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The Latin American Blueprint: An analysis of Latin American policies that can aid cultural, sociopolitical and economic development in Trinidad and Tobago.

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Abstract

The thesis reviews specific policies across Latin America, in focus of applying these to policy framework in Trinidad and Tobago in effort to aid the drive to sustainable development. By using patterns and policies established from the years 2003 to 2023, the progress in specific policy areas were seen as successful as it mitigated or solved certain challenges in society. The Latin American ‘Blueprint’ follows: Colombia’s Immigration policies and its handling of the Venezuelan refugee crisis which also affects Trinidad and Tobago; Costa Rica’s globally acclaimed Environmental policies and Uruguayan Marine policies to aid Trinidad and Tobago’s environmental sustainability; Argentina’s free tertiary education policies, which outline funding and allocation to ensure an educated population, which can be utilized to improve and better execute GATE and Scholarship allocations in Trinidad and Tobago; Brazil’s culturally rich carnival and how it maintains its heritage, as Trinidad and Tobago has potential to use its already successful Carnival celebrations to promote and maintain its rich culture and history, through correct financial allocation and regulations. These Latin American countries, would have faced and are still fronted with similar challenges that Trinidad and Tobago faces, due to their interconnected historical and sociocultural factors. Therefore, the success of these policies across these Latin American countries provide a “blueprint” for Trinidad and Tobago to assess and analyse in undergoing policy procurement. The selected policy areas are those which need to be met with urgency by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and aid in the drive towards sustainable development.

Keywords: Policy Framework, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Latin America, Sustainable Development, Immigration, Environment, Education, Culture.

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Introduction

The research paper, “The Latin American Blueprint: An analysis of Latin American policies that can aid cultural, sociopolitical and economic development in Trinidad and Tobago.” focuses on the analysis and assessment of various policies across Latin American countries and how they can be applied to Trinidad and Tobago. Latin American countries, though arguably not developed, have certain policies in place in specific areas which can be viewed and related to local policies in Trinidad and Tobago. In administering policies for the development of a country, necessary framework must be put in place. Typically, Caribbean countries strive for development, and use the United States of America as the ideal, in attempt to follow their policies and apply it to their local laws. However, this is a huge socio-cultural disparity between the United States of America and the Caribbean, which makes the application of the policies difficult due to such drastically different climates.

Shifting policy framework to Latin America gives Caribbean countries such as Trinidad and Tobago a better scope for analysis. The correlation between Latin American countries and Trinidad and Tobago stems from their similar historical, cultural, ecological and political factors. Considering these factors, policies that have been tried and tested in certain Latin American countries, should be applicable to similar situations in Trinidad. Therefore, using the Latin American blueprint, implies use of their policies which can be applied to similar situations in Trinidad and Tobago.

Rationale

This study will focus on policies in specific areas, which can aid Trinidad and Tobago’s development exponentially. As a student who has done a unique blend of Latin American Studies and Political Science courses, the researcher’s interest stemmed from the success certain countries across Latin America have had in certain dimensions of the political scope, and how similar success

can be had in Trinidad and Tobago. Certain policies are nonexistent in Trinidad and Tobago, as the framework for policies are typically based on either standardized policies in developed countries as such the United States of America, which the researcher has observed is not the ideal scenario as there are extremely different conditions for success in countries which are on the road to development as opposed to those already developed. As a result, many policies fail to achieve the desired outcome, however, a solution to this is the analysis and application of policies in Latin American countries, where the researcher has noted there are similar conditions for success as Trinidad and Tobago.

In the construction and application of these policies in the movement towards development, appropriate policy framework must be set out. Policy framework focusing on policy implementation may vary in terms of their scope, included constructs, relationships between the constructs and context factors (Lobczowska 2022). Policy framework for Latin American countries, would share similar constructs, relationships between the constructs and context factors, as mentioned, with Trinidad and Tobago. The sociopolitical, cultural, economic and geological similarities between the twin island republic and its Latin American counterparts would allow for applicable policy framework. In analyzing the policies of a country with similar factors, resources and challenges, a like minded political culture is evident and can be utilized in its respective areas. The researcher noted the issue with using the United States of America as the framework, as also stated by Alasuutari (2014), “From these differences in national political cultures we cannot deduce, however, that the United States is immune to external factors or the center of a unilateral system.” This implies that the United States would not face as many challenges and repercussions that would limit the success of their policies. The Latin American Blueprint, would therefore focus on the analysis of policies present in certain Latin American countries that can aid cultural, sociopolitical and economic development in Trinidad and Tobago through its similarities and application.

Parameters

This study, would focus on specific countries across Latin America, for the purpose of analyzing definitive policies, which can be adjusted to suit Trinidad and Tobago. The Latin American countries under the microscope would be Colombia, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil, due to their policies on immigration, the environment and ecotourism, tertiary education and carnival respectively. All policies in focus would be effective from the year 2012 upwards, accounting for the pandemic years (2020- 2022) and how this affected the development of the country.

