the classroom" (Rostant, 2015). The unit became the Student Support Services Division (SSSD) in the Ministry of Education and counsellors have a broad range of duties to refer or provide services to students on personal/social issues such a mental health issues, drug and alcohol use, suicidal thoughts,

acts of violence including gang violence, as well as career and academic guidance (Rostant, 2015).

Renuka noted that her own decision to pursue engineering studies was not well informed:

> Engineering is all about mathematics which I didn't know. I did well in most of it except the drawings course. I failed that - AutoCAD drawing but it's interesting because girls have less ability to see things in 3D than men and that's a big part of engineering, which I didn't realise, and I failed that. So, I have proven that that is true" (Interview, 2017).

Her ignorance about the mathematics component of engineering studies was positive as it would have discouraged her from enrolling in the programme. Her story may speak to an ongoing need to address attitudes, fears and ignorance of female students in career counselling, in order to direct more of them towards STEM-related programmes, which lead to occupations that are better compensated and in high demand in the 21st century.

Renuka's own experience of guidance counsellors was that they never showed up to help the students and she had some advice for policy-makers, "I think an improvement in the Trinidad education system could be career guidance at a younger age. Especially if you don't have any guidance at home or you confused. So, it's easier to talk to an independent person". Renuka is speaking to the lack of social capital in the family, voicing the plight of FGS students who do not have help at home, at school, or at the HEI that they are attending to provide advice and support, which impacts retention for many students as they struggle on their own to navigate the education system.

Her words are also an indictment of the school career guidance and counselling system. She felt her success in the education system and achieving graduate education was "random", which suggests that there could be many more students who could achieve higher education if the system was more supportive for students from her background. Information seemed to come from the newspaper to find out about schooling and job opportunities. With the arrival of

the Internet and widespread cell phone use, students may have more general access to information, but it is different from advising and counselling from institutional agents.

As Devanand is now an educator, he spoke to the role of guidance officers who are supposed to provide counselling to students about career options, “If we have problems with them [guidance officers], the principals will call in their supervisor from that Unit and they will deal with issues relating to them” (Interview, 2018). The Ministry continues to struggle with the issue of adequate guidance and counselling at school, as there are not enough support staff for schools and funding is an issue. However, given the rise in *community and school violence*, counsellors are also more needed than ever, as these issues disproportionately impact low-income communities.

When information and guidance is not available at home, institutional agents in schools and HEIs play a more important role. The results compare with research in England (Dunne et al., 2014), where teachers in the higher tier (Oxbridge) schools have higher expectations and provide better counselling and guidance for students. From the participants’ stories, teachers label students and put limits on some students and encourage other students towards academic excellence. The findings suggest that support of students through advice and guidance on courses and higher education is not only based on the tier of school that one attends but is also related to differential and inequitable treatment by teachers that can have positive or negative impacts on the student’s success in education.

Peer-To-Peer Information and Guidance.

Fellow students – peers – can also provide information and guidance on further education or careers. Neil was friends with a group of classmates from secondary school who all ended up excelling and going on to university, locally or abroad. He formed lasting friendships with like-minded people who were focused on academic success unlike his own relatives back in Aranguez, “My school was really good. That is where I formed the core of my friendships. My five best friends are fellas that I went to school with” (Interview, 2017). He developed a social

network in school that encouraged him to access higher education and better job opportunities. Neil's educational and career trajectory, as a PhD graduate and research scientist, was based on his school social capital from primary to secondary school to university. His story demonstrates the value of social networks developed in the education system. Renuka also relied on her peers at school and university for advice.

School Safety and School Violence.

A safe environment is essential for student learning. However, violence in the society has made its way into the classrooms of some schools in the lower tier. Participants related stories of school violence that impacted them directly or which they observed.

There were incidents of attempted bullying of participants but in each case, they did not allow themselves to be bullied. Boyo, who attended primary school in the 1960s, said that school fights were not serious. Bullying was not an issue for him, as he saw his father as an example of bravery that he emulated, "Nobody couldn't do that. I ah terror, you know. Me eh taking nobody lash. You know where I come out from? He [father] was brave. He was serious. Very serious. He eh have no smile, you know" (Interview, 2017). Boyo suggested that his family members were not afraid of defending themselves against violence – a theme in the stories of others. Manny noted: "You must get into a little fight and ting in school. You must get that. If somebody tell you they didn't fight in school well is something wrong. Sometimes you stand up in the line then somebody push you. That is how you fight" (Interview, 2018). The school fighting that Boyo and Manny described could not to be compared with the current violence in schools.

Some of the participants were involved in serious fights in school. These were participants who did not go on to higher education, and who also attended low-tier schools. Rohan witnessed bullying in his secondary school, "People picking on children. People always want to pick on the quiet ones. Because they don't stand up for themselves. You will find that it is something they will always do" (Interview, 2018). Similar to Boyo, he got into a fight on his first day at school in Form one in the local Junior secondary school:

> Some fella thought that he could intimidate me. He was from a different ethnic group. African ethnic. And he came across and he told me to get up from my seat. In the hall outside. I told him, 'no', so he pushed me, and I push him back. *I learned never to let anybody take advantage of you*. Fight start. We get pulled into the Dean's office. We get some blows. We got scolded. He said we shouldn't be fighting on the first day at school. (Interview, 2018)

He did not tell his parents about the incident, "Tell them you got into a fight the first day of school? You will get more licks when you reach home. 'Okay you went to school to fight, alright, come here' "(Interview, 2018).

This fear of parents was similar to Boyo who afraid to tell his father about fighting in school, since he would get a beating for misbehaving. Jason was involved in fights at his school. He was raised with *conflicting advice from the men and women* in his life with regard to the use of violence, "The people that I used to be around teach me to never let anybody take advantage of you…. And that is good. In my opinion, that is good" (Interview, 2019). His father and uncles were the influences on him that taught him to stand up for himself. On the other hand, his mother gave him different advice:

> My mom always used to say *walk away from fights*…. Yes, she said the opposite. She used to always say if anything happen, if anybody hit you, just walk away. My dad never let anybody take advantage of him, because you know if somebody hit you; next thing you walk away and do nutten [nothing]; dey [they] know dey could do it again and get away. So that is what I say in my mind. So, when that happen, I was like, you not getting away. (Interview, 2019)

Jason noted that his motivation and learning were impacted by indiscipline, "because while teachers trying to teach, you will see students fighting in class; not paying attention; talking" (Interview, 2019). The students came from low-income and/or high crime areas and he

mentioned that he had friends from Morvant, Laventille, El Socorro, Kelly, and Bamboo (Interview, 2019).

Fighting was not limited to boys. Jameela fought with a girl at her secondary school.[100] The girl said that a chair on which Jameela was sitting belonged to her, but Jameela refused to give up the chair, so they started fighting. A male student came to the defence of his fellow Aranguezian, “I think he hit she some cuff for me too because he know meh” (Interview, 2017). As a result, the girl developed respect for her for standing up for herself and they became friends. The ability of both boys and girls to stand up for themselves in the face of bullying in the schools shows a feistiness and bravery that may be grounded in the violent history of Aranguez and its marginalisation, where parents prepared their children to defend themselves against others in the outside world.

In Jameela’s secondary school, there was also illegal activity and police made regular appearances, “Plenty time police come in and they find de children dig a hole in the ceiling and they hide weed. When we have nothing to do, they always playing cards” (Interview, 2017). Twice the police came and caught the students gambling for money. The school had security guards posted every day given its reputation and location, “It had a security by the school. They always searching your bag when you come in the school. They always finding children with weed. Children with some form of weapon in their bag. I never hear about any guns” (Interview, 2017).

There was also a male teacher who behaved inappropriately with the female students and should have been removed as a teacher:

> He was a kind of teacher - he like young girls. I remember dat good. He was tracking [interested in] my Indian friend. He was fresh. He used to watch you in this way and

[100] In 1975, with the introduction of the comprehensive system to Trinidad and Tobago, the school had its first intake of Junior Secondary School students. Form six was introduced in September 1983.

> always call you up. And he always have he special children. Everybody used to watch how he was moving. (Interview, 2017)

None of the students reported him. Based on media reports, teacher discipline[101] is a serious issue that the ministry is struggling to address in low-income communities, including abuse and violence against students, and sexual misconduct with students.

School violence does not impact all schools in the same way and is another equity indicator in the school system. Historically, the 3-year Junior Secondary and two-year Senior comprehensive schools (now converted to 5 year and 7-year secondary schools), are the ones that have had school violence issues, which are the schools where students are of low SES. This is reflected in the school experiences of Jameela, Rohan, and Jason.

According to Devanand, who is a dean in a secondary school, schools are classified by level of risk: high risk, moderate risk, or low risk. The Ministry uses different criteria such as the amount of infractions reported from the particular school, the catchment area, among other criteria, to determine risk level. Devanand noted that schools had changed in terms of incidents which impacted their risk classification:

> Just last week they [X Government secondary school] had an invasion in the school. And the zoning causing it too. You know [X] was not a bad school. Zoning was implemented more or less under the PNM. They said they wanted to zone children so that they could be close as possible to the schools in the area. There was zoning to a limited extent. But now it is more prevalent than before. Zoning started within the last two years. And also, with the social problems in the community like the gang activities. A child from a certain part of Morvant cannot come to Malik. Someone from Malik cannot go to Success-Laventille - those sorts of things because of the gangs. Again, the flipside

[101] It is difficult to discipline or fire teachers, much less principals, as they are unionised, and the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association (TTUTA) is very engaged as a policy actor for its members interests.

> of that is that a child who is doing good, you confine them to their area and then they can't go to the good school. (Interview, 2018)

In the Aranguez context, the primary schools (the majority of which are denominational schools) are not impacted by violence. However, the secondary schools where Aranguez students are most likely to be placed, tend to be schools that have issues with violence.

Government policy changes have attempted to address the rising school violence. The Ministry has a *School Code of Conduct* which was revised in 2018, and outlines appropriate behaviour for staff and students and considers the evolution of technology and the range of behaviours that need guidelines. Devanand noted that school safety officers were introduced into the education system and the School Safety Officers Division (SSD) is a unit in the Ministry of Education which is responsible for school safety. With escalating violence in the society, the Minister of Education in 2018 emphasised that guns would not be provided to school security to address violence among students and outside elements who may enter schools.

A violence prevention programme pilot was implemented by foreign consultants in 2010 in 25 schools and the government secondary school in Aranguez was selected as one of the schools to be in the pilot. The school, however, did not provide any data to the consultants to assess results of the pilot to address violence prevention.

The participants' stories suggest that school violence creates a poor school habitus and negative social capital for students which impact their performance. This is part of the streaming process where low-income students attend low tier schools that have issues of violence that hinders success and impacts higher education aspirations and access. Documentary research suggests that violence and student indiscipline are becoming worse, requiring police interventions, and reflects the escalating violence in society. Violence in society is a much broader policy challenge for government. Chapter 7 speaks more to the issue of violence as a colonial legacy.

Impact of Material Contexts.

Part of the situated context that impacts access to a quality education is the material context of the school which includes adequate staffing, budget, buildings, technology, and other infrastructure (Ball et al., 2012). A lack of primary schools in the 1960s forced students in Aranguez to attend schools located outside of their village. The school expansion programme in the late 1970s and 1980s aimed to provide access to more secondary schools in low-income areas.

As the government expanded primary and secondary schools across the country, many children were the first cohort in the schools. Most of the children of Aranguez were in the first cohort in the local and neighbouring *Junior secondary schools*, after which they were automatically placed in *Senior Comprehensive schools,* where they were also first cohorts in new schools. Both were on the lowest tier in the ranking of schools. These first cohorts faced challenges with attending incomplete schools or having to share school facilities until their schools were completed. Different participants mentioned *poor school facilities* during the different decades when they attended school which impacted their student experience and learning.

In the context of expansion of the education system, *teacher shortages* and attending school in *incomplete facilities* contributed to a poor student experience. In the 1980s, Manny was placed in a senior comprehensive school and noted:

> At the starting, it wasn't good. Because it had *construction there*. It had dust. *It hardly had teachers but then it started to fill in. Teachers wasn't punctual right through*. They had to get teachers to fit in other subjects. *Dey eh really teaching*. If a teacher had spare time and nobody to teach dey come and stay dere and talk. Just pass the time for 45 minutes. Dat was frustrating. Is only noise yuh hearing in de school – va va va. I didn't tell meh parents but eventually dey come and get the teachers. And then they come and

start cleaning up de school because remember, it had construction going on all about with dust. They come and finish up de work and it start to run as usual. (Interview, 2018)

His teachers were late for classes, did not teach, or were unqualified to teach the subject. Manny spent one term attending another school before his school was completed. The teachers who were teaching him at the other school moved over to the new shool.

Devanand also faced similar challenges, “We didn't have a teacher. We didn’t have a classroom and we used to be roaming the school” (Interview, 2018). Even in the 1990s, lack of school furniture was an issue, as Jameela noted, “Sometimes you go to a class and it don’t have chairs and tables for us” (Interview, 2017).

However, when Valmiki started secondary school in 2005, he was the first cohort in a new building for the local Secondary school (the former Junior Secondary school built in the 1970s). The Government under Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar was responsible for another school expansion programme, and Aranguez benefited from facility renewal when the secondary school was re-built. With the decline in Government revenues, school and HEI expansion and facility renewal will be an ongoing challenge. The school experience and quality of education of the first cohorts were compromised and may have impacted their educational outcomes, as none of these students, except for Devanand, accessed higher education.

Private Schools and Quality of Education.

For students who are unsuccessful in the government tests or did not sit them at all, and want to continue their secondary school education, they could attend a private secondary school, if their parents can afford to pay the fees. Nadira had attended a private primary school, as did Manny’s brother when he failed his CEE. It is also an option for those who do not want to attend a low tier public secondary school. Nadira’s daughter was placed in the local Junior Secondary school after sitting the CEE, but Nadira’s parents intervened and asked for their granddaughter to go to a private school, and they paid the fees. However, unlike in other

countries, most private schools do not carry the same's elite status, and is seen as a place for "duncy" children who could not get a place in the government school.

Nadira felt that this Catholic private school offered her daughter a better quality of education and a more disciplined school environment:

> They say I have to pay for the school. I say, "I don't mind". They give you books. You didn't have to buy books. You have to pay for the learning, the tuition, the books, and everything. You only had to buy copy books. Sister Teresa was the principal. Not white people. But mixy.[102] It was very strict. You have to be in uniform. You can't be seen in the road talking to no boy. No, no, no. As you leave school, you have to go home where you living. (Interview, 2017)

The private school school allows completion of 'O' levels. Another option is to attend private vocational school. Jameela completed a Nursing Aide course (personal support worker) at a private vocational school which offered her an unpaid internship at their private eldercare facility, which was really a ruse to get free labour under the guise of work-integrated learning. She quit the course after having to deal with an HIV/AIDS patient.

In the tiered system of education, private primary and secondary schools, and private vocational schools are on the lowest rung of educational institutions and are not well regulated. This is another component of the stratified system that streams low SES students who struggle in the public school system. This area requires further research as to quality of K-12, TVET and post-secondary education, and to what extent students from low-income families are vulnerable to predatory practices leading to poor educational outcomes, similar to the US[103] and Canada.[104]

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[102] 'Mixy' - mixed race.

[103] Fact Sheet: Protecting Students from Abusive Career Colleges. See. https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-protecting-students-abusive-career-colleges

[104] See Ombudsman Report 2009, Too Cool for School, https://www.ombudsman.on.ca/Files/sitemedia/Documents/Investigations/SORT%20Investigations/bestechfinal_en.pdf

Breaking Biche and Disengagement

Absenteeism from school could be related to home factors or school factors. Factors such as caregiving, household duties, farm work or other parental assistance, or illness may lead to school absences. However, the phenomenon of “breaking biche” is when a student misses attendance at school without legitimate excuse unbeknownst to parents.

Jameela and Rohan were guilty of “breaking biche”. Rohan missed school a few times with his school friends but he was careful to not let his parents find out as he knew he would be in trouble. They mostly went to play video games in the arcade at the mall and were not involved in nefarious activities. When she was attending secondary school, Jameela would sometimes miss half the term – staying home from school by pretending to be sick; telling her parents that they had nothing to do in school; or run away from school with friends. Her parents would not question her when she stayed home from school.

Breaking biche is an indicator of disengagement from school caused by boredom with the curriculum, the school habitus, and the quality of education. Jameela disliked her secondary school - the teachers and quality of teaching, and the subjects that she was forced to do, and the school habitus - which were contributory factors in her disengagement and de-motivation leading to her absenteeism. In addition, the lack of interest of her parents in her educational success, given their preoccupation with their own difficult jobs (farmer, cleaner), facilitated her staying home from school.

The fact that their (Jameela and Rohan) parents were unaware of their absence from school or did not ask questions suggests that there was not a *system for regular communication* between the schools and parents around student school absence and even parental dis-engagement, so that students do not go off track, drop out or fail their examinations. Monitoring student absence properly should be a routine policy to inform interventions to address barriers and concerns that students may face.

