

Exploring Youth Development Workers in the Process of Civic Youth Engagement in Trinidad and Tobago

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the concept of civic youth development within the wider context of Caribbean youth, specifically in Trinidad and Tobago. It is important to understand youth development from this perspective given the critical social and developmental changes within the Caribbean. A qualitative research methodology was used to examine these issues. Eighty-two adult youth development workers from across the country were asked a series of questions on their knowledge and understanding of civic engagement, barriers to involving youth in community activities, and what they feel motivates youth to participate. Data collected were analyzed using the NVIVO statistical software. Several themes emerged for each question in the data set. These included creating positive civic experiences, teaching youths to be good citizens, empowering youths, engaging youths in community activities, adult mentoring, parental and community involvement, generation gap, time and social constraints, incentives, adult involvement, and youth participation. The results provide a foundation upon which a model can be built for the full engagement of young people in programs and activities that can impact positively on their quality of life.

Keywords: Adult, Agriculture, Civic Engagement, Trinidad and Tobago, Youth Development