Objectives

The aim of this study is to identify spheres in which policies can be implemented to maximize development in Trinidad and Tobago. This would be done through identifying and assessing the success and impact of certain policies in Latin America, and evaluating the impact such a policy will have in its respective field in Trinidad and Tobago.

Chapter Outline

This study would consist of four chapters, each highlighting a different policy area. Chapter 1, entitled “The Immigration Blueprint: Colombia’s Migration Control” would assess how border control at the Colombia-Venezuela border is managed and how it handles the influx of Venezuelan migrants. Chapter 2, entitled “The Environmental Blueprint: Costa Rica and Uruguay’s Eco-friendly Development.” highlights the importance of the environment and eco-sustainability in the case of Costa Rica, and the importance of preserving marine life in the case of Uruguay. Chapter 3, “The Education Blueprint: Argentina’s Education for All.” would bring into focus Argentina’s policies for free tertiary education and its effectiveness. Finally, Chapter 4, entitled “The Cultural

Blueprint: Brazil's Carnival" which underscores how Brazil maintains their cultural heritage while opening their carnival to the world.

Methodology

The research design for this project was qualitative in nature, by means of acquiring and conducting interviews with individuals in certain fields along with the assessment of a number of policies and policy evaluations. The interviews acquired and conducted were done with individuals qualified and versed in the specific policy area. More so, the research utilized was relevant and applicable to the microscopic area. The data collection was therefore a mix of primary and secondary documentary sources.

This type of research was chosen due to its proliferation of benefits of qualitative research namely the ease of administration and analysis. Furthermore it allows researchers to draw precise conclusions through interviews, which allowed for more discourse and clarity in some areas. This qualitative data consisted of a mix of social, political, economic and cultural studies. These genres were deemed most appropriate for this study as it required the understanding of all these spheres to make the correlation between the Latin American countries and Trinidad and Tobago.

Literature Review

In developing countries, policy framework and implementation is of utmost importance. These countries on the road to development are facing a more challenging situation than others due to their limited health infrastructure, limited financial and human resources, and limited capacity of governments to respond, according to Rasul (2020). Due to this restrictions, developing countries have seen a setback in many of their goals, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rasul drew his focus to

Asian countries, who have struggled with infrastructure due to the pandemic, as immediate attention had to be brought to health care. However, even more harmful than this, was the how the pandemic affected other spheres of society as well, and how the governments of these countries with poor healthcare and infrastructure took massive hits due to the overwhelming amount of citizens that needed care and eventually vaccination during the pandemic. Resources were stretched and many other areas of development were halted. Looking towards the post pandemic years, Rasul stated that proper framework must be put into place as it can help governments to prioritize policy choices and allocate limited resources in such a way that they are directed toward actions that generate synergy and co-benefits, have multiplier effects, and achieve interconnected solutions for health, the economy, and the environment. Similarly to the Asian countries, Trinidad and Tobago must learn how to allocate its resources the board, in managing its usual challenges while mitigating the effects of the pandemic.

To understand the need for scholarship in Trinidad and Tobago, on policy framework that can be exemplified by Latin American countries, the current situation of policies in specific areas must be understood. Unfortunately, policies as such the immigration act, have not been visited since 1995, and information on dealing with issues as such as the Venezuelan Refugee Crisis have only been provided through Non Governmental Organizations as such as the International Organization for Migration. The ‘Assessment Capacities Project’ (ACAPS) reported that, Trinidad and Tobago have announced a lack of budget to provide shelter for all Venezuelan migrants and refugees. This, combined with limited regularisation plans and the economic impact of COVID-19, has led to many Venezuelans being unemployed and evicted from their homes (2022). NGOs as such as the IMO and Living Waters Community attempt to aid these refugees, however, the lack of proper policy framework is at the root of the problem. Proper border control and a reviewed immigration process must be undergone to solve this, as this is evidently straining the resources of the country and restricting post-pandemic development.

Finally, the comparison between Caribbean and Latin America is not far fetched, as Bonvecchi and Scartascini in their work, ‘Who decides Social Policy?’ (2020) compare and contrast

policy formations across Caribbean countries and their Latin American counterparts. In speaking about Trinidad and Tobago, it was mentioned that the networks through which ideas and information circulate do not prove hierarchically structured, and the Cabinet does not provide the main source of ideas. In contrast, in a country like Argentina policy formulation is seen as a hierarchical process, politically coordinated by the president and technically informed and advised by the social area ministries. Through their extensive case studies, Bonvecchi and Scartascini acknowledge the differences in policy formulation between the Caribbean and Latin America. This notably comes from the apparent disconnect in the Caribbean countries, whereas the Latin American countries, in spite of their volatile political situations, see the need for socially impactful and efficient programs.