Beyond Access

Retention and Success in Higher Education

While the study focused on access (how participants did or did not get to higher education), issues of retention, graduation and employment did arise. At university, Renuka had adjustment problems, “Well, it was stressful. I found year one stressful. I found it quite different from school, where you have to *self-manage* yourself. I thought it was a big jump and this is where the career counsellors [at school] could help people with that jump. Because it’s more self-managed” (Interview, 2017). Renuka depended on peer networks during her university studies, working with a group of her engineering classmates to study and to find employment after completing her degree:

> I had a peer group of mostly girls and 2 boys. About 7 people. But this is a group where we worked together to send out our applications. We got together at the campus because we all didn't know what to do. It was a common problem we had. And again, *we didn't have any guidance* on this. We were in the same boat. We were just sorting it out. We were left, so we sort of figured it out on our own and hoped for the best which is bad. (Interview, 2017)

Their experiences suggest that UWI still does not provide proper student support services for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Neil also had a group of students from whom he gained support and information at the UWI. These peer networks can provide the support that family or institutions may not be providing to first generation students. Their support was informal, but HEIs can leverage this capacity by creating formal peer support networks so students from different backgrounds can share information and learn collaboration and communication skills. In addition, HEIs can provide better student advising, career advice, and student support services to those who need these services.

Credentialism and Alternative Pathways to Learning

According to human capital development theory, higher education credentials are supposed to provide an economic return to the individual through access to better jobs and higher earnings. From a Bordieuan lens, credentials are also a signifier of cultural capital and class. However, the issue of *credentialism* arose in the study where there was limited opportunity to find work related to level or field of education.

Jason commented on the issue of unemployment and underemployment of graduates, "... these days in Trinidad, the education system right now, not too good. Because it have a lot of people who went to get their degrees – Master's, Bachelor's, whatever, and they cannot get a job right now. They can't do nothing with all their papers and ting now" (Interview, 2019). The people that he knew with higher education were having problems finding work which led him to believe that the population was over educated. His aunt had a degree and could not find a job related to her qualifications. Even Suresh who is a certified journeyman applied for jobs for his skill level but was unsuccessful, which he put down to "the oil crisis had happened. People were getting laid off and stuff" (Interview, 2017). Suresh is still working beneath his capacity as a fully qualified journeyman certified by a German training institute, whereas in developed countries like Canada, his skills are in demand.

The reality is that although the higher education attainment level (especially university) is still low, the issue of the capacity of the economy to absorb graduates raises questions around the rationale for HE investments. Trinidad has had a low unemployment rate since 2007, with unemployment at 3.4% in 2019 and 4.5% in 2020 (World Bank). Jason's comments suggest that while higher education credentials are important in the labour market, it does not guarantee you a decent job. The reason that these graduates from Aranguez could not find jobs or jobs related to their qualifications could be two-fold – a lack of jobs or a lack of *social capita*l – the right connections to find a job. People from marginalised/low-income communities with higher

education may not have the same labour market access that people from the dominant class or group may have.

Whether the context is a developed or developing country, first-generation students, and students from marginalised communities need support from their HEIs to access employment opportunities after graduation. This has not been a priority of the HEIs or the government. This lack of access to good jobs in the local labour market in Trinidad is a push factor for people to migrate to North America and Europe. In fact, Renuka and Neil migrated, and Devanand had thought of it.

The Caribbean historically suffers brain drain to developed countries in North America and Europe. There is a need to understand outmigration of graduates in Trinidad & Tobago and the region to better assess the success of higher education policy and the returns for individuals (those who stay and those who leave), and the social and economic returns for government investments in higher education. While Trinidad & Tobago has expanded the primary and secondary school system to universal access, other developing countries still struggle with achieving universal primary and secondary school access, so expenditures on expanding HE would divert resources for basic education.

The case study demonstrates the feasibility of pathways outside of formal education for training and employment. Boyo received training from a community member as a boy and he trained his two sons. Boyo and his sons exercised their agency to take the path of informal apprenticeship, self-employment and independence. Individuals enact education policy where opting out of the formal higher education system is a feasible option but these avenues remain unexplored in HE discourses.

The global discourse of HEI representatives, governments, and UN agencies such as UNESCO of promoting universal higher education, especially degree credentials, is challenged by the research findings. The education sector has to be inclusive of formal and informal learning systems. This reframing will uncover the actual level of skills and education existing in

a country and show a higher level of competencies in the population, and inform investments of Government and other policy actors.

Alternative pathways such as informal or formal apprenticeships in skilled trades, or on-the-job training with employers are options for people seeking post-secondary training as ways to improve earnings and improve their standard of living. The higher education massification movement especially for degree credentials, in particular, ignores the needs of the capitalist machinery for all types of labour – semiskilled, unskilled, skilled, and highly skilled university educated people. It also ignores the agency of individuals who consciously opt to pursue alternative ways of learning and earning that may not require formal higher education.

Cultural Capital

This section uses cultural capital as an analytical tool in understanding higher education access in Aranguez. Bourdieu's cultural capital refers to knowledge of the dominant culture that allows participation in it. It is a relational concept as it must be understood in conjunction with social capital and economic capital. Possession of cultural capital of the dominant class provides access to social networks that have economic capital. The concept of cultural capital is extended to the role of religion and gender in relation to education access.

Religion as Cultural Capital

There is research on the *role of religion* as a mechanism to build community *social capital* through the social networks in churches (Hussain et al, 2010; Coleman, 1998) and relation to educational outcomes. Bourdieu's view of cultural capital as a contributor to unequal educational outcomes based on social class (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu, 1973) holds in the Aranguez context, as the community lacked cultural capital of the dominant society for generations. Religion as cultural capital had a two-pronged impact both negative and positive for the community of Aranguez, depending on the period, in relation to access to education.

Aranguez was a village that was resistant to *creolisation by conversion*, which had consequences for the education of its inhabitants post-indentureship. Many parents resisted

conversion and assimilation to the dominant culture, including refraining from sending their children to Christian denominational schools which would have provided cultural capital for navigating the dominant society. In Aranguez, Christian missionaries failed to 'save' the heathen Indians - first the Canadian Presbyterian missionaries, and then ongoing efforts by Jehovah witnesses, Church of Latter-Day Saints, and Pentecostal churches. This decision was crucial as it led to generations of people in Aranguez being illiterate and marginalised. Indians who converted to Christianity were upwardly mobile. The Presbyterian church opened schools for Indians who converted, and provided jobs as teachers in the church, along with jobs in the mainstream society. Thus, religion was a mediator of access to education.

Religion was an important aspect of the culture for Hindus and Muslims and shaped their way of life. The Indentureds were illiterate in English, but many were literate in their own language and read and wrote Hindi and learnt from ancient texts - the Ramayana, Vedas, Bhagavad Gita, and the Koran (Interview, 2017). There were no temples and mosques initially. Boyo noted that informal learning among peers occurred using their own scriptures:

> Dey used to have a society in Aranguez Savannah where they used to go and smoke. All of dem used to go and smoke dere ting [105]in Aranguez Estates. My grandfather learn from he father. But he couldn't read Ramayana, but he used to understand. My grandfather used to read. Because the panchayat used to take place on Aranguez estates steps. One of them used to watchman the estates here. (Interview, 2017)

Later, Aranguez and nearby El Socorro gave rise to religious and political national leaders in the Hindu and Muslim community in the country, who helped to build mosques and temples and denominational schools which served to maintain the culture and religion in some form over the generations.

[105] Ganja (marijuana)

Being of the Brahmin caste brought cultural capital within the Hindu community in Trinidad and in Aranguez. Prem's indentured ancestor benefited from his Brahmin caste status as someone bought out his indentureship contract. He chose to stay on in Trinidad. As Perry (1969) noted, the appointed *Protector of Immigrants* could relieve an indentured labourer from serving his contract, if he could pay for his recruitment expenses, transportation to the depot, board, and room in the depot until the ship left, and expenses for the journey from India to Trinidad. This ascribed status in the Hindu community provided cultural capital within the community and allowed Prem's grandfather to continue his role as a pandit (Hindu priest), which customs were continued by his descendants - sons, grandsons (Prem's generation), and great grandsons. His father read and spoke Hindi and was versed in ancient Hindu scriptures and philosophy, a very learned man from the perspective of his Hindu community and an Eastern lens, but not in the broader creole society.

Prem and his siblings had to learn Hindi and Sanskrit at home to read the ancient scriptures as they grew up and became pandits, so they were surrounded by the learned atmosphere of his household and the strong influence of his father. Prem was very fond of his parents and inspired by his father, his culture, and his religion, "When you look at the scriptures about ascetics in Hinduism, you give up everything and go to the forest and meditate and hardly eat and these sorts of things. So, it shows you have the discipline" (Interview, 2018). He credits his discipline to his religion. He was influenced by his religion in selecting a secular secondary school, not a Christian denominational prestige school.

The ascribed social status of the Brahmin caste provided cultural capital within the Hindu community and in the broader society. Prem noted, "In the Indian society, we are highly regarded. I mean, people think we have done well. I think in the non-Indian community, there is a high degree of respect for us" (Interview, 2018). The embodied cultural capital of a PhD credential, also allowed Prem to access other opportunities in the mainstream society. Thus,

Prem's family had cultural capital based on religion of the non-dominant group, which operated to provide social and economic capital, which is different from Bordieuan theory.

As discussed previously, there is no strong separation of Church and State in Trinidad. Christian denominational schools were well established before the government school expansion. Aranguez students went from having no schools as Indentureds to having a choice of denominational schools or government primary schools. Religion is allowed in government schools - primary and secondary- through curricula whereby there is one unit every week for R.I. (religious instruction) for all religions. R.I. class were led by the local Hindu and Muslim representatives who would be allowed entry to the school to run the class.

In the local Junior Secondary School, Shanti noted that Hindi classes was also taught as an elective, even though it was a government school. Christianity was the formally recognised religion in Aranguez Government school with prayers said in morning assembly and before and after lunch. But hosting of cultural events on school property for celebration of Hindu religious holidays such as Diwali (public holiday), Holi or Phagwa festivities and other religious days (Christmas pageants, Easter celebrations) are allowed in government schools.

Participants related positive and negative experiences in government schools and positive experiences in the Hindu and Christian denominational schools. Valmiki commented on his experience at the Vedic primary school, "It was a really good experience. It was a very strict school. Punctuality, tidiness, the way you carry about yourself. You had to carry about yourself in a *proper manner*" (Interview, 2019). Based on his experience, the Hindu religion and culture were blended into the activities of the school in a formal manner. At the school assembly, students would say the national anthem, the school pledge, and then sing some bhajans.[106] They prayed in the morning, at lunch time and before the school break. Denominational Hindu and Muslim schools allowed students to practice their religion and culture to a much greater

[106] Hindu religious song

extent than government schools.

There seemed to be a belief that the denominational primary schools in Aranguez were better based on examination results. Renuka did not complain about the local government primary school, “I thought it was good. It was not the best primary school in Aranguez at the time and it still isn’t. Because I think the passes for the other schools were a lot better. But I think the education was sound” (Interview, 2017). She believed that the Hindu schools in the community had a better quality of education which could have led to better outcomes in her CEE. Shanti noted that Christians and Afro-Trinidadian parents send their children to the Hindu and Muslim schools because they feel the schools will be a safer environment and provide a better quality of education in the context of school violence and poor results in some government schools. The excellence in performance of students from Hindu and Muslim schools at the SEA, CESC, and CAPE examinations in recent years, suggests some research is needed on the role of religion as cultural capital in denominational and non-denominational schools and student success.

Gender Inequity and Cultural Capital

Women’s access to education in Aranguez was shaped by the historical period, socioeconomic and cultural context which evolved with creolisation - the community’s acculturation to the western society. East Indian women’s access to education was circumscribed by the *patriarchal culture* which is *negative cultural capital* displayed as a form of social power and control of women, reflected in the story of Nadira. Historically, life was harder for women and gender-based inequity was endemic to their lives. Women were expected to work in the plantations and also carry out their duties as caregivers.

However, traditional gender roles between men and women started shifting. Their lesser numbers gave them power and the ability to re-negotiate their role in Trinidad. Some women shirked the patriarchal culture which was transplanted to the Caribbean (Perry, 1969; Hosein, 2007). Women found themselves empowered to leave abusive spouses. They also found

different ways to earn wages outside the estate where they worked (Hosein, 2007). They saved and bought land, creating a generation of independent women. While before the 1970s, East Indian women's educational and occupational aspirations and opportunities were limited, not all women in Trinidad had the same experience with regards to education.

In creole society, pre-independence and early post-independence, white Trinidadian women, middle-class upwardly mobile Black women, and middle-class, Christian East Indian women had some opportunity for further education - secondary school and even university studies. Hindu and Muslim women's lack of access to education stemmed from the external oppressive, dominant society and internal oppression from community norms restricting access to education at different levels and at different periods in time.

Arranged marriages [107] was a custom from India that lingered until the 1970s. Boyo noted, "In those days, once you could cook a sada roti[108], dey looking to marrid yuh." Household skills mattered for preparing women for marriage. The participants' parents or grandparents, relatives from older generations, and the eldest participant in the study (Nadira) had arranged marriages. Boyo's mother got married to his father when she was 10 and he was about 8 through an arranged marriage:

> In dem time, you come and make a boy and you come and make a girl and they kinda make a bargain there. When de time reach, dey do some ceremony for you. They say you marrid and then they send you back home until you reach the age and then you come back. (Interview, 2017)

Nadira commented on East Indian parents' obsession with getting their children married off as soon as possible, "Because Indian people, that is their biggest problem. Because they figure it bad to have their children big in the house. They have to get married". This practice of arranged

[107] Wife and husband are used loosely in Trinidad as many people co-habit and never marry legally, a legacy of the slave/indenture heritage. Pandits/Imams could not perform legal marriages until 1954, as they were not allowed to be licensed to perform legal marriages. People tended to skip the formality of taking a trip to the Red House in Port of Spain to do a legal ceremony.

[108] A type of plain flatbread made by East Indians.

marriage gave no agency to women. Parents and husbands had control of their lives and when they rebelled, like Nadira's grandmother, they were ostracised or sometimes worse happened to them. Marriage was expected to be the focus of a woman's aspiration not education.

Nadira's mother was living in Port of Spain and had the opportunity to attend St. Theresa's Girls' RC Primary School during the 1930s. Nadira noted, "If you see my mother handwriting. She could write better than me. I always remember she say de teacher dey had was a Catholic priest" (Nadira, 2017). Living in the capital city provided access to a good quality primary school education for her mother. Her mother's education should have set up Nadira for success but her mother allowed her father to dictate her educational future.

Gender inequity is reflected in the experiences of Nadira who only completed primary school:

> I didn't go too long. Because when I had 12 years, my father say, 'No school again'. Because he had dis real Indian ting. Dey did not believe in children having education, girls, especially. My father just figure I big enough and I stay home and then dey send me to learn to sew". (Interview, 2017)

Nadira attended primary school in the 1950s and her parents were more financially secure than most families in Aranguez. However, patriarchal attitudes of her father resulted in no further investments in her education beyond primary school which seems to have impacted the next generation. Nadira's daughter (who migrated to the US) did not access higher education. Nadira noted that her paternal grandfather was interested in keeping Islam and Islamic practices alive but did not have interest in formal education for his children:

> And the other ting is, my father, although he do all those big houses, he couldn't read or even write. I remember my mother learning [teaching] him to write. That is when he start building the house. But you see figures, he did know everything. I don't know if he went to school so long, but their father was more interested in them learning Muslim ting and Muslim prayers. (Interview, 2017)

As a building contractor, her father was not educated and licensed to do his job. He had enough literacy and numeracy to run his business, but his worldview may have been limited by his lack of education, which in turn led to him limiting his daughter's education and career possibilities. Prem's elder sister was also not expected to further her education beyond primary school. Prem's sister was a housewife and mother, and her husband supported her financially. Prem noted, "That's how it was. That's the culture" (Interview, 2018).

Given their lack of access to education, occupational opportunities were also very limited for women in Aranguez. Boyo noted that his mother was a housewife and also worked in the vegetable farm for several years with his father. Nadira and Prem's big sister took sewing lessons – a simple 'feminine' activity. These women were more privileged than other women in the village since their parents were not farmers, so they did not have to work in the fields.

Nadira made a living as a seamstress for many years, after taking classes from a woman in nearby El Socorro and classes from the Singer company in Port of Spain. She was very independent and one of the only women who drove her own car in Aranguez at the time. She also displayed a yearning for what might been, "I always like to learn things. But I sorry I didn't have a good education. I might have done drafting for my father to build house. I woulda like the building business. When he have to make an estimate, is I have to write it for him, after" (Interview, 2017). Her desire to follow in her father's footsteps as a builder demonstrates the influence of parental occupation on occupational aspirations of children. She felt that if she was a son, she would have been able to further her education and work with her father in the family construction business. Her mother did not intervene when her father told her to stop school. The lack of opportunity did not mean that Nadira did not have higher education and non-traditional occupational aspirations.

Renuka is a proponent of co-educational (mixed gender) schools since she felt they prepared her for the real world, "I think it prepared me for life. So, I preferred that. I'm a big

supporter of co-ed. schools" (Interview, 2017). The debate (Demers & Bennet, 2007)[109] among educators, academia, and policy-makers about the value of single-gender schools over co-educational schools is not supported by Renuka's experience. Her co-educational schooling may have influenced her study decisions and prepared her for operating in a male-dominated job (engineering) occupation and Industry (Energy sector).