Chapter 1

The Immigration Blueprint: Colombia's Migration Control

Over the last decade, in Trinidad and Tobago, the Venezuelan refugee crisis was the most prominent issue in society. With the challenges it poses to the development of Trinidad and Tobago, the handling of the Venezuelan refugee crisis is so far, a monumental mismanagement at a national level. The amnesty programs granted to these migrants come from Non Governmental Organizations as such as the International Organization for Migration. The apparent lack of immigration laws or any type of policies that would apply to migrants is harmful to the overall state of Trinidad and Tobago, as many migrants are unaccounted for, which in turn sees resources unaccounted for, the increase in crime, xenophobia and many other regressive factors which affect development. This stems from the fact that Trinidad and Tobago does not have migration policies in place at a national level, the Immigration Act of Trinidad and Tobago has not been updated since 1995. Efforts towards accountability have been made, however, with notable shortcomings, in 2019 there was a two- week amnesty period set by the government for Venezuelan migrants. Minister of National Security, Stuart Young noted that the migrants would be “...assisted by a translator to fill out forms, in which they will be required to provide their local address and contact numbers, among other information. They will also have their photographs taken, provide biometrics, fingerprints and undergo a medical examination.” Once approved, applicant were promised to receive a work permit exemption valid for one year, ensuring that they were protected by T&T laws, were not required to pay the National Insurance System (NIS) but would have to contribute PAYE if they cross the income threshold. These stipulations were put out before the Amnesty period of May 31st to June 14th 2019. Spanish language volunteers during this period, recounted that hundreds were unable to be registered, with even more being unaware of this registration period. As it is, the language barrier in Trinidad and Tobago, makes the migratory situation very difficult, and bulletins, news and updates on issues in the country, such as the amnesty programs are not shared around in Spanish, which creates it impossible for migrants who do not understand English, to better their situation.

More so, there were no reports of the proposed followups made, thereby even the National Amnesty effort, shows little account. Since then, the situation has only worsened with the COVID-19 Pandemic which began in 2020. During the period, the lack of border control may have seen an influx of refugees from Venezuela who would have likely slipped under the radar, however due to the challenges posed by COVID-19, accountability for these migrants are needed now more than ever. Trinidad and Tobago must put into place the necessary policies, using framework set from countries in similar situation, and scale this according to the local unique situation. One country in the Latin American region, hailed for “Setting the bar for handling migrants” is Colombia, therefore, a cross-examination of their policies regarding migration, border control and overall refugee crisis must be assessed, and applied to Trinidad and Tobago.

The situation in Colombia should be noted, that in spite of there being a larger population, and more land for potential refugee settlement, the budgetary situation is very difficult, due to the civil war ending in 2016. In 2019 there were intentions to work on a framework for a comprehensive policy that will outline how to allocate funds to the migration crisis. Similarly, Trinidad and Tobago would lack funding to spare, therefore must find the most effective way to allocate finances to the migration laws and border control. Colombia noted that the budgetary allocations would be necessary to, “...keep these people away from the brink of poverty, ideally with jobs, education, and health care, so that they can become productive citizens in a modern economy.” (The World Bank, 2021) Properly dealing with this crisis would exponentially aid in guaranteeing a more sustainable future in the drive towards development. The Colombian government has struck “public-private partnerships to invest in the economic opportunity created by a displaced population that needs to rebuild.” (The World Bank, 2021) As such, investment and support in communities to house and provide opportunities for these refugees. It should be noted that Colombia faces similar issues as Trinidad does in the employment market, as well as with admitting Venezuelan children in schools, however, then Colombian President Iván Duque has acknowledged the need for seeing Venezuelan migrants as part of the national family. Trinidad too, should acknowledge this due to the country’s close relations to Venezuela, there should be a similar

sentiment. This sense of fraternity could help against the xenophobia that would sprout hate crimes, gang wars and other tension around the country. Colombia's art of migration management is simply opening their borders and making their country's resources available to those migrants. Viewing the long term negative impacts over short term expenditure has proven to keep the peace in Colombian society.

In relation to Trinidad and Tobago, such can be done as well, through supporting and providing for communities as such as 'Living Waters Community' which provide housing, education and employment opportunities for Venezuelans. However, even these communities pose a sense of unreliability. The Living Waters Community, among others is associated with the Catholic Church in Trinidad, who encourages the in-migration of Venezuelan refugees to the republic's shore, however, this creates an element of controversy. The Roman Catholic Board of Trinidad and Tobago has gone on record and openly supported the influx of Venezuelan Refugees, but has never put a plan in place beyond directing the refugees to shelters. The Living Waters Community provides housing, education and to some extent work opportunities to those within its walls, however, in exchange for this, the refugees are expected to be active members of the congregation. An article published by the US Department of State on the Religious Freedom in Trinidad and Tobago in 2022, highlights that Roman Catholicism is now only the second highest religious denomination and no longer the dominant Christian sect in Trinidad and Tobago. The article further implies that such staunch religious institutions are dwindling, as the youth no longer look to religion and tradition, in this case, with the Catholic Church in certain regions, like Trinidad, posing doubts about the COVID-19 vaccine, many more liberal members of the church began to question its entire belief system. Thereby, the Catholic Board encouraging refugees to build its numbers in exchange for shelter and work, appears to be beneficial for both parties, however, this is not necessarily the case, as the influx of migrants far outnumber the availability in these communities. Furthermore the Catholic Board has not made any effort to mediate the issue of enrollment of refugee children into its schools via its "Board of Education" as well as finding work outside of its community, as within the Living Waters Community refugees work at the bookstore and coffee shop as well as learn skills

to do labor around the community. Colombia does not face such an issue as, the entire country is dominated by the Catholic religion, so there is no need to build a congregation as there is with the Catholic Board in Trinidad and Tobago.

A major setback in dealing with this crisis appropriately, was the COVID-19 pandemic, however, using its set framework, Colombia reached out to the World Bank for assistance with a detailed proposal for its issue. 'COVID-19 Response for Migrants from Venezuela and Host Communities' where the presiding body indicated that the impact of the pandemic is multidimensional, along with the arrival of massive numbers of migrants has placed pressure on its institutions and systems. Likewise in Trinidad and Tobago ACAPS stated, "Venezuelan refugees and asylum seekers are at an increased state of vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic." Therefore, dealing with the migration crisis has affected the development of the country exponentially. The economic impact of COVID-19 has left many Venezuelan migrants unemployed, and Colombia acknowledged the further strain this has on their economy and are doing migrant papers and sending them to other countries as such as Panama. Trinidad and Tobago could utilize their other relationships to solve such an issue, as through CARICOM or other sociopolitical agreements. Regardless, there would be other countries, who can utilize the quality of labor from Venezuela to benefit their own county. Therefore, Trinidad and Tobago, post pandemic should put policies in place to transit refugees out of the country, if there isn't reason to keep them for productivity and development.

Chapter 2

The Environmental Blueprint: Costa Rica and Uruguay's Eco-friendly Development

Since the 1990s, the drive towards sustainable development has intensified and the levels of environmental awareness has only increased. Many countries around the world have begun national efforts for environmental sustainability, through mandates to decrease levels of gas emissions, decreasing of waste and encouraging recycling. In the Latin American-Caribbean region, however, the climate allows for even more untapped environmentally friendly sustainable development, which can open doors in other sectors, as such as food security and even tourism. This is the ideal situation for many developing countries, as they can maximize cross-sector development in achieving sustainability. A global leader in this is Costa Rica, which places them on a regional pedestal when it comes to sustainability, as all countries within the region can replicate a number of Costa Rica's policies due its similar climate.

With its environmental achievements being recognized at an international level, having received the 2019 Champions of the Earth award, the highest environmental honour of the United Nations. In earning this accolade their policies and environmental framework were lauded, as established policies actively bore results and the framework set up displayed intent to combat climate change. Costa Rica's policies include the establishment of national parks, promoting ecotourism, fostering organic farming, encouraging preservation of the natural environment, improving societal well-being, health, educational access and support of a green culture and finally designing a plan to implement a green economy. These environmental policies encourages sustainability on all fronts, as the national parks serve as protected biological intense areas and reserves that is open to visitors, alongside the promotion of ecotourism, wherein there are hiking trails, whitewater rafting and even experience local food on farms and farming villages. Costa Rica's organic farming and the maintenance of the natural environment go hand in hand, as farming is done without the use of harmful chemicals and the ecosystem therefore, remains balanced. As mentioned by the Green Business Bureau, Costa Rica actively works on improving "societal well-

being, health, educational access and support of a green culture.” This is a vital aspect of their success as a nation, as the “green culture” is part of their national identity. In an assessment done by Euronews, Costa Rica’s divergence from the path of “Structural Transformation” through the industrial phase, was to it becoming the global leader in environmental sustainability. Costa Rica provided land, money and education to people as way of empowering communities, in turn this allowed the country to become modernized without leaving an environmental footprint. The importance of the environment to Costa Ricans shapes their ideology and eco-friendly lifestyle which seems to transcend generations. Finally, Costa Rica has designed plans to shape a green economy, meaning sustainable innovations in the industrial market to aid the country’s economic development. The Green Economy therefore, “operates on low carbon power sources, resource efficiency, and social fairness.” (Sarah Long, Green Business Bureau.) Therefore, companies can now operate sustainably, allowing reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhanced energy and resource efficiency, along with conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Costa Rica has therefore covered all bases, and has a viable plan of action moving forward.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago revisited the National Environmental Policy (NEP) in 2018, the document highlighted National Environmental Priority Areas, which were namely ‘Pollution Control’, ‘Sustainably Managing Natural Assets’, ‘Improving the Local Economy’, ‘Evolving a Greener Economy’, ‘Fostering an Environmentally Responsible Society’ and ‘Addressing Climate Change and Environmental and Natural Disasters’. These priority areas are centered around environmental sustainability, and are notably important goals to set in achieving this. However, through thorough analysis of the document, it can be understood there is no proper policy framework in place, rather there are definitions and proposed amendments. In order to achieve the goals set in the National Environmental Policy (NEP) there must be a proper path to its success. The policies, for example, ‘Pollution Control’ defines different types of pollution and how to mitigate it, but does not clearly state the policies through which the pollution would be mitigated and how these policies would be implemented. Policy implementation seems to be the clear issue with the NEP, as in theory, the goals set are ideal, however there is no plan of action by which these