The evolution of women's positions can be seen by comparing Nadira to Renuka. Her parents were not supportive and expected her to follow a traditional path – focus on housework and marriage. Renuka made her own decisions about her educational future. She completed university and is an engineer working abroad, with her husband performing the caregiving role. Renuka's educational journey demonstrates how attitudes, norms and values have shifted generationally among East Indians in Aranguez; progressing from previous generations where women were denied education or were allowed only primary school education to achieving post-graduate education. Based on the period in which they grew up, the women participants had very different educational outcomes.

The shift in education for women in Aranguez is reflective of broader changes in the society. In Aranguez, female tertiary education attainment is 19% and male is 16%; however, these numbers reflect a more diverse population in the village than in the past. At the tertiary level in Trinidad, females outnumber males (See Table 6). Of the 400 scholarships awarded in 2019, 115 were awarded to male students and 285 to females, showing a gender difference, and many of these were Indian women.

[109] See http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/demers.pdf

Table 6:

Tertiary Education Attainment in Trinidad by Gender

Sex	Tertiary - Non- University	Tertiary - University
Male	5.9%	7.9%
Female	7.3%	10.2%
Total	6.6%	9.0%

Source: Census 2011

The patriarchal aspect of East Indian culture which impacted women's access to education and higher education extends the understanding of cultural capital, in that it was *negative cultural capital within the community*. The nature of culture in a new context, however, is that it can evolve and adapt. East Indian women are equal in status now with their peers and have occupied the highest post in the land – Prime Minister. However, East Indian women in Aranguez still have improvements to make compared to the higher education achievements of East Indian women in other areas of the country, especially women from high-income and middle-income families.

The stories about different generations demonstrate that non-financial factors – culture, patriarchy, and fear of acculturation impacted education/higher education access and employment opportunities. Religion as cultural capital which was *negative* in terms of attitudes towards women and education has evolved to attitudes of equal access and opportunity. The case provides further understanding of how membership in a non-Western, subculture impacted education access and the role of acculturation to the dominant culture (creolisation) in changing educational access.

Economic Capital

This section looks at the role of economic capital - access to financial resources - in higher education access in Aranguez. Costs of higher education changed at various times in Trinidad and so did the opportunity to access HE. Before the GATE tuition aid programme was

introduced for higher education, people had to pay tuition, in addition to books, ancillary fees, travel or accommodation. Given that tuition waivers were put in place and the HEIs were within commuting distance, it needs exploration as to what extent financial difficulties were a factor in people from Aranguez not accessing HE, especially university education.

Family Finances

Participants had differing economic experiences growing up, with the families of some relatively comfortable (Nadira, Boyo, Prem, Renuka); others were poor but getting by (Rohan, Jason, Valmiki, Suresh, Shanti); and others struggled (Manny, Devanand, Jameela). Finances of the family are still important for attending school at all levels, regardless of government aid, but more so at the higher education level. The families of most of the participants, regardless of income, invested in extra tutoring at the primary school level and secondary school level. In addition, families with the resources paid for their children to attend private primary or secondary school, if their child failed examinations or did not sit the CEE/SEA, got placed in a low tier secondary school, or needed to re-do secondary school examinations.

The options for higher education funding (beyond tuition waivers) were having parents pay, working to pay expenses yourself, or winning a scholarship. Participants represented all three financial situations - Prem and Renuka's parents paid for UWI expenses; Devanand and Jason had to work to help cover both secondary school and higher education expenses. Neil won an Additional Scholarship which covered some costs at UWI, and his parents helped him with other costs, so he did not have to work. He did not have accommodation costs as he lived close enough to drive to university. Later he obtained funding and worked as a tutorial assistant for his PhD at a US university.

Nadira and Prem's families were not dependent on agriculture to earn a living in Aranguez, and not financially challenged like some other participants. The men in Nadira's family had been in other non-farming occupations - wheelwright (ancestor from India), fishermen, dock workers, building contractor, and clerk. They did not have the habitus and

background of peasant farmers, and the subsequent generations should have done well in terms of education and career, but their stories differ, mainly because of gender, as discussed previously. Both Nadira's child and her sisters' children only completed secondary school, even though Nadira's daughter lives in the US and could have gone to university, which suggests *non-financial* factors were involved in their educational outcomes. Prem's father was in a better financial position to support his children who accessed HE.

Boyo's father could afford to help his children further their education, if they wanted to and so did Nadira's family. Both she and her daughter attended a private school, after attending public school. As a small businessman, Boyo was able to pay for Renuka's engineering education, which had higher tuition fees than other programmes, and no tuition waiver at the time. Economic capital is important for tuition and other costs (accommodation, travel, meals, ancillary fees, examinations abroad). Boyo noted:

> She [Renuka] say "Listen, I have to go to this University. Faculty of Engineering". She set up everything. Went and get all she tings. She say. "I need to go to the university, and you have to get some papers. Money. Cash". I couldn't say no. She say, "Mr. Man, find money, you know". She say, "find money". I gone there [UWI campus]. She take my money and tell me to stand up on a piece of lawn, dere. She could see about she self. I stand up on de lawn dey and smoke two cigarette. She went and did she transactions and ting. (Interview, 2017)

Fortunately, Prem, Devanand and Renuka had no accommodation costs as Aranguez is a short bus ride to the university.

However, the availability of financial resources allows for payment of other expenses, even if tuition is free. Financial resources also allow for aspirations towards degree level higher education and occupations that require such credentials. Engineering in Renuka's case and Medicine in the case of Prem's daughter are professional programmes which are more costly in any context (books, materials, examinations, travel), even with tuition waivers.

Devanand's family had financial difficulties, as poverty seemed to be intergenerational. His mother had had a life of poverty as Devanand noted:

> In fact, things were so bad that her mother was about to put them in the orphanage. It's their grandmother who had to intervene and tell her daughter [my mom's mother], she will not allow her to put the children in the orphanage. They will make whatever sacrifices – if they had to eat salt and rice, they would eat salt and rice to survive. So, both of them went out to seek work and mommy had to stay home from standard 3 in order to take care of the household chores. (Interview, 2018)

Due to financial difficulties in the family, Devanand opted to attend the evening shift in Junior secondary school and work in a survival job, which he got through *someone his mother knew*, cleaning a bookstore on the outskirts of Aranguez, "I used to go and sweep it out, put out the garbage and so on". He gave his earnings to his mother for books, school uniforms and other expenses. At that time, his father was still an alcoholic and money was scarce as most of it went towards drink. Devanand struggled financially but was motivated by his father's ill-treatment to access and persist in higher education.

Neil's brother attended UWI under the GATE[110] programme (discussed in chapter 5) and wanted to drop out, but their father told him that he would not help him to re-pay the tuition fees to the government if he dropped out, so he completed the degree. This example demonstrates that free education with a financial penalty for dropping out does seem to work and avoids wastage of government investments in higher education.

Participants like Suresh and Jason benefited from the GATE-tuition waiver programme. The money he earned from his electrical job helped to pay for some of his school supplies when he went to UTT to study electrical engineering in a 2-year diploma programme. His programme was GATE-approved so he did not have to pay tuition and his GPA was over 2.0, a requirement

[110] GATE as mentioned previously is financial aid in the form of tuition waiver for HE programmes approved by the Government.

of GATE funding. He also had to pay for re-doing two examinations that he failed which were TT $1500 and TT$1200, which he found to be affordable. But both Suresh and Jason felt that *even without GATE, they would have still done their programme* because for the former, his father would have helped him, and the latter was earning an income which would fund his HE programme. Being able to afford university or college still requires financial support since tuition represents only part of the costs.

The GATE tuition-waiver, working part-time and parental financial support also helps students avoid having to take bank loans under the HELP programme to pay for HE costs. The different participant experiences demonstrate that finances matter where both parental assistance, earned income, and support from government facilitate accessing higher education.

Land as Economic Capital

An unexpected finding was the role of property ownership - land as economic capital. Indian Indentureds were landless on arrival but they were able to save and purchased land once their indentureship contracts on the plantations were served. By the late 19th and early 20th century, both men and women became landowners or acquired rental rights to land (Hosein, 2007). However, for some East Indians, religion provided a legal barrier in land inheritance as children, who came from common-law relationships, lost their property rights to the State, as they could not prove legally that they were the children who were entitled to the land rights of their father or mother.

The people of Aranguez, by an accident of history, became landed peasants – a positive colonial legacy for many Indians who worked on Aranguez Estates. The government had consolidated other estates in Central and South Trinidad, but Aranguez was in private ownership, with land being rented and gradually sold off to the villagers, who had first right of purchase from the Estate owners. All the participants were living on land inherited from their ancestors, except for Nadira. None of Nadira's family living in Aranguez were involved in farming or owned farming land. This speaks to the fact that Nadira's family came from outside of

Aranguez. When they moved to Aranguez to live with her grandmother, the latter had already purchased land there, and later her father was lucky enough to purchase some land from the Estate.

Over time, people moved away from agriculture and at the turn-of-the-century, land prices escalated, and some sold their inheritance and moved away, and others became landlords, constructing apartment buildings, and renting to people working in the city, Chinese immigrants, and Venezuelan refugees (Interviews, Boyo, 2017; Manny, 2018). Aranguez's *geographical location* in the North which had been a disadvantage in terms of information about jobs in the energy sector and access to 'oil money,' has become an advantage in its proximity to the capital. The former plantation land is an asset for the descendants of the indentured who had worked it.

Bourdieu's theory of social inequality does not address the issue of economic capital being disconnected from the cultural capital of educational credentials. In the Bordieuan world, and generally, in the higher education policy discourse, the two are complimentary. The findings challenge the notion that the cultural capital of higher educational credentials are key for increasing earnings (economic capital). Income can come from other sources that do not require educational credentials.

The promotion of *higher education for all* has been adopted by policy actors such as UNESCO and is being promoted to developing countries like Trinidad & Tobago, whether or not this policy approach is feasible from a funding standpoint or applicable based on the needs of the economy and their ability to absorb graduates, or the desires of people. The people in Aranguez mobilised their land assets to engage with the economic system in diverse ways that worked for them through traditional peasant farming, or farmland and residential rentals.

Nonetheless, university education is still valued by individuals wanting to improve their social class, as higher education credentials provide cultural capital and allows individual social mobility. The revenues gained from land and rental housing need not be a deterrent for people

to aspire to higher education. Prem and Renuka's family had inherited land like many others but they both still sought higher education and professional employment. Prem said he had an inner drive for learning which led to university. Renuka received encouragement from her teachers and parents, and she always felt that university was an option for her.

A survey of inhabitants of Aranguez may demonstrate whether there is a relationship between land ownership and higher education access in terms of opting out of higher education and monetising land for income.

Individual Agency in Higher Education Access

Bourdieu's theory of social inequality allows for *agency* where individuals can move up from the lower class through acquisition of educational credentials (symbols of cultural capital). The participants who accessed higher education displayed qualities such as *high self-esteem, motivation, determination, and perseverance* to achieve higher education beyond what was achieved in one's family. The participants had a lot of agency in deciding their schooling and career paths. Most individuals could not look to parental education, teacher expectations or occupations of parents to inspire or inform higher education choices.

Prem said he had a thirst for knowledge, but he could not explain why he was able to succeed and become a PhD graduate in the 1970s when prompted to think about it:

> To be very frank, since I was a little boy, I wanted to be a scientist. I used to read. Up to now I read endless. I am a voracious reader. You ask the question, I am trying to figure out but ever since I was small, anything I see I would read. I read. I had all the books from the great scientists, great mathematicians. I read it in the library. Up to now I have endless books. I spend money on books. I always wanted to go to university and do a PhD. My mother was very good mathematically. So, I guess that part... I don't know. I inherited from her. (Interview, 2018)

His siblings did not have the same educational outcomes as him (some undergraduate studies, undergraduate degree; secondary school; primary school). Prem had an internal motivation and

confidence in himself from a child, which speaks to psycho-social aspects of student performance.

On the other hand, Devanand had a negative self-perception about his abilities, “I was so duncy because I used to be a dunce”. The *psychological formation* of children is influenced by experiences in the education system and with institutional agents in the way they are treated both positively and negatively. Examinations scores influenced how Devanand valued his academic capabilities:

> I never come in the first 10 or so in primary school. And because I skipped a class, I feel I was a little bit disadvantaged, and I *never had high expectations of my own self*. And coming over 15, 16, 17 in class and then you go there, and it dawn upon you, you come third in test; that first time that I came third. I decided since I did so well, I have to maintain that. I don’t know if it’s some *self-realisation* that I realised, ‘Look, you have a little bit of ability’ and I started to study and try to do good work. (Interview, 2018)

Despite his challenging circumstances, he had an *internal motivation* to succeed which included attending university.

Renuka had her own inner *self-motivation and aspirations*, along with the support of her parents, “I think because of my capability. I was always performing well in school. And I think they always had that vision for me, and *I had it for myself*. In my brain it was a given, not a choice” (Interview, 2017). Boyo noted her commitment to school because when his father died, [Renuka’s grandfather], it was during the period of ‘O’ level examinations, “When he die, she went and sit exam. the day for the funeral and come back. She went and sat exam. the day he dead and come back in time” (Interview, 2017).

The *internal motivation* and drive to achieve higher education for people like Renuka, Prem, Neil and Devanand who had differing economic and family circumstances at home, the same racial and cultural backgrounds, and were all first-generation students, suggest that there is a *psycho-social dimension* of how individuals enact education policy and navigate the

education structures in challenging circumstances. The road to higher education was a *personal journey* for each participant fraught with obstacles, randomness, and low probabilities. The acquisition of higher education credentials allowed those participants to improve their individual economic circumstances, but acquisition of university credentials also allowed individual class movement, changing their SES and that of the next generation.

Summary

Bordieuan theory and concepts of social, cultural and economic capital has explanatory utility in interrogating higher education access in Aranguez. The findings show that the availability of economic capital (parental income, student aid) is not enough to motivate people to access higher education. There are also *other non-financial factors* that intervene, external to the person (e.g., parental and family support and involvement, cultural norms, and values) and internal to the person (agency and psycho-social factors) that impact HE access.

The agency of the individual in overcoming barriers at home, in the community and education system was a key factor in higher education access. The case study allows a more nuanced understanding of family social capital for FGS students - the role of the mother and extended family; inequity in schools due to material contexts; and treatment from institutional agents, which helped or hindered a pathway to higher education.

The case also challenges the *higher education for all* discourse which assumes everyone wants formal higher education because it is the only route to improve one's standard of living. People opted for alternative routes to learning, even if they could access higher education, choosing informal learning and/or independence in the ways that they earned a living. Chapter 7 discusses new findings that did not arise in the literature related to the specific post-colonial context of Trinidad and Aranguez that impact success in K-12 and orientations to higher education access.

Chapter 7: Data Analysis – Beyond Bourdieu

This chapter discusses new findings that arose from the post-colonial context of Trinidad and Aranguez. Themes include post-colonial legacies of mental health illness from intergenerational trauma and violence (gender-based violence and corporal punishment in homes and schools). The issue of violence appeared in participants' stories either in the home, in classrooms, and schools in low-income communities where Aranguez students went to school, and in the broader society. School violence was already discussed in chapter 6 in relation to the school habitus and social capital but it is also a post-colonial legacy. Issues related to violence have implications for education access and outcomes. Additional issues that arose in the findngs were family attitudes towards disability, undocumented migrant rights to education; and out-migration and brain drain.

Post-Colonial Legacy of Violence

Community violence as negative social capital

As mentioned in chapters 2 and 5, the village is a former sugar cane plantation, a space built on violence through enslavement and extermination of the Indigenous peoples, enslavement of Africans, and indentureship of East Indians labourers. The evolution of the village from a plantation to a high crime area indicates continuing impacts of the violence within which it was formed. The broader context of Trinidad also suggests a trend towards escalating violence.

Manny noted that trafficking in illegal narcotics was rampant in the country with little consequences, "people killing people one after the other. When you kill somebody in Trinidad, they ain't killing just so. It have something about it. Something about that. The police does be in the racket" (Interview, 2018). Rohan mentioned that his nephew got robbed at gunpoint for his cell phone in San Juan, even though there were people in the vicinity. He also mentioned that in Aranguez, bandits regularly robbed the new Chinese immigrants who had opened grocery

shops; the latter had to get security personnel to protect themselves and their customers and/or they armed themselves with guns.

Most of the bandits were from outside Aranguez, but some also are people who moved into the town (Interviews, 2017; 2018). The younger generation seems to accept the heightened level of crime, as it is all that they know and compare their safety in Aranguez with the more violent neighbourhoods in the North. Jason noted:

> It doesn't have much crime and ting in Aranguez, because you know how the people here does be. But it does have late-night robberies. They don't come during the day; they come during the night to try to rob you. Some does be outside people, but some does be local people. (Interview, 2019)

As a young man, he had a different perspective on the level of violence from Manny who remembered his village differently. Rohan's view on the violence was from a father's perspective. He had just had a baby and felt that the country was unsafe for his child. He wanted to equip him with the skills to deal with the violence in the society which was showing up in schools:

> Definitely, he is not going to be travelling to school. If I have to arrange to get him a drop [lift] or I have to drop him and pick him up personally, I will make that arrangements. Self-defence class – definitely he will be doing that because nobody will be bullying my child in school. (Interview, 2018)

The endemic violence affecting Aranguez in homes and the community is a *form of negative social capital* or *perverse social capital* that is a persisting post-colonial legacy. This negative social capital encourages criminal activity in poor communities (Mcilwaine & Moser, 2001). Networks of gangs who have their own relations of trust and cohesion were common in Aranguez, but internal crime seems to be less pervasive than in the past. However, criminal networks continue to thrive in the broader society influencing youth who prefer these social networks.