goals should be achieved. As senior environmental consultant, Ms. Analisa Rasheed after making notes to the NEP of 2018, stated, “This is an improvement from the policies before, but much more needs to be done, we know the problems, yes, but after a national level, solutions need to put forth.” With reference to Costa Rica, its government in 2018, the same year of Trinidad and Tobago’s NEP update, set out a decarbonization plan to ultimately achieve a Green Economy. This plan set out a step by step process with goals cited for specific years between 2018 and 2050. Named “Descarbonicemos Costa Rica” meaning “Let us decarbonize Costa Rica”, the policy set a longterm timeline focused on its national interest while keeping in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The Decarbonization Plan by the Government of Costa Rica states, “The actions are presented in 10 sectoral focus areas with policy packages in three periods: beginning (2018-2022), inflection (2023-2030) and massive deployment (2031-2050), and also 8 cross-cutting strategies to enhance change.” The 10 focus areas spanned across 4 goals, namely, “Transport and Sustainable Mobility”, “Energy, Green Economy and Industry”, “Integrated Waste Management” and “Agriculture, land use change and nature-based solutions.” This short but precise document outlining specific areas by which goals would be achieved to contribute to environmental sustainability. Trinidad and Tobago’s policy structures must take a similar approach if efficiency should be achieved.

Although many areas in Costa Rica’s policies can be implemented in Trinidad and Tobago environmental policy framework, one very comparable area is the development of ecotourism. Costa Rican ecotourism is vast and expands across a number of spheres, there are eco-reserves, with a number of nature-based activities, as such as whitewater rafting, hiking and more, there are eco resorts, lodges and hotels situated in remote areas to give an immersive experience, along with a number of villages, communities and plantations which host tourist visits for up to 3 days in some cases. All of these features are part of the precise environmental policies, going in hand with Costa Rica’s “green culture” that is shared by its natives, however, this allows the country to attract a large number of tourists throughout the year, as there is seemingly a surplus of environmentally friendly activities to take part in. Adversely, in Trinidad and Tobago, the influx is usually centered around

Carnival and activities just preceding the week of Carnival. However, Trinidad's potential for ecotourism is untapped, as there are many natural attractions and nature-based that are simply not marketed. For example, the northwestern region of Trinidad, Chaguaramas is home to beaches, historical areas, a number of docks and smaller islands and hiking trails, however much of this goes unknown to even the average Trinidadian, more-so for a tourist. The Chaguaramas Development Authority, a body tasked with maintaining the region does not have a website to market or display its many gems, but instead is vaguely featured on the Ministry of Planning and Development's website, with its vision, stating, "To be the premier provider of the ultimate customer experience in a world-class, ecotourism destination, business and entertainment centre." Although this vision is attainable, it would be worth noting more needs to be done to expose the region, as it already has a plethora of amenities and features that already fit the project design for ecotourism. For example, Chaguaramas' Tucker Valley Road is home to a number of hiking trails including the US Military Tracking Station and Plane Crash Site, Paint Ball, a Golf Course, Upick Farm and Restaurant as well as Macqueripe Beach. These facilities and more should be marketed to the outside world. In addition to this, hiking trails as such as Paria, Three Pools and the Balandra basin are scattered throughout the country, yet are not taken interest in at a governmental level. Recent conservational efforts have been also made into guided tours at the Caroni Swamp and Bird Sanctuary to display the natural flora and fauna whilst explaining the importance of conserving this ecosystem. In an interview with conservationist Ms. Vieanna Tirbanie, she explained how her team is working towards educating the public and attempting to promote ecotourism for the Sanctuary. Tirbanie stated, "The Caroni Swamp is teeming with life and is an essential part of our local ecosystem. There was a man who regularly combed the mangrove for crabs and snails to eventually sell, but through our team's efforts he now leads guided tours through the swamps educating visitors at ground level explaining how important it is for the mangrove and sanctuary to be conserved." When asked about promoting ecotourism for the Caroni Swamp and Bird Sanctuary and by extension the country, she stated, "Trinidad and Tobago as well has a lot of potential for ecotourism, however, as in the case of the Caroni Swamp, it lacks funding and maintenance, national and regional boards do

not pay attention to these areas when considering the budget or any sort of promotion. In Trinidad, there is not enough government interest in the environment, so even places that have economic potential, is overlooked, like the Caroni Swamp and Bird Sanctuary.” Therefore, the nation simply needs to promote ecotourism and maintain these areas, as part of the National Environmental Policy.

Furthermore, is the topic of marine-life and how aquatic ecosystems are preserved and protected, as touched on with the Caroni Swamp, however our coastal areas are also vulnerable and run the risk of destruction. One major example of this is Tobago’s prime ecotourist attraction, the Bucco Reef Marine Park, which has been destroyed after years of activity and in effort to allow the reef time to naturally restore itself, regulations had been put into place by the Tobago House of Assembly. Regulation 3 of the Marine Areas Act placed strict rules on the visitation times and states that “Access to the Marine Park is allowed to registered and insured vessels holding Access and/or Transit Permits issued by the Division.” These regulations were put in place ensuring the safety and preservation of the Marine Park, whilst maintaining its strong value to ecotourism. However, in Trinidad many areas and species that should be monitored and protected, yet are not paid enough attention to. There are groups and Non-Governmental Organizations as such as Fishermen and Friends of the Sea, who attempt to bring attention to these issues. The case regarding marine life conservation efforts is different from that of the general environment, as there are rules and regulations put in place through the Marine Areas Act and the Fisheries Act, which “created protections for marine life, including corals, in restricted areas of the country's territorial waters that have been designated as restricted marine areas” and “make provisions for the long-term, sustainable management of Trinidad and Tobago's fisheries and marine ecosystems and regulate fishing and other activities in coastal waters.” (Tuckerman Reef, 2020). It is worth noting however, that the Fisheries Act of 2020 has not yet been passed by the parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. The paperwork is there yet it is not met attentively, as reviews take quite long to do and there are many more issues in this area that go unnoticed. For example in 2021, there was a Paria Fuel Trading Oil Spill reported on by Fishermen and Friends Of the Sea (FFOS), as it affected a number

coastal areas, yet no national response was given for weeks, and since nothing has been put in place to avoid these issues from happening in the future.

For the Marine Life blueprint, Trinidad and Tobago can look to Uruguay, who have not been global leaders in this field for decades, but within the last decade made great leaps in the preservation of its aquatic ecosystems and fisheries. At the Marine Spatial Planning Forum in 2019, Uruguay presented their case for such policies, in an adept plan, highlighting exactly what needs to be focused on, how finances for these projects and policy implementations can be obtained and how to ensure these practices are sustainable. This is due to Uruguay recognizing at a national level, that more needed to be done regarding marine-life conservation. In 2021, Uruguayan President Luis Lacalle Pou met with the National Geographic Pristine Seas, to aid in the protection of Marine Areas as part of the United Nation's Convention on Biological Diversity wherein "The international community agreed to protect at least 10% of the planet's marine ecosystems." Uruguay, until this point had only protected less than 1% of its sea, leading to the Pristine Seas team's intervention to correct this. Alex Muñoz, National Geographic Pristine Seas' Latin American director, stated, "The creation of new marine protected areas would bring benefits for all, from the protection of endangered species, the recovery of the fishing sector and the mitigation of climate change." Since, Uruguay has been following its MSP and making these improvements a priority, Uruguay has been hailed as the regional leader for marine life and coastal protection policies. It must be noted that there have been flaws, as protecting areas at a national level have been a success, however illegal fishing on the Uruguayan sea border has been taking place in 2023, where groups and the government have noted more must be done to maintain the security of its protected areas. In spite of these complications, its policy planning, framework and execution has been successful, in the span of a decade. Uruguay acknowledging and addressing its issues at this level in working with the drive towards sustainable development makes it ideal for Trinidad and Tobago to follow in the realm of policy formation, as Trinidad and Tobago already has certain regulations and acts in place, improvements with Uruguay's planning and execution in mind would ensure an efficient policy structure attainable in a few years.

Chapter 3

The Education Blueprint: Argentina's Education for All.

Literacy and education are key factors that shape a country's development, as a country's human resources are its most important when tasked with sustainable progress. In the Latin American region, Argentina has impressed on this front, by having tuition-free access to schools and universities. The Argentine education system consists of free schooling at the primary, secondary-one, secondary-two and university level. Trinidad and Tobago has had this interest in mind, as the current education system allows free primary education through public government-run schools and government-assisted denominational schools. Secondary education is also free, as through the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) students are placed in public schools, also either government-run and government assisted in the case of denominational schools. This system in itself has its own issues, but the government in recent years has faltered immensely as the tertiary entrance policies go.

The issue of tertiary education in Trinidad and Tobago is rooted in the cost of tuition, as tuition is usually too high for the average student, in spite of them having achieved success in secondary school, students who are part of the vast middle class structure simply cannot afford to further education in some cases. Due to this, government assistance in the forms of scholarships and bursaries are present, however, not sufficient to allow the masses of secondary school graduates access to tertiary education. Policies for a different type of financial was then introduced as the need for a more educated workforce grew at the turn of the millennia. Previously, administrations lead by Patrick Manning and Basdeo Pandey had proposed mediums through which the government can financially assist students in accessing tertiary education. Mr. Pandey had once proposed the idea of "Dollar for Dollar" Programme, where the state funded 50% of students education fees, which was passed and established under his tenure as Prime Minister. In 2004, PM Patrick Manning, built on this, with the introduction of GATE, which provided 100 per cent financial support for tertiary education. However recent changes to the GATE Policy and Scholarship Funding led to a massive debate, as many students now would have to find funding for tertiary education, instead of simply