This generalised violence in Trinidad (theft, murder, kidnappings, gender-based violence) has been researched in South America (Mcilwaine & Moser, 2001). In Trinidad, this issue needs to be interrogated with a post-colonial lens to better understand and stem the violence with appropriate policies and programmes.

Violence as Corporal Punishment

Violence manifested itself in attitudes around discipline of children in the home and school. The violent culture is reflected in family relationships and child-rearing where corporal punishment as a child rearing tool was common. Participants' punishment ranged from verbal chastising to beatings with fists, belts and other apparatus that came to hand.

Boyo was punished by his father for fighting in primary school, as he tried to help out his friend, Prem, in a fight with another student. Boyo's father had an interesting approach to disciplining his children, as he related:

> Before I reach home, he [the student] and he sister by meh fadda [father] with a complaint. I take the books and I run across by the neighbour. Because after 6, he don't beat you. He say once light light [the flames are lit], once it dark, you okay; but you get it [a beating] early in the morning. I come by the neighbour and spend the little time. I get some belt. Dem old people and dem, *anything dey get in dey hand, dey beat you*. (Interview, 2017)

Devanand suffered both physical and emotional abuse by his father as a child. However, Devanand persisted with advice, resources, and assistance from teachers and people in the community who helped him in his educational journey from primary school to university. Other participants (Rohan; Jameela) commented on the fact that 'licks'[111] was normal in their upbringing. West Indians differentiate between corporal punishment and child abuse, but physical abuse of children is a social problem in Trinidad which has been exported in the

[111] beatings

diaspora.[112] Violence and abuse in the home impact academic progress (McGaha-Garnett, 2013).

Corporal punishment was permitted in schools for a long time, a colonial legacy from the English system, where principals and teachers in primary schools could whip students. The Dean was the one appointed to mete out corporal punishment in secondary school. Participants related incidents of corporal punishment that is no longer considered acceptable in the education system. Suresh recalls being scared of the school principal when he was punished, "One time I push down somebody when we was playing. Probably in standard one. We were playing catch or something. I got beat with a guava whip" (Interview, 2017). The boy complained about him, and Suresh received a whipping to his palms.

According to Shanti, her brother (who is a primary school teacher) used to beat his students. When his father asked him why, he responded, "But the parents give me permission to" (Interview, 2018). Some parents are supportive of teachers disciplining their children with corporal punishment. The incident related by Shanti of being beaten by the teacher for blacking out is also disturbing, as she was a student with a physical ailment that affected her mental health.

The experience of Neil was similar, even though he was a good student. If you did not do your homework, you would get "licks with tamarind branch". Despite these experiences of corporal punishment in school, there was agreement by two participants that it was a useful disciplinary tool, as Jason noted, "It would be good to reintroduce it, because I find students these days, they don't listen to teachers and they do what they want" (Interview, 2019). Rohan personally believes in corporal punishment, given student misbehaviour, which he thinks is

[112] Cases of reported physical abuse is collapsed with routine discipline among West Indian families in Canada. Hackett (2019) speaks to the overrepresentation of Black Caribbean children in the social welfare system in Canada and the need to decolonise social work practice that considers the history of families. The same type of discipline is applied in East Indian, West Indian families, and other ethnic groups but the interaction with the social welfare system might be differential and requires investigation in Canada.

exacerbated by modern technology – widespread cell phone usage, the internet and social media.

Corporal punishment was quite common in different cultures including Europe but is now seen as child abuse, and research has shown its ineffectiveness as a disciplinary tool, which has long-term negative impacts on children (Utter, 2019). Corporal punishment in the home and schools is outlawed in some countries, although it is still acceptable in many other countries including some US states. Corporal punishment in schools was banned in 2012 under Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar. Child Protection legislation was passed (*Children Act, 2012*) and Section 4(6) confirms the right of parents/guardians to administer “reasonable punishment”, but does not allow corporal punishment by school officials such as teachers or counsellors.

Despite this ban, reports in the local newspapers indicate that some teachers are still administering corporal punishment, which amount to verbal and physical abuse. Violence against children in schools has been normalised, and provides a reason for students to fear and dislike school. It also suggests to children that violence is a way of resolving problems. Abolishing corporal punishment is a move that seeks to decolonise the education system, but practitioners have been slow to adopt change in administrative practices to manage student discipline and change the culture of schools. McGaha-Garnett (2013) notes that, “Exposure to violent home and community environments, as well as injury due to violence, contribute to both reduced academic progress and increased disruptive or unfocused classroom behaviour for children, adolescents, and teenagers”. This describes the state of many schools in Trinidad.

The violence in schools discussed previously is related to the violence in homes and communities and requires holistic solutions so that *at-risk children* have a chance at academic success in school, and the opportunity to access higher education. Violence has been part of the community habitus and negative community capital of Aranjuez which provides challenges for children to excel.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

The early history of indentured women like their Black counterparts is filled with gender-based violence (GBV). Early marriage meant that girls went from their father's home to their husband's home, where they were at the mercy of their husbands and his family. Wife murder was a common occurrence among indentured workers. The violence against women resulted in ongoing changes by the colonial authorities in the ratio of men to women being brought to Trinidad. According to Perry (1969), a woman who changed partners would be transferred to another estate to prevent violence.

The persistence of GBV in Aranguez appeared in the stories of some participants. For instance, Nadira's brother-in-law was an alcoholic and was physically and verbally abusive to her sister, and made life uncomfortable as they all lived in the same yard[113] with her parents. On the other hand, there were stories of caring fathers. Nadira's father was protective of her and any potential violence that she may face in her marriage and kept an eye on her husband. Prem and Boyo were very protective of their daughters and were conscious of the challenges their daughters would face, as Boyo noted, "She is a girl child, and I need to make she independent. Because I see how de life is. Dem people does be advantaging girl children" (Interview, 2017).

Boyo hired a driver and car and went with his daughter to job interviews in South Trinidad for her own safety, as women can disappear off the street. Prem went with his daughter to Barbados and India when she had to do examinations. They were concerned for the safety of their daughters. Boyo's desire for Renuka to be independent was realised, "dey does have to depend on dey husband and ting to get something. I tell myself, *if I educate she, she wouldn't have to depend on nobody to get nothing*. I say dem [his sons] could have a little hole in their pants and ting. She is a girl, so I have to provide for she" (Interview, 2017).

[113] A yard is a shared piece of land where a large extended family would build separate little homes. This occurred for both Indo and Afro-Trinidadians and West Indians, in general.

While Boyo and Nadira's father both cared about their daughters' welfare, they had the opposite view of the role of education in empowering women, one denying his daughter education beyond primary school, and the other (Boyo) wanting her to achieve all that was possible. It could be a generational issue, such that Nadira's father did not know any better.

GBV continues to be an issue, not only among East Indians. Despite more women graduating from higher education than men, women are still subject to violence, where 44% (Pemberon & Joel, 2018)[114] have experienced some form of violence. Sayed & Bland (2020) note in a World Bank post online:

> Although Caribbean women and girls are doing better than their peers in many other parts of the world in terms of access to education and formal employment, … data underscore the urgency of continuing efforts to empower women across the Caribbean by enhancing their voice and agency, eliminating *gender-based violence*, and transforming patriarchal norms.

Domestic violence and murder of women is an ongoing issue, which reached crisis levels in 2020 during the pandemic, based on newspaper reports.[115] The culture of patriarchy and violence diminish the gains made by women in education and in the labour market and requires urgent attention by government.

Intergenerational Trauma (IGT)

Indicators of trauma arose in the stories of participants that suggest a lingering impact of the trauma of indentureship system, sometimes called, the second slavery. Trauma creates a cycle of substance abuse, violence and dysfunction which interrupts people's lives including impeding the educational journey. Alcoholism, manifested as 'rum-drinking' as a past-time was

[114] See https://publications.iadb.org/en/national-womens-health-survey-trinidad-and-tobago-final-report
[115] See https://trinidadexpress.com/opinion/editorials/a-crisis-of-domestic-violence/article_1e443934-3410-11ea-ab2d-23fa629e5fb3.html

integral to the life of the indentured labourer. Rum was one of the by-products of the sugarcane industry.

Alcoholism among East Indian men in Trinidad is rampant and socially accepted over the generations. Alcohol abuse has its roots in colonialism as indentured labourers were introduced to rum in the colony as a "labour enhancer" (Anngrosino, 2003). Canadian Presbyterian Minister, Rev. John Morton[116] noted in 1868, "I have never been in a place where *rum stares one so constantly in the face* as Trinidad" (Morton, 1916). The alcoholism of East Indian men is rooted in the history of 'King Sugar' and the need for cheap labour:

> In the 1890s the dangerous precedent of rum for wages began. At Forres Park, the lifestyle of the labourer was typical…Squalid barracks, zero sanitation, no school for children, scanty rations, and heavy tasks. One great evil which was introduced by Mr. Farmer, the manager in the 1890s, was the offering of white rum, firewater, as a supplement to wages and even as wages themselves. This of course enslaved the Indians since they became rapidly dependent on the alcohol and thus were always in debt to the estate since the cost of rations was also deducted from the pittance, they received for their task work. (Bissessarsingh, n.d.).[117]

Rum and ganja (cannabis) helped them to deal with the misery of their life in the fields in a foreign land. The use of alcohol as a mode of control of the Indentureds by the plantation owners is similar to the experience of the Indigenous Peoples in Canada, where alcohol was introduced to them for purposes of manipulation and disenfranchisement. In addition, in the early days of indentureship, ganja smoking, which is a cultural practice for relaxation brought over by the Indians, was outlawed. The planting of ganja was occupying their time, instead of focusing on the work on the plantation work, as it was an income source (Samaroo, 1975). The

[116] Presbyterian Missionary from Nova Scotia.
[117] See Bissessarsingh, https://www.facebook.com/groups/191766699268/permalink/10158203309959269/.

high incidence of alcoholism among East Indian men in Trinidad has been documented and researched from a social and clinical perspective (Seepersad & Maharajh, 2010).

There are a few "rum shops" in Aranguez, where men meet and drink as a regular past time. Nadira's father, even though he was Muslim, drank excessively as a younger man. Her brother-in-law, Rashida's husband was an alcoholic and abusive husband. Devanand's father was an alcoholic, who was mentally and physically abusive towards him and his mother. Devanand's suffering at the hands of his father impacted his attitude towards alcohol:

> I despise it so much because I saw the negative effects of it, of him behaving bad with my mother. He used to abuse her. And when I saw all those things, I despised it a lot. I hated it because of the negative effects it had on us. (Interview, 2018)

His father sought professional help after Devanand graduated from UWI, "I think one morning after he drank a lot, he got sick, and I think he just called my mother and told her he wanted to go to rehab. They inquired by a doctor, and they send him to the rehab. in Caura"[118] (Interview, 2018). Alcoholism led to poverty and gender-based violence, which was not conducive to learning which makes Devanand's achievements even more exceptional. Devanand believes that his father's alcoholism is "*cultural and hereditary*," as his paternal grandfather and his paternal uncles were also alcoholics.

For Manny, his addiction took the form of gambling leading to indebtedness, as he had to borrow to pay his debts when he lost his bets. He worked as an itinerant worker washing cars to feed his habit:

> Is small money I does be paying dem. In the weekend, I does pay dem. I does trust [owe]. I go owe dem a $600, this weekend. But I owe somebody else, is moneylender. But I will pay out next week. I have to go to de garden. Once I go to the garden, dat is it. Yeah. I want to go back in de garden. But just I does be here. Is 2 weeks again and I

[118] Caura Hospital

> done pay out dat money. Gambling, you know, gambling causing dat. I does play de roulette machine. I don't lose much in the whe whe, you know. I does gamble in de whe whe".[119] (Interview, 2018)

When asked if he would stop, he was ambivalent and responded, "Not really".

Fanon (1961) wrote about the impacts on mental health from colonisation, with a focus on the impact of slavery which was dehumanising and stripped people of their culture and traditions, with brutal violence against their bodies and minds. The Indentureds were spared this cultural disenfranchisement, although there were attempts to restrain cultural practices that were seen as a threat, such as ganja and stick fighting.

Several factors could have contributed to trauma in the indentureship experience starting from the arduous journey by boat with disease and death; harsh working and living conditions; abuse and violence on plantations; distrust by the local community; gender-based violence from plantation owners; and suppression of cultural practices used for relaxation. In the early days of indentureship, mostly able-bodied men were recruited so there was lack of opportunity for marriage and family. There was a high rate of suicide in those first five decades (Harrichan, 2020). While suicide did not appear in the stories, there is also a history of suicide in the community.

Social issues of addictions (alcoholism, gambling), gender-based violence, and crime, require further examination as manifestations of intergenerational trauma (IGT) and legacies of the plantation, which the people of Aranguez never left. These issues could be viewed as negative social capital of the community. IGT and its manifestations have consequences for the individual's success in education, as it creates a cycle of violence and poverty in the family that is difficult to escape. Bordieuan theory and the transmission of intergenerational capital (social, cultural, and economic) and Coleman's understanding of social capital's role in cognitive

[119] Whe Whe is a popular illegal gambling game brought to Trinidad by Chinese immigrants. Private "bankers" continue to operate in Aranguez which has its own illegal Whe Whe operations.

influences, suggest that the social networks within which people exist contribute to their psychological formation which impacts self-esteem, motivation, life expectations, which influence educational aspirations and life trajectories.

The issue of IGT expands social capital theory to consider cognitive factors shaped by the history of indentureship. The psychological aspect of postcolonial theory and the transmission of IGT derived from the indentureship experience was not part of the original theoretical framework but arose out of the data. Research on IGT from the legacies of indentureship in the Caribbean is scarce. There has been sociological research in the Caribbean on family formation, the matriarchal nature of Caribbean societies, the predominance of female-headed households, visiting relationships, the marginalised Black male, gender-based violence, and related social phenomena as legacies of the slave experience. But the legacy of trauma for both the Black and East Indian communities is important terrain for further research as it continues to generate negative community capital. Rahman (2020) notes:

> These ongoing colonial legacies of violence stemming from indentureship include but are not limited to how it has shaped mental health (and how mental health is perceived), high rates of suicide and gender-based violence, with so many men killing women they were in relationships with and/or their children followed by suicide (such as the murder of Riya Rajkumar by her Indo-Guyanese father in Ontario). The trauma of indentureship is carried in our cells and passed down in our genes with each generation, as the descendants of indentured labourers.

Rahman is speaking to epigenetic inheritance, new research that suggests that IGT is not only a psychological process but biological, passed down over generations at a genetic level, which Devanand suggested based on the alcoholism in each generation of his family.

The research on IGT conducted around people who have suffered traumatic events such as holocaust survivors and Indigenous peoples in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the US, has found that the experience of genocide and abuse has left a legacy of trauma and PTSD that

is transmitted through generations. In the case of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, research has shown students who carry trauma are likely to fail in school and in life.

Gaywish & Mordoch (2018) conducted qualitative research with Indigenous students in Canada to assess the impact of IGT on educational outcomes, where students identified some common factors associated with IGT, some of which may be relevant to the Caribbean context, including: adverse childhood experiences including trauma; violence and abuse; personal and family problems with alcohol and drugs; horizontal violence in families and communities; resentment from family and community; negative self-concept such as self-doubt, low self-esteem, and low confidence. Students felt disadvantaged by their backgrounds and did not develop good study skills prior to their secondary school education, as some of their families did not value education, which put them at a disadvantage in college and university.

The creation of trauma-informed education and higher education principles and practices in Canada, acknowledges the experiences of students who carry traumas from different life experiences and histories – survivors of genocide - Indigenous Peoples, Holocaust survivors, and other war refugees. However, in Trinidad, the legacies of slavery and indentureship have not been acknowledged and investigated as a continuing factor in the violence in society, contributing to violence in low tier schools and in low-income communities, with high failure rates and low transitions to higher education.

Times have changed in Aranguez as the era of local criminals and gangs from the town has passed, but in the meanwhile the persistent violence in the broader society has permeated Aranguez, affecting the sense of safety and security in how they live, go to school, work, and socialise.

Disability

Disability – mental and physical – is an axis of inequity in the education system. Schools and HEIs continue to struggle to address the diverse needs of individuals which require inclusive structures and systems for students of all abilities to succeed. In developing countries

like Trinidad, the situation is exacerbated by ignorance and lack of resources. Stories relating to attitudes towards disability in the family and institutional agents in the education system impacted the educational outcomes and life trajectory of people.

Shanti indicated that she had “the sickness” which resulted in blackouts which impacted her educational outcomes. She related an incident in primary school that speaks to poor teacher training and difficulties facing students with disabilities:

> In my 2nd year, well I repeat Common Entrance. That was like the *pressure there*. Because I study more harder that time to pass. Well, I had one seizure in school. The teacher was calling me, and I was not hearing anything. There was a girl telling me the answer and I didn’t respond to her. Well, the teacher end up coming and beating me, and he didn’t realise. Well, when he realise I wasn’t responding, is quite lunchtime. I get up back, recover. When he done beat me and he realise I didn’t respond, he end up leaving me there to sleep. (Interview, 2018)

The teacher hit Shanti and she fell unconscious, and then he left her asleep on her desk. There was no consequence for the teacher as her parents did not take action, “Dad and dem come for me in the evening and when I come home, I say, ‘I want to show you my back. I get any lash?’ Well, dey end up leaving it like that. Dey didn’t went in school and do anything. Dey said it was nothing really” (Interview, 2018).