attending university. To understand this situation, the GATE programme ran successfully for years, but was met with criticism due to its level of expenditure on the national budget. For over a decade, GATE allowed students of any age to do courses and degrees across a number of institutions, especially in the initial years where “short” courses were done by smaller institutions that were not fully accredited. It was noted that this level accessibility allowed many individuals to abuse the system, as many persons did a number of diplomas, certificates and eventual degrees in succession funded completely by GATE. Therefore, one person would hold multiple GATE funded accolades without consequence. The Government, under Minister of Education, Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, a reassessment of the GATE programme was revisited to address this, wherein programmes funded by GATE were reduced significantly, and the introduction of means assessment test, to determine the need of student in correspondence the amount of funding granted. This stated that a student would only be entitled to 100% funding if the household’s income was less than \$10,000, however the definition of “Household income” in the means assessment was criticised, as the joint income of everyone living on one lot or one house, was considered for this. This created an issue, Trinidad and Tobago is home to many extended families, thereby not everyone in a household would be responsible for paying tuition for one student. If the cumulative household income surpassed specific thresholds, the funding was gradually reduced by 25%, means testing specifications on the UWI website state, “if household income is above \$10,000 per month but less than \$30,000 per month, students will be eligible for 75%”, “if the household income is above \$30,000 per month but less than \$75,000 per month, students will be eligible for 50%” and any cumulative income above \$75,000 renders students ineligible for funding. This along with a limit imposed on GATE funding per person to one, is able to determine those in need, instead of allowing the system to be misused and abused, however, it is not without its shortcomings. This served in alleviating the issue of one person holding multiple GATE funded certificates, however, this was made a general rule, so programmes that require multiple parts were only funded for one programme. For example, UWI’s (University of the West Indies) ROYTEC hosts a computer science and business based associate degree which prepares students to eventually enrol in bachelor degree programmes in the university

as such as a Bsc. Computer Science and Information Technology, only one of these programmes would be GATE funded, thereby students who rightfully qualify to 100% funding, would fall short if they are part of these programmes due to the strict limitation set by the ministry in the allocation of GATE funding. Finally, a massive blow was dealt to students entering tertiary education once more in 2020, when “Education Minister Dr Nyan Gadsby-Dolly announced an immediate 75-per cent reduction in scholarships from 400 to 100, with limitations on fields of study.” (Trinidad Express Newspapers, 2020). Although there is still opportunity for free tertiary education, it is far more limited now, and is met with much criticism due to its inefficiency.

To address the issues in tertiary education policies and funding, Argentina can be used as the framework. The National Higher Education Equity Policy, of 2019 as outlined by The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology of Argentina and the Secretariat of University Policies states that nations and in some cases international students are granted free undergraduate education. Thereby, the government funds solely the initial phase of tertiary education, ensuring the graduates hold a technical or professional bachelors degree. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) underwent a study on all of its member states, including Argentina. The Argentine Government, through this equity act, was shown to have funded all public University/Institute technical and professional programmes for either 4 or 7 years of study, ensuring graduation with a Professional Qualification, in this case a Bachelor’s (BSc. Or BA.). The OECD study states that 19% of 25-34 year-olds had a tertiary qualification in 2021 compared to 47% on average across OECD countries, which is remarkable for a single country. Moreover, the “Tertiary students enrolled in public institutions” in the OECD’s 2020 evaluation displays Argentina at 76.3% in comparison to the OECD’s average of 70.7%. It should be noted that this OECD average counts its 37 other members, including, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia and other European countries, which have already achieved a high development index. Argentina’s education system therefore stands out against the average, considerably more developed and economically stable countries. This is testament to the impact of Argentina’s focus on its education system, providing free education from birth to bachelor’s. However, achieving this feat was no easy

task, as the equity policy underwent structural planning, through financial mechanisms and the creation of educational and social policies. UNESCO in 2021 cites how Argentina finances for equity in education. “Public spending is primarily financed by the Ministry of Education (87.3 per cent), the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (10.6 per cent) and the Ministry of Planning (2.1 per cent). The national government finances 40 per cent of education spending, while the provinces finance 60 per cent.” Comparing this to Trinidad and Tobago, 7.9 billion dollars was allocated to education during the budget reading of 2022, with no specific amount outlined for tertiary education. If previous years are to be considered, the 2019 national budget saw tertiary education be allocated less than 10% of the overall budget, as many resources are expended on primary and secondary education. Although these early years are pivotal for the academic foundation of generations, this all goes to waste if they are unable to receive tertiary qualifications. The financial mechanisms in Argentina to fund tertiary education is further supported by tax revenue redistribution, upheld by the 2005 Education Financing Act, which states, “a portion of these resources must be used to fund education according to a formula based on enrolment numbers, incidence of rural areas and the out-of-school population.” Therefore indicating that the financial allocation for university is determined by its demand through the revenue that has been stored in the national treasury for this purpose. More-so, the social and educational policies and programmes encourage both students and their parents, from the primary levels, to further education, as such through the provision of tutoring services, advising, mentoring and encouraging all fields of study. This is another factor that can be criticized as in Trinidad and Tobago, the sciences and business are heavily focussed on in secondary schools, where as the humanities and social sciences are often disregarded at career days or when considering advising students for their future endeavours.