The school was unaware of her disability, which her parents had not disclosed to them, but the teacher’s behaviour was also abusive. Parental expectations of Shanti in terms of educational outcomes and occupation were limited, “How I was the *epileptic*, they never really push” (Interview, 2018). Her willingness to complete her education by taking classes to re-do her Mathematics examination, and her exploration of vocational training and aspirations to open her own cake-icing business, demonstrate that she was capable and willing to learn and work. However, her family placed limitations on her because of her health issues which affected her life trajectory.

Manny's brother, Lallo, had a poor life trajectory even though he had done well at the secondary school level. According to Manny, "Nine passes he have but he get lash in he head too. But he used to work as a checker in the road. After he come and get lash in he head ... It look like it affect him too" (Interview, 2018). His brother had an accident and hurt his head and was never the same again. His brother may have needed medical assistance that could have addressed physical and mental health challenges arising but as low-income people, they did not have access to proper healthcare.

Jason and his sister also struggled in school, and he needed tutors at both primary and secondary school, and he also tutored his sister. The students who struggled in their schooling, had no support from family, as they did not have the understanding and capacity to help their children. Shanti's parents did not understand how to support her special needs. Hence, Shanti, was filling potatoes in a grocery – a job she had to beg her parents to allow her to do. Lallo, Manny's brother, worked as a casual labourer in the unemployment relief programme. Their education and occupational options were circumscribed by a lack of special education policy and the ignorance of families about disability. Their experiences also demonstrate the inability and lack of training of teachers to deal with students with disabilities. These stories suggest a need for community and teacher education about health and disability issues so children can realise their potential.

On a broader level, the education, medical, and social welfare system are limited in their capacity to help students with mental and physical disabilities. The government provides limited support for students with disabilities, but this is also an issue in more developed countries. There have been some attempts at policy-making regarding students with disabilities/special needs with the establishment of an inclusive education policy.[120] Section 8.1 of the 2009 policy notes that inclusive education involves, "changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies,

[120] See https://www.moe.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Inclusive-Education-Policy-Covers-2.pdf

curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners" (GoRTT). However, the Ministry's Special Education Policy developed in 2013 is still in draft. Stated policies, however, require implementation with assigned funding, resources, teacher education, and parent education to be successful.

Charran (2019) found a lack of government data that would show frequency of services being provided, and accessibility to students with disabilities. Moreover, a variety of sources suggested that educational change has been difficult for Trinidad and Tobago, especially the provision of Special Education services and the inclusion of children with disabilities in general education classrooms. Services for special education are very limited in the type and number provided in the schools (Charran, 2019; Blackman & Conrad, 2017). The issue of serving children with disabilities involves an interplay of policy, practice and cultural factors impacting the individual, the family and community, and the education system, which limits education access and life trajectories for people like Shanti and Lallo.

Migrations of Human Capital

The case raised the issue of migration from the Global South to the North, a global policy issue tied to post-colonial legacies, where people from former colonies migrate to the former colonising country (e.g., Caribbean migration to England) and neo-colonial powers (USA) for better economic opportunities. The push for developing countries to expand higher education access which requires increased investments, raises questions of mining of human capital from the global south. On the other hand, in-migration of immigrants and refugees to Trinidad, raises questions of access to education.

Out-Migration and Brain Drain

Out-migration (legal and illegal) has always been an option for Trinidadians, either for higher education attendance for the wealthier groups or to find better employment opportunities for all social classes. In fact, East Indian indentureds would abscond to Venezuela to permanently leave their assigned estate, which continued up until the 20th century (Perry,

1969). Relatives living abroad expands one's social capital as "people who are socially related to current or former migrants have access to social capital that significantly increases the likelihood that they, themselves, will migrate" (Palloni et al, 2001).

All the participants had family members who had migrated abroad given the limited job opportunities in Aranguez. Renuka and Neil who opted to migrate did not have a migrant network in England or the US, but their move was facilitated by their skills and higher education credentials. Better job opportunities were available through promotion with a transnational company (a push factor for Renuka) and lack of opportunities to pursue the career and research opportunities available in a developed country (a push factor for Neil). Renuka had mentioned that many of her colleagues in the company in Trinidad had not wanted to migrate, which the expatriate managers found to be strange. Devanand's mother did not want him to migrate to Canada because he would "live like a refugee" although it seemed fine for his sister to migrate in his stead.

Prem was never interested in migrating even though he had the opportunity when studying in Canada. His parents wanted their children to stay in Aranguez. He also lacked interest in studying abroad, after facing racism in Canada during a period of study. He rejected the metropole (North America, UK) as a study destination, preferring the local HEIs to learn and teach. His decisions demonstrated a refusal to conform to what was expected by his teachers but his was also a rejection of the former colonial and current neo-colonial powers. Prem was unique, in that sense. In a community which lacks social capital in the broader society, villagers who attain higher education may find it difficult to find employment, which provides a motivation to migrate abroad.

While the GoRTT has provided more access to various types of higher education, it is unclear whether there are sufficient employment opportunities, especially for PhD graduates and people in specialised fields, which is a push factor for educated people to migrate. This raises the question whether developing countries like Trinidad are simply 'educating to export',

while OECD countries are happy to recruit people with higher education to supplement aging populations. The West Indies has always suffered brain drain. Education policy accounts for this migration by having a re-payment policy for scholarship recipients who study locally or at foreign universities through the Scholarship Programme of Trinidad and Tobago, and subsequently migrate. Neil had to pay back the government for the 'Additional scholarship' that he had received for study at UWI.

Brain drain is a policy challenge of developing countries, but unless countries can generate economic opportunities locally, higher education expansion in the global south could be seen as a wasted investment and an extension of neo-colonialism. It raises the question of who benefits from higher education investments – the individual, the investing government, or foreign governments.

The findings provide some insights into the broader issue of HE policy and human capital development goals in the global South and migration patterns to OECD countries, which are relevant to the fields of development studies and internationalisation of higher education.

In-Migration - Newcomers and Educational Access

The research focused on the town of Aranguez and descendants of indentured labourers. However, the racial and cultural composition of Aranguez continue to evolve, reflective of political and economic shifts in the region and increasing global migration, raising new questions of access to education. People from other English-speaking Caribbean islands and Guyana have migrated on an ongoing basis to Trinidad given its strong economy.

Decades of economic and racial strife in Guyana has led to Guyanese migrants settling in Trinidad. According to the Census Demographic Report 2013, the share of foreign-born population from Guyana increased from 12.6% of the total foreign-born population in 2000 to 19.7% in 2011. Some of these people settled in Aranguez. Infrastructure projects using Chinese contractors have resulted in a new wave of Chinese immigrants. Many have set up groceries and shops in Aranguez.

The political unrest in Venezuela resulted in a wave of refugees to Trinidad with some living in Aranguez. Valmiki noted, “The few Chinese will have businesses like groceries or food places. The Venezuelans – you will see a lot of them. A lot of Venezuelans and Guyanese” (Valmiki, 2019). Skilled people are doing menial jobs in Aranguez. Manny commented, “Dem catching dere tail in Venezuela and dem coming here and renting. They have doctors working as labourers down here in Aranguez” (Interview, 2018). Aranguez people provide work for them on the farms and retail outlets and they rent apartments from locals. There is also some resentment of the Venezuelan refugees, based on media stories and demonisation of them as criminals. Manny’s comments reflected these public sentiments:

> It not hard for Venezuela boat to come and bring their guns. Dey loading the whole place in Trinidad. When you say dey run their own house, dey will do their own crime. They will not have Trinidadians working with dem. Dey will cut dem out. Dat will be a big problem, just now, you go see. … I might be telling you this, but we know the street life. All we saying is dat it becoming more and more Spanish and dey moving all about. The police does tell me dat too, me and dem does talk. Dey say these Spanish people coming to kill people just now. Dem come to do dat, so you have to get rid of dem. (Interview, 2018)

In the same way that East Indians were seen as outsiders and resented as a new group who had difficulties with access to education, the same has happened to undocumented people and refugees.

The country does not have legislation on refugee and asylum matters, so refugees do not have the right to work, the right to an education, or any legal rights (Maharaj-Landaeta, 2019). Before 2019, NGOs provided education and in the 2019-2020 school year, UNHCR[121] provided online education for refugees as the Trinidad government did not allow them access to public schools. The “Equal Place[122]” programme developed by the Education Working Group

[121] See https://help.unhcr.org/trinidadandtobago/faqs/equal-place-education-programme/

established by R4V partners was accessed by 1000 children.[123] In addition, language and financial barriers impede access (R4V, 2020).

The children of the Indentureds who were once living on the margins of society have been replaced by a new group of vulnerable people – new immigrants and refugees. The geopolitical changes that have impacted the town and broader society has expanded the issue of access to education to refugees and State-less people who are now at the bottom rung of society. The issue of groups lacking economic, social and/or cultural capital can be extended to these new groups in Aranguez, especially Venezuelan refugees. In the broader theory of social inequality, citizenship status becomes an axis of marginalisation. The issue of newcomers/refugees and their lack of access to education was an unexpected finding in the village of Aranguez and requires further research.

Summary

This chapter presented new findings rooted in colonial legacies manifesting as violence (community violence, corporal punishment, gender-based violence) and intergenerational trauma which continue to create harm in families, in the community, and/or in schools, which have implications for people's educational trajectories and participation in society.

The chapter also discussed findings related to migration of peoples; out-migration of educated people raises questions of brain drain to the North and in-migration of newcomers (documented and undocumented) reflect broader issues of access to education as a human right in the country. The issue of disability and challenges faced in the home in Aranguez and in schools, reflect outdated norms and customs in the community and society, and gaps in special education policies and teacher education which contribute to barriers and difficulties in the education system for special needs students. A lack of understanding of these complex issues

[123] The programme consists of an e-learning platform in Spanish and English that is available to all primary and secondary-level children who cannot access the local formal education system.

in Aranguez and the broader society, and how they impact the behaviour of policy actors, limits design and effectiveness of education policy.

Chapter 8: Key Findings and Contribution to Theory and Policy

This chapter summarises key findings, policy implications, and contributions to theorising in critical policy research in education. The research sought to understand why, despite government policies to remove financial barriers to higher education, there is low participation in the village of Aranguez. The findings reveal several factors and policy actors influencing education decisions, which demand changes in education policy that addresses a range of issues involving K-12 education and other education and employment options.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings provide new insights into how Bourdieu's social capital and cultural capital theory applies in understanding policy enactment and education access, as well as its limitations. Post-colonial theory allowed new understandings of postcolonial legacies in the education system and in the community that determine how education policy is enacted, which can inform policy and opportunities to improve K-12 and higher education and other social policies to support people facing barriers and marginalisation.

Key Findings

The Forms of Capital and Higher Education Access

Social Capital of the Family, Community and School.

Social capital embedded in family, community and school networks influenced higher education access in a *positive* or *negative way*, similar to previous research. However*,* while research in OECD countries has found *parental education* to be the primary factor in higher education access, the case study shows more nuanced results*.*

Where formal parental education was absent or limited, *parental support and involvement* of one or both parents mattered more. Findings specific to the context show that the *mother played a stronger role* in the child's schooling even though both parents were in the

home. *Extended family networks* were also an important source of information and support – kin and non-kin family. This is different from developed countries, where the nuclear family is the dominant family form.

C*ommunity social capital* in Aranguez provided limited access to resources - information and guidance - on higher education experiences (university and non-university), even in more recent times. An interesting finding was the role of the village's *geographical location* in the North which ghettoised the community and impacted *flow of information* about the wealth and work opportunities in the Energy sector in the South, which were motivators for higher education for Indians living in close proximity to the industries. These findings suggest that proximity to HEIs may not encourage HE access but proximity to job opportunities and employers may do so. East Indians from agrarian communities in the South of the island were aware of work driven by proximity to the energy sector, so they attended university in the North to gain the education required for technical and professional work. Aranguez people were unaware of these job opportunities and did not aspire to higher education.

S*chool social capital* was a major factor in higher education access, where student experience and success at K-12 level were impacted by the tier of school (middle or low tier) attended. The government policy of zoning sends students from Aranguez to low tier secondary schools in their community or similar communities, which limit access to information outside their own networks. Thus the education system serves as a mechanism to continue to reproduce social inequality.

Cultural Capital in Subordinate Subcultures.

Cultural capital was a useful analytical tool in understanding education access in this subordinate culture practicing non-Western religions. Findings cast new light on religion as *cultural capital* in education. Participants suggested that the Hindu and Muslim schools in Aranguez and environs foster a *habitus* and *organisational culture* that cultivate discipline, respect, and academic excellence but this require further research.

In the case of Prem and his Brahmin[124] family of Hindu priests, there are indications of a *family habitus* and *positive cultural capita*l that was influential in his educational journey, as well as that of subsequent generations, who accessed higher education at the graduate and professional levels. This eastern culture challenges the theory that only the culture of the dominant class can be of value to social mobility. This aspect of cultural capital in East Indian communities (including issues of caste) in the West and their attitudes towards education warrants further investigation.

The findings also expose *negative cultural capital* in the community enacted through patriarchy which impacted access to education for women. However, culture evolves and adapts, and this patriarchal legacy of the Indian culture that perpetuated gender inequity diminished over the decades as they assimilated to norms of Trinidad society.

Economic Capital – Alternative options.

The results provide a critique from the Global South, challenging the Western policy discourse that *formal higher education* is a prerequisite for increasing incomes and economic participation. Based on rational choice theory, people opt for higher education as a means of accumulation of economic capital through higher wage earnings. Changing 'attitudes' of low-income people as to the value of higher education has been viewed as challenging in the discourse on higher education (Parker et al, 2013). However, researchers and policy-makers apply their own worldview about what constitutes a 'policy problem'. In Aranguez, people do not necessarily place the same value on higher education and self-select out for two reasons.

First, in the village, all forms of education and learning were valued including informal on-the-job training leading to viable self-employment and independence, as opposed to formal credentialled education and wage employment. Second, land ownership (a *positive colonial*

[124] A few Indian Brahmin men in Trinidad had accessed higher education early, since the 1930s and formed the basis of the post-colonial Indian political parties and lobbyists for greater rights for Indians in Trinidad including voting and education.

legacy of the village) mediates the impact of higher education policy. Ownership of residential land and farmland translate to rental incomes, which allow them to bypass higher education to earn a livelihood. The economic return from higher education is not as important for land-owning villagers in Aranguez. These findings do not mean higher education is rejected by everyone. It is still an indicator of social status by Western norms and a means of social mobility, as demonstrated by the participants with higher education who were all middle class, wage earners.

Intergenerational change in higher education access

Given their late arrival to Trinidad and illiteracy rates in the 1950s, the East Indians in Aranguez have made slow progress towards higher education. The *temporal nature* of the analysis was able to capture small changes in higher education attainment in families. Change in education access from illiteracy to primary school to secondary school and some higher education in the subsequent generations reflect shifting government education policy. The educational attainment of Aranguez has evolved from illiteracy to 17% tertiary education, although this number does not account for the villagers leaving and outside people moving in from other parts of Trinidad and international migrants.

While six participants in the study had achieved some form of higher education, ranging from accredited technical/vocational education to PhD level, this is over-representation in the actual population of Aranguez. Figure 6 below, shows educational attainment levels of participants and relatives, including grandparents, parents, siblings, and other relatives, and the period completed, where applicable. Across generations, all the participants who had accessed formal higher education were first-generation students including two with PhDs, one master's graduate, two with accredited technical/vocational education & training (TVET) from HEIs, and one with unaccredited (informal) TVET. For all the participants, the journey to higher education took 4 to 5 generations, except for Prem who took the shortest time from his indentured grandfather - 3 generations - for someone to access higher education in his immediate family -

his eldest brother and himself. The fourth generation (child, nieces, and nephews) accessed higher education (including PhDs, law degree, MD) demonstrating intergenerational transmission of cultural and social capital.

Figure 6:

Intergenerational Change in Educational Attainment

Pre-1950s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000-2019
father mother	Nadira		niece/ nephews	daughter		grand-children
parents		sister brother	Prem	brothers		daughter/ nephews/ nieces
Boyo's parents		Boyo	Siblings		Renuka's maternal uncle	Renuka brothers
parents		siblings	Siblings	Manny		niece/ nephews
grand-parents		parents			Devanand sisters	nieces
grand-parents		parents			Rohan/ brother	son
grand-parents			parents		Shanti brother	niece/ nephew
grand-parents			parents			Jameela/ brothers
grand-parents			Father Mother			Neil brother
grand-parents		father	mother		aunts	Suresh
grand-parents			parents			Valmiki/ brother
great-grand-parents		grand-parents		parents	aunt	Jason

Legend

No formal education

Primary school

Secondary school/informal vocational training

Higher education – Accredited TVET and Undergraduate

Higher education – post-Graduate

Relatives/Descendants too young for higher education

Not applicable

The research demonstrates that inter-generational change in higher education is complex given the multitude of factors involved. However, once a family has people with higher education, there is indication of change in the next generation.

Education in Post-colonial contexts

The research brings new understandings to education policy enactment in a post-colonial context with colonial legacies of slavery and indentureship which created a diverse society, where power relations are determined by class intersecting with race, religion, and geography, which are determinants of who has access to education and higher education, and the quality of education accessed.

The research on racialised groups and HE access has focused on Black people and Latinx communities in North America. This research shifts our understanding of racialisation in the West based on the historical and ongoing experiences of East Indian-West Indians in the Caribbean as a subordinate group. Findings demonstrate how colonial relations of power, oppression and race relations persist, where the population is majority people of colour, the political elite are people of colour, and the economic elite are minority in numbers but not status, which perpetuate inequalities. The impact of racialisation and religious discrimination of non-Christians in a Western context can be of value to countries who find diversity challenging to accommodate in education policy texts and practices.

In colonial and early post-colonial years, the villagers' access to education were limited due to racialisation and religious discrimination as Hindus and Muslims. The economic, social, and political shifts in Trinidad, from colonialism to post-colonialism, resulted in changes in education policy to expand education as a means of development. These changes positively impacted the Aranguez community's access of K-12, which became mandatory, but not so much higher education.

The education system has colonial legacies that privilege high-stakes testing which disadvantages students from lower class groups like Aranguezians. Examinations serve as a

social sorting tool to stream students from Aranguez to low tier schools, which impact success in education.

The study offers another perspective on the role of the Christian Churches in providing access to education. The active role of the Church (Roman Catholic, Anglican and Presyterians) as a policy actor in education is a colonial legacy. The dual system of education of government and government assisted-denominational schools established early in the country's history, stratifies schools and serves as an axis of inequality, as it contributes to class stratification. The Concordat, a colonial policy document, allows 20% of students to be selected by the Church, which privileges religion and class over high school scores. However, government policy also evolved to allow government funding of all denominational schools, due to agitation from other denominations. Students have some level of access to religious-based schools of their own denomination. This is an equitable policy as it does not deny access to funding for one religion over another and provides lessons for other jurisdictions.

The research also suggests that Aranguez as a plantation community, still has a *community habitus* that display legacies of the plantation, which have persisted long after the plantation shut down operations. The habitus of the community is part of the psycho-social dynamic in higher education access (Bourdieu, 1977). Colonial legacies of intergenerational trauma (IGT) seem to linger among the children of the indentured in Aranguez, manifested in violence, crime, gender-based violence, alcoholism, and gambling, which affect families psychologically and economically, and have implications for success in the education system. The violence on which the village and the broader society was built persists in the post-colonial period impacting families, the community, schools, and educational outcomes. These issues need to confronted by government and other policy actors.

Policy implications and recommendations

The findings demonstrate the complexity of policy enactment with new findings specific to Aranguez, which have implications for change. Ball's theory of policy enactment (2005) was

valuable in interrogating policy enactment in Aranguez, including the role of various policy actors operating at multiple levels. However, while Ball centres the school and institutional agents (teachers, principals) as enactors of education policy, this research *centred people in the community*, giving them voice as the key policy actors who 'filter, accept or reject' the options available to them for higher education.

The case demonstrates why increasing higher education participation rates in the community will continue to be a challenge for policy-makers, which financial aid initiatives cannot resolve. The findings also have broader implications for education policy in the country. Government has to consider where policy change has to happen in terms of policy actors; at which levels; where to focus; and the needs of people arising from the post-colonial context and legacies versus the needs of Capital, and external policy influences.

Government as a policy actor

Government shifted education policy over time as the country moved from colonial status to independence which expanded access to education for the villagers. The findings demonstrate that there was increased attendance at primary, secondary school, and to some extent higher education in Aranguez. Many countries choose not to or cannot afford to subsidise higher education to the extent that Trinidad has done, including other countries in the Caribbean and developed countries. Investing in new K-12 and expansion of HEI seats, low tuition fees and later tuition-free undergraduate education created the *opportunity of access* to higher education. While funding policy is important, findings reveal that there are gaps in government policy and practice. Simply providing 'free' higher education is not enough for encouraging people from marginalised communities to attend.

Outreach and engagement.

Government policy and programme initiatives provide the *right of access* to higher education but not *equity of access*. Policy has to be complimented by other strategies that aim to equalise the playing field for people from low-income or marginalised communities. Outreach

and engagement to build awareness of higher education as an option, along with career options, are important to address social capital deficits. Government cannot assume the "build it and they will come" approach towards marginalised communities. This information and guidance could be provided through schools, social media, and traditional media. There is progress, as the Ministry now provides virtual career fairs[125] but given the digital divide, local in-person initiatives for families in communities who do not have internet access or computer literacy are also necessary. HEIs and government agencies, teacher unions, NGOs, and other policy actors should get involved.

Funding.

A major challenge for the government is how to maintain funding along with improving the quality of education at all levels of the system, while providing access for low-income and marginalised groups. Given financial constraints, the definition of 'higher education' needs to be more inclusive and recognise and support different forms of postsecondary education (academic and professional) including informal training and employer-based training using strategies such as PLAR.

Asking unemployed graduates from low-income communities to re-pay loans up to a maximum of six months after graduation, disincentivises the poor from accessing higher education. Loan re-payment should be contingent on graduates finding employment or having the ability to-repay. In addition, government should provide upfront grants and bursaries tied to need instead of only high secondary school grades (CAPE grades) to low-income students.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonisation (EDID).

The colonial institutional structures reflected in Trinidad's education system, suggest the need for decolonisation of the education system. Changes required include transformation of

[125] See Virtual Career Fair Series • Ministry of Education (moe.gov.tt)

the tiered system to remove *high-stakes testing* and *zoning* which streams students based on geography and class, and privileges children of the minority elite.

There is need for an EDID policy framework grounded in the realities of Trinidad's diverse society that shifts race relations and other equity issues in a positive direction. Government ministries and education policy actors can operate within this framework to improve equity and inclusion in K-12 and higher education, given the diversity and diverging needs of various vulnerable populations, including implementing special education policies and training. A holistic review of the education system from kindergarten to university is required to address EDID issues.

Education policy reform must also decolonise the education system that would include amending the *Concordat*, addressing *mental health,* and dealing with *school violence*. Endemic violence in the community have made their way into classrooms. The government needs to work with other policy actors (students, parents, schools, communities, unions, NGOs, churches) on decolonisation in schools and marginalised communities like Aranguez. Decolonisation work requires horizontal colloboration across Ministries such as Community Services, Health, Child Welfare, and National Security, and among various policy actors,[126] who need resources to implement transformative solutions, moving beyond partisan and race-based politics that has been the norm since the inception of the nation state.

In addition, government needs to introduce policies for political refugees and undocumented people, and work with the UN and other IGOs to provide access to all levels of education for this vulnerable group.

Brain Drain.

The case study highlights a new pillage of the global south – its skilled, highly-educated human resources which are in demand by OECD countries based on their own aging

[126] In 2021, segments of the Indian community were complaining that they were not being consulted about education reform.

population. The global discourse on increasing access to higher education does not consider the gap between wealthy and poor nations, and where priorities should be for limited government revenues. The drive to produce more higher education graduates assumes the economy can absorb them. The findings show that people in Aranguez who have higher education are under-employed or have difficulty finding employment, and highly educated people migrate to the metropole.

Trinidad may be educating to export human capital to developed countries facing labour shortages. Government policy needs to better account for brain drain and factor in remittances and investments from citizens abroad and find ways to recoup lost investments to the Global North. A possible option could involve collaborating on data exchange between Trinidad & Tobago and receiving countries of labour. Data would show the flow of people and remittances, and measure who benefits and who loses from higher education investments between countries in the Global North and Global South, and among countries in the Global South.

Monitoring policy impacts.

The research highlights the need for better monitoring and evaluation of K-12 and higher education policy. There is a lack of both quantitative and qualitative public information on the impact of K-12 and higher education policies in Trinidad. Metrics on higher education are needed on retention, student experience, employment after graduation, and time to completion.

Equity indicators are also needed given student diversity for race/ethnicity, religion, gender, immigration status, disability, geography, and intersecting variables. An analysis of official longitudinal data that includes disaggregated demographic data and education indicators on the student and working population, will allow tracking of policy impacts on HE access and success. In addition, measures of safety and violence at schools and building facilities indices in K-12 and higher education (to speak to material contexts) can allow assessments of education quality. Inadequate policy research and statistics mask ongoing and increasing problems and inequities in the society.

Individuals and families as policy actors

Government bureaucrats as framers of education policy, assume a lack of higher education is a problem that must be solved since people should desire it and the economy needs it. Instead, government should engage communities like Aranguez at the local level to ascertain their educational and economic needs, and social supports required to succeed.

The findings have shown that individuals as policy actors exercise their agency to consciously opt out of formal higher education and choose alternative paths. Governments, policy-makers, and academic researchers need to understand that this does not signify failure of government policy to expand HE participation, despite the global discourse to expand the HE graduate count to feed the capitalist machinery. If people are choosing different ways to engage positively with the economy (e.g., informal apprenticeships, self-employment through farming or small businesses, provision of rental housing to commuters and refugees), governments can provide support for those options.

In addition, the investment of time and resources and foregone income for higher education, followed by unemployment or under-employment does not provide a good return on investment for people from communities such as Aranguez. Therefore, employments supports are needed for such students facing challenges after graduation, which will deter migration.

K-12 - Institutional agents as policy actors

Institutional agents in schools play a role in aiding or hindering pathways to higher education. Teacher education and teacher accountability need to address equitable treatment of students and quality of teaching especially in schools serving low-income and marginalised groups. Training curricula for guidance counsellors and teachers should include EDID, and removal of practices that label and stream students from marginalised and vulnerable groups. Teacher unions also need to hold their members accountable for inequitable, discriminatory and unprofessional practice.

HEI accountability

While HEIs in developed countries have programmes and departments for outreach and community enagement with students and parents from marginalised groups, that have some success based on the research literature, this is not the norm in Trinidad. Their role in *outreach, community engagement*, and *retention promotion* and their obligation to promote *equity and inclusion* for marginalised students seem to be overlooked based on GoRTT policy documents and participants' stories. This means that marginalised students arrive at HEIs in a random manner with low probabilities of even getting there as was confirmed by the findings.

Public sector HEIs, in particular, especially UWI, need to outreach to marginalised communities and find students capable and interested in higher education, encourage enrollment and provide academic and financial supports, in order to provide equity of access. This is important given the recent decline in enrollments in Trinidad. Trinidad can learn from the mistakes of programmes in other jursidictions which failed to address external factors in the home or communities that affect K-12 and HEI students.

The Church as policy actor

Churches of all denominations are key policy actors who lobby and influence education policy, since colonial times to present day. Early in its colonial history, Trinidad became dependent on the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches as a provider of K-12 to the elite and later to the black population after slavery ended.

The last group who came to Trinidad in colonial times during the country's formation were Indians. Their access to education was extremely limited, and later the Presyterian Church provided access to K-12 and limited higher education abroad for those who converted. This decision to not assimilate through conversion put people in Aranguez at a disadvantage since they only accessed K-12 widely when public schools expanded after Independence.

Trinidad's dual education system became enshrined in the Concordat of 1960 which led to financial sharing of educational costs and the 20% option for the Church to select students for

secondary school intake. Other denominations through lobbying obtained access to public funding including Hindu and Muslim denominations. Aranguez children eventually had government and Muslim/Hindu primary schools locally and limited access to Muslim/Hindu secondary schools outside of the village. Religious instruction and celebration of festivals are also allowed in government schools.

The cost-sharing is a positive for the government who face a drop in revenues. However, the Government and the various denominations need to revisit the 20% rule and its role in preventing access and equity for students. Government should also review what practices denominational schools have that result in better student outcomes, and what learnings could be applied to the public schools where certain schools face increasing violence.

Global policy actors

IGOs push a global narrative that developing countries need to massify higher education. They bring funding and policy advice to developing countries that HE expansion is the solution to make the shift to 'developed' status. The reality is that brain drain feeds the labour market needs of the North.

The GoRTT has to better understand and address the needs of the economy and population, and apply a critical lens to policy advice from IGOs such as UNESCO and the World Bank. Massification is an unrealistic goal for Trinidad & Tobago, much less poorer countries, who (unlike TT) are still struggling to achieve universal primary and/or secondary school education. People have other options and desires for a career and income which work for their context, as the people in Aranguez demonstrate.

Areas for further research

The key areas for further research are presented below.

A Bordieuan lens in developing countries

The case study demonstrates the utility of using the resource-based concepts of *social capital*, *cultural capital* and *economic capital*, as well as *habitus,* grounded in Bourdieu's theory of social

reproduction, in applying a critical lens to understanding higher education policy enactment in Aranguez. The theoretical framework allowed an analysis of power, class formation, systemic oppression and the role of the education system in reproducing social inequality at a structural level. It also allowed examination of educational policy enactments at the group level in families, community, schools, and individual levels. Researchers in developing countries can utilise these concepts in their own research in education policy.

EDID in education policy in post-colonial societies

The findings demonstrate the need for research on intergenerational trauma (IGT) in communities of descendants of Indian indentureds (Girmityas), as there is a dearth of research in this area. Rajkomar (2018), in writing about the trauma of indentures in *Sueurs de Sang* in the Mauritius context, recommends research on IGT and the interplay between trauma and gender, caste, and religious affiliation. IGT research can be extended to the Girmityas diaspora in former colonies (Trinidad, Guyana, Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, etc.) and places of re-migration such as Canada, the USA, the UK,and the Netherlands.

Research can include how legacies of trauma create a cycle of escalating violence, even pervading the school and classroom. Research on the application of trauma-informed education/higher education policy and practice in the Caribbean context is needed within a decolonising framework to address the challenges faced by Indian (and Black students) living in low-income communities, with historically high levels of violence and poverty.

The role of the Church in Education

There are interesting insights from the case study on the role of the Church as a key policy actor and religious accommodation and equity. In North America and Europe, separation of Church and State has led to the exclusion of religion in schools and classrooms. This issue offers different areas for further research – religion in public schools; equity in government funding policy for denominational schools; school organisational habitus, cultural capital and student success in denominational schools - comparative research on the performance of

Muslim/Hindu and Christian students who attend mandir/mosque/church regularly and attend either denominational schools or government schools (primary/secondary), and their rates of access to higher education.

Other areas

The findings highlight the need for research on access to education for refugees in the Global South and migration of skilled labour to the North. The issues of labour market saturation and brain drain for people with HE in Trinidad and the Caribbean require further research to inform evidence-based policy.

Analytical Perspectives/Frameworks for Critical Education Policy Research

The research demonstrates the complexity of higher education access and the value of interrelated perspectives/frameworks to interrogate the issue. Using *Bordieuan theory*, I was able to demonstrate the value of positive and negative social capital, and positive and negative cultural capital, and habitus (community and organisational) and the importance of social networks in providing information, guidance and support to access higher education. *Post-colonial theory*, allowed an understanding of the impact of the history, economy, and politics of Trinidad in the local context and post-colonial legacies in the education system and in the community of Aranguez that impacted the educational journey.

In addition, my research identifies key factors – *agency, additional educational statuses - no formal education and informal education/on-the-job training, race in terms of Indians, religion and the Church, non-Western religions, gender, geography and spatiality (local, national and global influences), temporality and intergenerational change in education, colonial legacies - trauma and violence, and EDID* – that need to be considered in addressing any model to assess higher education access in localised contexts like Aranguez, especially in post-colonial societies.

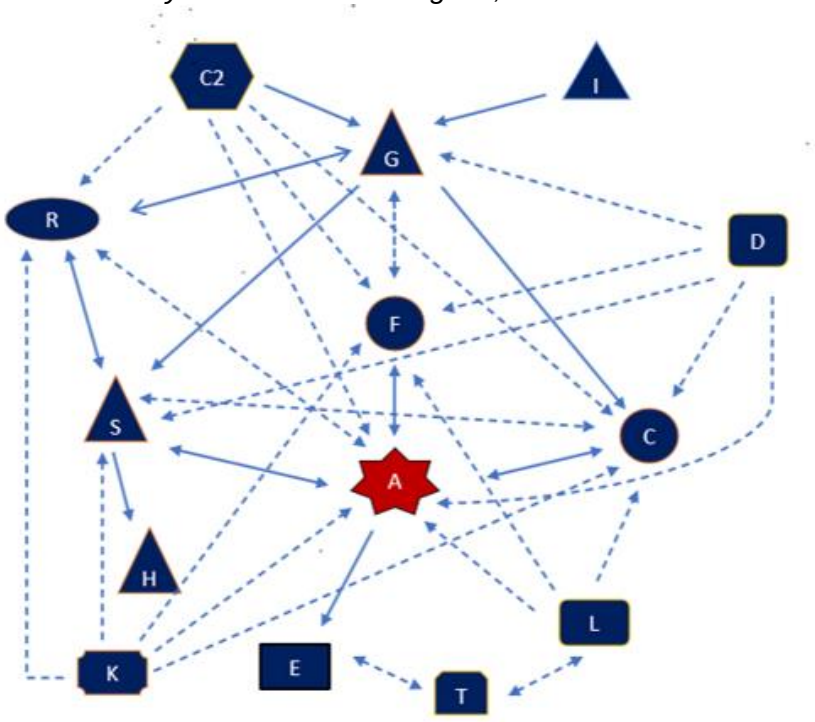
Individual agency and psycho-social factors of motivation and aspirations were the common threads for people who accessed higher education, as they overcame challenges despite low probabilities of entering and succeeding in higher education, especially university. All education statuses have to be considered for research participants, to determine cultural capital in families. This includes '*no formal education'*, an educational status related to marginalisation and lack of access to education of older generations, while '*informal education/OJT'* were viable options for the community, which led to self employment.

Specific demographics were important in access and power*. Race* and racialisation was more nuanced in this context, where Indians were racialised by the black community and minority groups (creole society). Minorities in terms of numbers, did not equate with minority in terms of status, where the economic elite comprised numerical minorities. The *Church and religion* played a big role in providing educational services and access to education and higher education, as well as contributing to social stratification and inequity in the education system. All major religions were involved in education services and received public funding. *Gender* operated in two ways - to limit access for Indian women by their own community, but later led to positive outcomes over time, where women of all racial/etnic backgrounds in the society are doing better than their male counterparts.

Geographical location and spatiality are considerations in access. Place of residence can serve to ghettoise, limiting access to information about educational opportunities and related employment, where the latter can incentivise people towards higher education. Spatiality allowed an analysis of *local, national and global influences* on policy actors, especially Aranguezians and government*.* Colonial legacies of *intergenerational trauma* and *violence* in communities and *temporality* in terms of intergenerational transmission are overlooked policy issues that continue to impact the community of Aranguez. Based on the findings, *equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonisation (EDID)* within a post-colonial context became important in the analysis.

Figure 7

Education Policy Enactment in Aranguez, Trinidad



Legend

A	Individual and agency
C	Community of the individual; community of the school
C2	Context – history, politics, economics
D	Demographics and EDI: Religion (-/+) ; Race (-); Gender (-); Geography (-)
E	Levels of education attained: No formal education; Kindergarten; Primary school; Secondary school; informal education; OJT; Tertiary ed. – non-university; university
F	Family- mother, father, sibling, extend family – kin/non-kin
H	Higher education intsitution – private, public
I	IGOs – UNESCO, IRBD, etc.
K	Capital – social, cultural, economic, habitus
L	Legacies of colonisation – trauma, IGT , violence and decolonisation
R	The Church – Roman Catholic, Anglican, Hindu, Muslim, other Christian, others
S	School – tiers of K-12 (public, denominational, private)
T	Temporality – change

Figure 7 above, provides a graphical representation of the factors, relationships among policy actors, and influences involved in decisions around education and higher education access. These factors intertwine with power relations that shape education policy and policy enactments that ultimately impact intergenerational change in education. Researchers and policy-makers can employ these factors and levels of analysis to understand the complexities of higher education access.

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Appendix A: Participant Descriptors

The demographics and descriptors provide some personal context of participants to understand the discussion of themes and analysis of findings as they relate to higher education access. The descriptors summarises the participants personal histories as it relates to education and occupations intergenerationally in the family, which must be considered in light of the research context – historical, economic, political, and educational, outlined in chapter 5.

Participant descriptor: Nadira

Nadira was born in Rio Claro[127] on the Boos Estates but she moved to Aranguez with her extended family. She is[128] married with a daughter. She retired from being a seamstress and her husband retired from a clerical position. Her family did not have an agricultural background. Her paternal grandfather came from India as an indentured labourer with his second wife, the sister of his late wife[129]. He was a wheelwright – fixing the wheels of donkey carts, horse carts, but later became a fisherman in Port of Spain. Nadira's father was a house builder although he only had no formal training. Her mother attended primary school in Port of Spain, and became a housewife. Nadira attended a presbyterian and a catholic primary school in the late 1940s - 1950s but did not sit the College Exhibition examination (later CEE and now SEA). None of her extended family members up until the current generation went to a university or any type of postsecondary institution.

Participant Descriptor: Prem

Prem's grandfather was from India, and a pandit (Hindu priest), who did not work long as an indentured labourer. People in the Hindu community in Trinidad helped him to buy out his indentured contract and he continued his calling as a pandit. Prem's father was also a pandit and his brothers, and his nephews continue the tradition alongside their day jobs. His father and mother went to primary school. His eldest sibling, his sister, was a housewife. Prem attended a government primary school in the 1960s and the UWI in the 1970s and completed his undergraduate degree. He did not do a Master's degree but went immediately to the PhD. He

[127] A village in the South-East part of the island.
[128] Although Nadira passed away a few months after the interview, she is referred to in the present tense.
[129] In both Hindu and Muslim families in India, it was the norm for a widower to marry the sister of his late wife. This practice was continued by the indentured and this was the case for the ancestors of 3 participants.

became a Professor. The next generation is doing very well academically, attaining higher education at a high level – MD and PhD.

Participant Descriptor: Boyo

Boyo attended a Government primary school in El Socorro in the 1960s. He failed the Common Entrance Examination and dropped out of post-primary, which is the two years extra. He was school 'buddies' with Prem in primary school. He married a local girl who is a housewife. Boyo's grandfather came to Aranguez from India as a teenager with his mother, as indentured labourers. Boyo's grandmother died mysteriously, and his grandfather married and had Boyo's father and children. After his indentureship term ended, he became a peasant farmer and so did his children - Boyo's father and siblings. Boyo and his siblings were all married and living in Aranguez. Boyo had two boys and one girl who was the middle child, Renuka, another *participant* in the study.

Participant Descriptor: Manny

Manny attended primary school from the 1970s to early 1980s, a Junior Secondary School; and a Senior Comprehensive school in the 1980s. The family is a big extended family with uncles and cousins living in Aranguez. His great-grandparents were indentured labourers, and his grandfather worked on the Aranguez Estates when it was still operating as an agricultural business. His mother was from Caroni[130] (the central part of the island). He worked as a farm hand on his father's land that his brothers are now working. He said he was the only one to pass the Common Entrance examination in his immediate family. His brothers worked in farming and odd jobs and his sisters received some clerical training and became housewives. Manny currently works as an itinerant worker doing odd jobs. He is unmarried with no children and lives in the family home with his other unmarried brothers.

Participant Descriptor: Devanand

Devanand attended a Hindu school in Aranguez which all his family had attended. He attended the local Junior Secondary, a Senior Comprehensive and a secondary school. He attended the UWI where he completed an undergraduate degree. He also did one year of a Masters in

[130] Caroni Limited was the main source of livelihood for low-income East Indians in Caroni which was formed by consolidating former sugar estates under one Government company. It was divested in 2003 and land sold off to workers and residents. This was the end of sugar production in Trinidad and sugar is now imported from Guyana.

Accounting and a Diploma in Education. He is a secondary school teacher. He also taught accounting as a TA at UWI. He is the eldest in his family and his sisters completed secondary school and work in clerical positions. Their economic situation required them to work and not continue their education. He was the only one in his immediate and extended family to access higher education. His parents had primary school education; however, his mother did not complete primary school for economic reasons. His father worked a few jobs throughout his life – delivery man, rearing animals, foreman. Devanand is single and lives at home with his mother.

Participant Descriptor: Rohan

Rohan is married with a baby. He has a big family (maternal and paternal) who are from Aranguez. He attended a local Hindu Primary school and the local Junior Secondary School and later attended a Senior Comprehensive school. His older brother attended the same Junior secondary school, and another Senior Comprehensive School. He works in retail as a supervisor and his brother is a taxi-driver like his father. His parents went to primary school. None of his extended family have accessed higher education.

Participant Descriptor: Renuka

Renuka's family (paternal and maternal) are from Aranguez and her late paternal grandparents were peasant farmers but her maternal; grandfather is a small businessman. Her father is Boyo, another participant in the research. She attended a private preschool in Aranguez and the local Government School, then to a nearby Government Secondary School. She completed her A levels at a government College and her undergraduate degree at UWI, after which she started working in the Oil/Gas sector in the South of the island. She completed an MBA while working through a private HEI, which has a partnership with a foreign university. She is married and has a young son. She received an offer from her employer to live and work abroad.

Participant Descriptor: Shanti

Shanti is single and lives with her parents in Aranguez. Her father is a chauffeur and mother is a housewife. The grandparents were peasant farmers in Aranguez. She attended a Hindu School in the nearby village, the local Junior Secondary and then a Senior Comprehensive School in another village. Her brother is a primary school teacher. Her brother also attended the same Hindu School, and a secondary school in Port of Spain. None of her relatives attended government primary schools, only Hindu denominational schools. All her cousins attended

secondary school. She has 2 ‘O’ levels. Initially, she did not get any O levels but she went to a private secondary school where she got one O level. She repeated Mathematics through YTEPP[131] which gave free evening classes funded by the government in a local Hindu school. She later took a 3-month cake icing course from a lady who gave private classes at her home in a nearby village. After 5 years staying at home after completing all her studies, she started working at a grocery store.

Participant Descriptor: Jameela

Jameela’s family on both maternal and paternal sides are from Aranguez. Her grandparents were peasant farmers. Her father continues the tradition of vegetable farming and her mother retired after doing different odd jobs and working in her home-based catering business. Her maternal grandfather worked as an agricultural technician and farmed part-time until he retired. She attended the local Government Primary School from the late 1980s to 1990s, the local Junior Secondary, and a government secondary school in Port of Spain. There was no one with higher education in her immediate family, although she had two cousins and second cousins on her mother’s side who went on to higher education. She did a few odd jobs, completed a private PSW course and later became an artisan making and selling her own products. Her brothers completed secondary school, and one does automotive repair and had informal training and the other works as an agricultural technician. She is currently a self-employed as an artisan making and selling her own products. She is divorced with 2 children and lives with her parents.

Participant Descriptor: Neil

Neil’s maternal (Muslim) and paternal (Hindu) family are from Aranguez but his parents moved out to a town in Central Trinidad in the 1980s where they had family land. However, he spent a lot of time in Aranguez growing up with his grandparents, uncles and cousins. Both sides are farming families. The change in geographical location meant that his school zone and choices for schools changed. He attended a private preschool and primary school in the 1990s, then a top secondary school in central Trinidad and the UWI, where he completed his undergraduate studies. He received a scholarship to complete his PhD at a private US university. He worked as a TA while completing his PhD studies and the institution asked him to stay on to teach as he

[131] The Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP), provided through a state enterprise has provided vocational skills training for 30 years. It started off as a temporary youth program to address high youth unemployment.

was a good TA. He decided to enter the corporate world instead and stayed to live and work in the US.

Participant Descriptor: Suresh

Suresh's is maternal and paternal grandparents were farmers in Aranguez. He attended private pre-school, a local Hindu school from the late 1990s to early 2000s, a junior secondary school and Secondary Comprehensive School in a nearby village. He completed a welding course at a government Technical Institute (which became part of UTT) later attended a publicly-assisted, private Technology Institute where he completed the National Skills Development Programme (NSDP) Journeyman apprenticeship program. His older brother went to a Government Secondary in Port of Spain – the same school as Jameela and Shanti's brother. He started 'A' levels but did not complete and became a civil servant. Krishna is married with two children – a preschooler and one girl attending Hindu Primary School. His sister went to the same preschool and primary school but then attended a Government Secondary school (attended by Renuka); then she attended a popular private HEI where she did computer training that was certified by an HEI in London, England. She works in a clerical position. Suresh is currently working in the production line at a factory. He lives at home with his parents.

Participant Descriptor: Valmiki

Valmiki is from a large family in Aranguez. He is not familiar with the old history of the town. His highest educational attainment was secondary school. He attended a local private preschool (which later received state funding), and a local Hindu school. He was in the first cohort of in the local 5-year Secondary school which was converted in 2005 from a Junior Secondary school. He repeated some of his O level examinations at a private high school in Barataria. After school, he worked in the vegetable fields with his father who worked in a government position in agriculture but farmed part-time, as well. He is now an agricultural technician where he received on the job training from his employer. He has an older brother who attended a Comprehensive Secondary School in a nearby village and is a sales' clerk. He is single and lives with his parents in Aranguez.

Participant Descriptor: Jason

Jason's maternal grandparents moved from Waterloo to Aranguez where they settled as farmers. He was not too familiar with his families' history. He attended a local private preschool,

a Hindu primary school, and a nearby secondary school which used to be a Junior Secondary school in the 1980s, but was converted to a 7-year school during the conversion of all Junior secondary schools. He completed O levels. He had aspired to going to UWI to do Electrical Engineering but did not feel confident that he would succeed given his past struggles with school. He was writing his examinations for his technical degree at UTT at the time of the interview. His maternal aunt completed a degree in Accounting at UWI, otherwise no one else in his immediate family (cousins, aunts, uncles, parents) went on to higher education. Most of his paternal relatives did not complete secondary school. His parents divorced when he was young and he lives with his mother in Aranguez and his younger sister, who is in secondary school. His father lives in a nearby village and takes an active role in his life.

Appendix B – Interview Guide

Questions will be posed based on the individual's situation and educational attainment level and to age/generation and will be spoken in Trinidad creole to participants. Some questions will be asked during the interview as prompts to obtain relevant information.

1. Tell me about your experience with the education system in Trinidad at preschool/primary/post-primary/secondary/tertiary level? (Whatever is applicable)

   (Prompts for further questions on school/HE - parental involvement; costs; financial aid; retention/graduation; friends, siblings, teachers, outreach and information, career counselling; performance; aspirations)

2. Is there any particular reason that you did not complete school or go onto HE?

3. Looking back, did you have particular education/career ambitions from young or did your parents have any expectations of you for school/career success?

4. If you had to do over your education/HE, what would you do differently?

5. Is/Was religion/sports/extracurricular activities part of your life in school or in the community?

6. Was there anyone in your family/school/HEI/community who helped or inspired you in your education/career?

7. What do you expect for your children in terms of education and career? (people with children)

8. Would you go back to school to further your education?

<u>Key informants on Aranguez context (Older people in the sample)</u>

9. Tell me about your family - # of siblings, parents, grandparents, their education

10. Could you provide me with some information about the education of deceased members of the family or family (participants) that I cannot reach.

11. Could you provide me with some history about Aranjuez – stories related to you by older people in the community or what you know personally?

Appendix C – Subject Consent Form – Interview

Study Name: The Education System of Trinidad: A Case Study of East Indians in Aranjuez
Researcher: Sabita Ramlal, Doctoral Candidate, Graduate Program in Education
Email: sabita_ramlal@edu.yorku.ca
Phone: 1-647-351-3680 (Canada) or 1-868-675-0073 (Local TT)
Purpose of the Research: This is a case study to explore educational experiences of East Indians in Aranjuez, a town in Trinidad in order to better understand the operation of government education policy in Trinidad.
What You Will Be Asked to do in the Research: Participants will be invited to engage in a free ranging discussion and to respond to interview questions about their experience with the education system. The interview will be conducted by the researcher, either in person or by skype. Each interview will last approximately 1- 2 hours. The interviews will be audiotaped with the consent of the participants and subsequently transcribed.
Risks and Discomforts: There is little risk to participating in this project.

Benefits of the Research and benefits to you: This research may facilitate understanding for case-study participants as it pertains to your past and/or current experiences with the primary/secondary and/or postsecondary educational system of Trinidad.

Voluntary Participation. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision will not influence the nature of your relationship with the researcher involved in this project or York University, either now or in the future. You have the right to not answer any questions.
Withdrawal from the Study:
You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher or York University.
Confidentiality:
Unless you choose otherwise all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Audiotapes of the interviews will be stored in a locked filing cabinet for 10 years. Only the Principal Investigator, I, will have access to the raw interview data. In my written work that arises from the interviews, participants will be identified by pseudonym. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.
Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact my Supervisor, Roopa Desai-Trilokekar either by telephone at 416-736-2100 Extension 77368 or by e-mail (rdesaitrilokekar@edu.yorku.ca) or myself at sabita_ramlal@edu.yorku.ca (1-647-351-3680).
This research has been reviewed by the **Graduate Program in Education Human Participants Review Committee** and approved for compliance on research ethics within the context of the York Senate Policy on Research Ethics. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____ consent to participate in the data collection process for the dissertation research, “The Education System of Trinidad: A Case Study of East Indians in Aranjuez” conducted by Sabita Ramlal, a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at York University. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form.

[ ] The participant permits the researcher to record the interview through electronic voice recorder.
[ ] The participant permits the researcher to utilise the interview information in the dissertation and present the research at conferences, in publications, and in all media, educational settings, public and private spaces in perpetuity without any further consent from the participant. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____ **Date**_____
Participant Name

Signature _____ **Date**_____
Investigator

Appendix D – Subject Consent Form – Key Informant Interview

Study Name: The Education System of Trinidad: A Case Study of East Indians in Aranjuez

Researcher: Sabita Ramlal, Doctoral Candidate, Graduate Program in Education
Email: sabita_ramlal@edu.yorku.ca

Phone: 1-647-351-3680 (Canada) or 1-868-675-0073 (Local TT)

Purpose of the Research: This is a case study to explore educational experiences of East Indians in Aranjuez, a town in Trinidad in order to better understand the operation of government education policy in Trinidad.

What You Will Be Asked to do in the Research: Participants will be invited to engage in a free ranging discussion about the history of Aranjuez which will supplement any history texts on the town. The interview will be conducted by the researcher, either in person or by skype. Each interview will last approximately 1 hour. The interviews will be audiotaped with the consent of the participants and subsequently transcribed.

Risks and Discomforts: There is little risk to participating in this project.

Voluntary Participation. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision will not influence the nature of your relationship with the researcher involved in this project or York University, either now or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study:
You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher or York University.

Confidentiality:
Unless you choose otherwise all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Audiotapes of the interviews, if done, will be stored in a locked filing cabinet for 10 years. Only the Principal Investigator, I, will have access to the raw interview data. In my written work that arises from the interviews, participants will be identified by pseudonym. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact my Supervisor, Roopa Desai-Trilokekar either by telephone at 416-736-2100 Extension 77368 or by e-mail (rdesaitrilokekar@edu.yorku.ca) or myself at sabita_ramlal@edu.yorku.ca (1-647-351-3680).

This research has been reviewed by the **Graduate Program in Education Human Participants Review Committee** and approved for compliance on research ethics within the context of the York Senate Policy on Research Ethics. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager

and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____ consent to participate in the data collection process for the dissertation research, “The Education System of Trinidad: A Case Study of East Indians in Aranjuez” conducted by Sabita Ramlal, a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at York University. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form.

[ ] The participant permits the researcher to record the interview through electronic voice recorder or written notes.

[ ] The participant permits the researcher to utilise the interview information in the dissertation and present the research at conferences, in publications, and in all media, educational settings, public and private spaces in perpetuity without any further consent from the participant. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____ **Date**_____
Participant Name

Signature _____ **Date**_____
Investigator

Appendix E – Research Ethics Protocol Form

HUMAN PARTICIPANTS REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE (HPRC)
Protocol Form

Who should complete this Protocol Form?
All faculty members (including contract, adjuncts, and seconded) who are conducting funded or un-funded, minimal, or more than minimal risk* research that involves the use of human participants, must complete this Protocol Form. Students who are conducting funded minimal or more than minimal risk research that involves the use of human participants must also complete this form. This includes all experiments, interviews, and participant observation. If you are a student and your research is non-funded AND minimal risk, please consult with your Department Chair's, Graduate Programme Director's or Faculty Dean's office to discuss the approval process for your research.

How long will the review process take?
The average time to process minimal risk protocols is approximately twenty working days from the date of receipt in the Office of Research Ethics (ORE). **INCOMPLETE OR ILLEGIBLE PROTOCOLS WILL BE RETURNED TO THE RESEARCHER, WHICH WILL DELAY THE PROCESS.**

Online Ethics Review System
If you would like to submit your protocol using the Online Ethics Review System, please click on the following link: http://www.yorku.ca/research/support/documents/#ethics. Please note that the system is currently only accessible to faculty members and requires a York Passport Account. A signed hardcopy of your application is **not** required if you are submitting your protocol via the online system.

Who can I contact if I have any questions?
Please contact the Coordinator, Research Ethics Review, Office of Research Ethics at ext.55201 or (wjokhoo@yorku.ca).

*The HPRC uses the definition of minimal risk as outlined in the SSHRC/NSERC/CIHR *Tri-Council Policy Statement "Ethical Conduct for Research involving Humans"* (December 2010): "If potential subjects can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the subject in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research then the research can be regarded as within the range of minimal risk" (p. 1.5) An expanded version of this definition is available from ORE upon request.

Please submit a signed HPRC Form, with attachments to:
Secretary, Human Participants Review Sub-Committee
Office of Research Ethics
5th Floor, Kaneff Tower

*****A signed hardcopy is not required if you are using the Online Ethics Review System***

Checklist:

☒ Original HPRC form signed (**6 copies are NO longer required**)
☒ Consent statement is attached (informed consent form, letter, online consent or verbal statement)
☒ Interview questions/ questionnaire or survey/ advertisements, flyers, posters
☒ Additional Documentation (Ethics approval certificates/ letters of permission from other institutions or departments) **

** Please visit our website for Guidelines on:

- Research in an Online Environment
- Research Conducted by External Researchers
- Research in Hospital Clinical Settings
- Research in Educational Settings
- Research Involving Minor Age Participants
- Research with People who are Homeless
- Data Security Guidelines
- Ethical & Hazard Identification Guideline for Classroom and Research Projects Conducted at York University
- Research Involving Aboriginal Peoples
- Aboriginal Research - Checklist for Researchers
- Invasive Procedures

Note: Protocols involving Invasive Procedures and/ or the collection of human bodily fluids will NOT be accepted for review unless the Health & Safety Checklist is completed and all relevant documentation is attached (e.g., Biosafety Permit, Proof/ Certification of delegation of the controlled act by the relevant registered Health Professional, Radiation Safety Permit).

PART A - GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Name of Principal Investigator(s): Sabita Ramlal

B. Department and Home Faculty (or Research Centre/Institute): Education

Campus Mailing Address: N/A **Extension:** **E-mail :** sabita_ramlal@edu.yorku.ca

C. Names of any other persons involved in the data collection: n/a

D. Status of Principal Investigator:

☐ York Faculty Member
☒ Graduate Student
☐ Undergraduate Student
☐ Other:

If student, please provide course director's or supervisor's name: Roopa Desai-Trilokekar

E. Title of Research Project: The Forms of Capital and Generational Changes in Higher Education Access: A Case Study of Aranjuez, Trinidad

F. Is this research defined:

☒ Minimal Risk
☐ Non-minimal Risk

(Please see (*) footnote on first page for definition of minimal risk.)

G. If your research involves the use of human tissue/ blood/ body fluid and/or invasive procedures, please refer to the Submission and Ethics Review Guidelines for Research Involving Invasive Procedures and/or Collection of Human Bodily Fluids confirm whether Biosafety approval is in place:

☐ Yes - *Please append a copy of your approval certificate to your application*
☐ No - *HPRC protocol cannot be reviewed until the ACOBS approval certificate is in place.*
☒ Not applicable

For more information on Biosafety please contact the Occupational Health Coordinator & Biosafety Officer, Phone: x44745

H. If your research involves the use of radioactive materials and/or radiation exposure, please confirm whether Radiation Safety approval is in place:

☐ Yes - *Please append a copy of your approval certificate to your application*
☐ No - *HPRC protocol cannot be reviewed until the Radiation approval certificate is in place.*
☒ Not applicable

For more information on Radiation training please contact the Radiation Safety Officer (RSO), Department of Occupational Health and Safety, x44745

I. Does your research involve Aboriginal/ Indigenous Peoples?

☐ Yes – *Please complete and append a copy of the 'Checklist for Researchers'. Your protocol will first be reviewed by the Aboriginal Research Ethics Review Advisory Group.*
☒ No

J. Is this a revised version of a protocol previously reviewed by the HPRC?

☐ Yes
☒ No

K. Approximate dates for proposed study:

Start: December 2016 **End:** April 2018

L. Is any anticipated funding for this project from internal (i.e., York University) sources?

☐ Yes
☒ No

If yes, what is the funding source?

M. Is any anticipated funding for this project from any external (i.e., outside York) sources?

☐ Yes
☒ No

If yes, what is the funding agency and/or program?:

PART B - RESEARCH INFORMATION

1. In layperson's terms, please provide a general and brief description of the research (e.g., hypotheses, goals, and objectives, etc.).

This is a case study to explore educational experiences of East Indians in Aranjuez, a town in Trinidad to assess the influence of the forms of capital in the family, school and community networks in relation to education/higher education outcomes for residents and their families over time. The goal is to determine to what extent the forms of social capital is a determinant of HE outcomes for the community, and how these findings can inform policy-making in HE.

2. State who the participant(s) will be (e.g., experimental subjects, interviewees, community members to be observed, etc.). Please provide details about the research subjects that are relevant to your particular research (number, age, sex, students, children, businesspeople, government employees, etc.). Also discuss the relationship of the researchers to the prospective subjects (e.g., teacher, parent, advisor, stranger, etc.).

Residents and a few former residents of Aranjuez - aged 6+, all genders, some children. The participants are all from the same community where the researcher was once a member, so some interviewees may know of the researcher through community networks. This history and network is important for accessing participants for the study. Since the town is a small, closed community, any more details may jeopardise anonymity.

3. (a.) How will participants be recruited (e.g., snowball technique, random sampling, previously known to interviewer, telephone solicitation, etc.)?

By telephone, email, in person purposive sampling of families and family members will be selected with the help of members of the community who knows the interviewer. Telephone, email and in-person requests to be interviewees will be utilized.

(b.) Will you be using any advertisements, flyers, posters etc.?

☐ Yes - *If yes, please attach a copy with your application.*
☒ No

4. **Will you be offering inducements to participate (e.g., money, gift certificates, academic credit, etc.)?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☒ No

5. **What exactly will be required of the participant(s) (e.g., answer a formal questionnaire, respond to interview questions, engage in a free-ranging discussion, undergo any medical procedures, etc.)? If applicable, please attach any research instruments (e.g., sample interview questions, questionnaires, etc.).**

   Interviews involving open-ended questions and free-ranging discussion on educational and higher education experiences of interviewees involving family, school and community supports and influences.

6. **What, if any, are the risks to the participants?** **Or, ☒ No risks:**

7. **What, if any, are the benefits to the participants?** **Or, ☐ No benefits**

   This research may facilitate understanding for case-study participants as it pertains to their childhood and/or current experiences in terms of their aspirations, edcuational and occupational ouctomes. This may create positive impacts for familial relationships and future actions with regards to education. No financial incentives are offered for their participation.

8. **Is there a possibility of an apparent, actual or potential conflict of interest on the part of researchers, the University or sponsors? (E.g., commercialization of research findings; self-funded research)**

   ☐ Yes
   ☒ No

   If yes, please elaborate and outline how the potential or real conflict of interest will be addressed:

9. **This section pertains to issues around informed consent. Before completing, please read "Important Statement Regarding Informed Consent" attached to the end of this form.**

   (a) Will you provide to the participants a full explanation of the research prior to their participation?

☒ Yes
☐ No

(b) Is substitute consent involved (e.g., children, youths under 16, incompetent adults, etc.)?

☒ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please elaborate and provide a separate assent form: see attached Parental Consent Form

(c) Is deception involved?

☐ Yes
☒ No

If yes, please elaborate and provide a copy of the debriefing statement (including issues around debriefing, if applicable):

(d) Will individuals remain anonymous?
Please note that it is expected that participants remain anonymous unless participants explicitly have given their permission otherwise.

☒ Yes
☐ No

(e) Will the data be kept confidential?
Please note that it is expected that the data be kept confidential unless the participants explicitly have given their permission otherwise.

☒ Yes
☐ No

(f) How will data security and management be addressed?
Please provide details regarding proposed measures for safeguarding information – personally, identifiable data - for the full life cycle of information: its collection, use, dissemination, retention and/or disposal. At a minimum, researchers should **consider the full implications of the data collection, use, retention, and destruction/archiving when developing data security and management plans.** (Researchers are encouraged to review the Data Security Guidelines for reference re their responsibilities for data management).

The interviews and transcripts of the participants will not be associated with identifying information. The data will be collected through electronic recording and hand written

notes. The computer will be password protected, the recorder and notes will be filed in a locked drawer in the field and at the researcher's home.

(g) How will informed consent be obtained? (Please check all that are applicable):

☒ Informed Consent Form (please attach draft version)

☐ Letter* (please attach draft version)

☐ Verbally* (please attach draft approximation of what participants will be verbally told)

☐ Online Consent Form** (please attach draft version)

If informed consent is being obtained by letter or verbally, please provide a rationale regarding why an informed consent form is not being used:

If online consent is being obtained, please indicate the website where the questionnaire/ survey will be hosted:

10. Is there any additional information that you would like to add that may assist the HPRC in reviewing your protocol?

The research is in another country and requires timed trips to Trinidad to complete field work. A timely review by the Committee would be appreciated. The researcher would like to begin field work at the end of December 2016.

I have examined the guidelines and principles detailed above, and *the Senate Policy for the Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants*, and affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, this research conforms thereto. I hereby undertake to notify the Human Participants Review Committee if I make any major procedural changes involving the use of human participants on this project. I will also notify the Human Participants Review Committee if any unforeseen risks not specified in the research proposal appear. In such a case, the study will be suspended pending clarification.

_____ _____

Signature of Principal Investigator (PI) Date

_____ _____

Signature of Faculty Advisor (if PI is a student) Date

Item 9 - Important Statement Regarding Informed Consent

A. The HPRC has adopted the position that all human participants (e.g., interviewees, research subjects, community members, etc.) have the right to be informed of:
   - the nature of the research (hypotheses, goals and objectives, etc.);
   - the research methodology to be used (e.g., medical procedures, questionnaires, participant observation, etc.).
   - any risks or benefits.

- their right not to participate, not to answer any questions, and/or to terminate participation at any time without prejudice (e.g., without academic penalty, withdrawal of remuneration, etc.);
- their right to anonymity and confidentiality.
- any other issues of which the participants should be aware that are relevant to specific protocols and research projects.

B. The HPRC recognizes that the manner the researcher uses to obtain the informed consent varies according to the nature of the research, status of the participants, and culturally specific norms. Although the HPRC requires that the principles of informed consent (outlined in A. above) be met, it is very flexible in how this consent is obtained. The HPRC will accept any of the three methods outlined below:

1. Informed consent form: The traditional informed consent form is the standard for research involving human participants. This would detail the principles outlined in A. above and require the participants' signatures.
2. Letter: Where the traditional informed consent form is not appropriate (e.g., interviews with artists or government officials, mass mailed questionnaires, etc.), the researcher may wish to seek permission through a letter inviting them to participate. This letter must nonetheless incorporate the principles of informed consent outlined in A. above.
3. Verbal statement: In some instances, where written communication is not feasible (children, illiterate adults, certain communities), researchers can relay the principles outlined in A. above verbally.
4. Online Consent form: Researchers conducting surveys on-line must obtain consent from the participants. Recognizing that obtaining a signature is not feasible; researchers are advised that consent must be obtained in an alternate manner. Most commonly this can be achieved by including a "checkbox" function whereby participants can click on the box indicating they agree to participate or the box which indicates that they do not agree to participate.

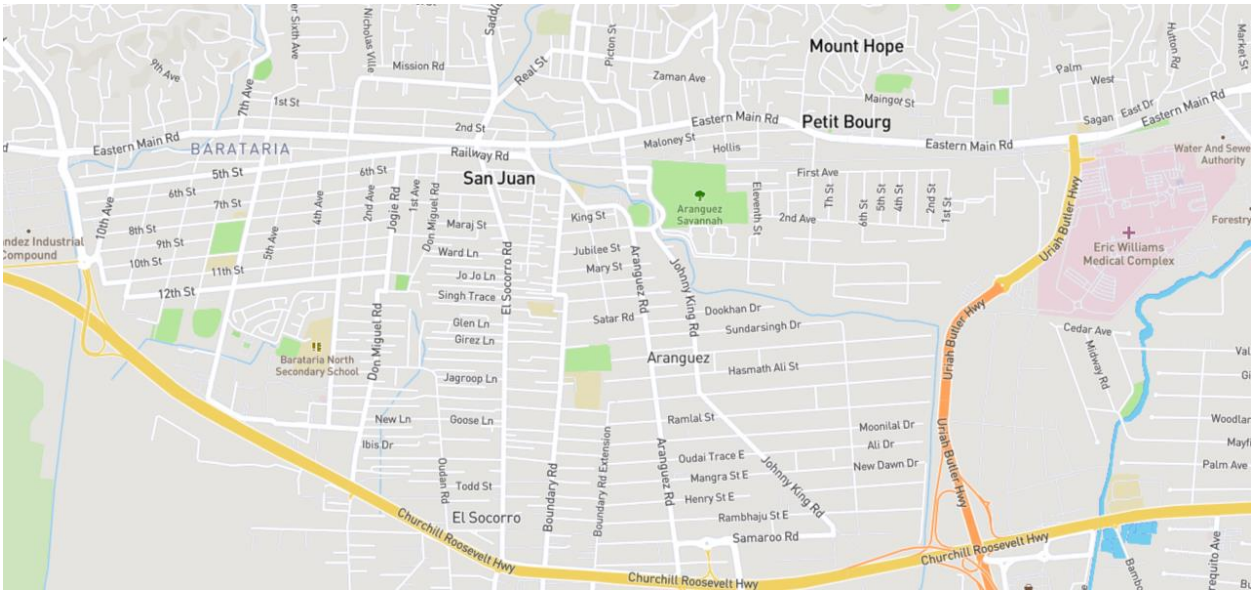
Although it is impossible to come up with *one* generic model that will suffice for every research endeavour, an Informed Consent Form Template is available for your review and assistance on the York Research website.

C. The HPRC recognizes that researchers completing this protocol may not be at the stage of their research where they are able to provide this information. Nonetheless, the HPRC requires that a "best effort" draft be attached to this protocol. **PROTOCOLS THAT DO NOT ATTACH THIS INFORMATION (CONSENT DOCUMENT) WILL BE RETURNED TO THE RESEARCHER.**

Appendix F – Map of Trinidad & Tobago

Source: https://www.freecountrymaps.com/map/country/trinidad-and-tobago-map-tt/

Appendix G – Map of Aranguez and Environs



Source: https://www.freecountrymaps.com/map/country/trinidad-and-tobago-map-tt/