In conclusion, the education system of Trinidad and Tobago, although it sits upon a fundamentally solid base, the access to tertiary education needs to be revisited and prioritized in national policies. Major improvements have been made in the financial sustainability of GATE, however, as mentioned with Argentina's provision of free tertiary education, there should be the allocation of funding until a person has completed a bachelor's degree. The Argentine policies have

never funded postgraduate programmes or minor certificates except in the case of those which were mandatory to achieve a BSc or BA. Although Trinidad and Tobago boasted of free education from early childcare to university for a number of years, the mismanagement of GATE has forced the government into a situation of strained finances where the only logical solution was cutting programs, restructuring funding and reducing scholarships. However, this can be resolved and the road to free tertiary education can once again be resumed through set goals and specifications for funding and the use of financial mechanisms for acquiring and distributing resources, as seen with the successful free tertiary education policies in Argentina.

Chapter 4

The Cultural Blueprint: Brazil's Carnival.

Trinidad and Tobago takes pride in its carnival as the greatest show on earth, yet in spite of its immense success, it has become considerably commercialized. In recent years traditional elements of Carnival have become lost or are no longer paid attention to, resulting in cultural activities being cut altogether from the season's schedule. Carnival itself still garners a lot of attention and brings in revenue for the country, however this expansion and execution of carnival must happen alongside the preservation of its cultural foundation. To address this issue, Brazil can be examined as the ideal country for advancing and expanding its celebrations while maintaining its cultural core.

To begin, the issue at hand is simply the loss of culture alongside the expansion of carnival. The traditional elements of carnival are being lost to time in this age of mass festivities, as 'fetes' have expanded and are now grand spectacles, which bring in positive revenue, however, promoters are the ones who benefit most from this. Promoter groups as such as WOW Events, Air Committee, Crimson Crew as well as individual artistes profit from these 'fetes'. Although there is a trickle economic impact where multiple sectors benefit from such events, for example small vendors near the venues, taxis and transport services are hired by locals and foreigners alike and finally hotels, apartments and local AirBnB's are booked for the season. In spite of the massive success of fetes, jouven't bands and mas bands, it can be observed that previously integral parts of carnival are losing its importance. To begin, although Soca, Trinidad's most popular music form especially during carnival, is thriving, newcomers in this arena struggle to compete against the huge names of Machel Montano, Kes, Voice and Bunji Garlin. This struggle peaked as the International Soca Monarch Competition for 2023 was canceled. "Geoffrey Wharton-Lake and Ricky Ragoonanan, directors of Caribbean Prestige Foundation which organises and promotes ISM, cited financial constraints as the reason for the cancellation. Ragoonanan went a step further and accused the government of "killing the culture" by offering less monetary support than was required for proper staging of the competition, which he claimed was "the only stepping stone for new artistes." (Mendes-Franco,

2023). With a budget allocation of \$147 Million dedicated to 2023's "Mother of All Carnivals.", questions must be asked about the distribution of this amount. On February 17th a Newsday article stated, "Ministry of Finance approved the release of \$83,861,683 million to the National Carnival Commission (NCC) on Thursday making it the first tranche of the commission's \$147 million subvention for Carnival 2023." The article cited the distribution of "\$1,852,500 to unsponsored steel bands and a further \$3.2 million remittance payout to NCC for Panorama players and a further \$1.565 million to cultural groups." however, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts Randall Mitchell, stated that these allocations given to Pan Trinbago were separate from the \$147 Million allocated to the Carnival Budget. These inconsistencies raise a number of questions, as even "153 unsponsored steelbands received assistance –\$15,000 for conventional and \$7,500 for the single pans bands." which would amount to over \$2,000,000 for smaller steelbands, yet the ISM was offered a subvention of only \$3,000,000 where the prize money alone would amount to \$2.5 M. Minister Mitchell stated that the government "could never be accused of failing to support any aspect of our culture, especially during the Carnival season." (Mendes-Franco, 2023), yet failed to allocate any amount to cover the costs of the ISM, which was an estimated \$10M. The menial 30% of the required amount, saw "Fantastic Friday" as the Friday before Carnival, which was previously dedicated to the ISM, lose its significance, in what was supposed to be the 'Mother of all Carnivals'.

In addition to the issues of budgetary allocations for Carnival, other traditional aspects are dying out, due to a lack of government attention as well as local support. Activities as such as 'ole mas', which is considered a "Protest mas", where masqueraders make a commentary on society's ills while laughing, is no longer existent. The Chutney Soca Monarch (CSM) which was also an integral part of Carnival, was only held up by sponsors, and poorly attended. This popularity of chutney-soca music, which is cultural fusion of Indian music and the Hindi language, with Soca, Trinidad's fusion of soul and calypso, is also at an all time low. Artistes now release music that is met with hostility by the fans, as popular artistes, like in the case of the ISM no longer take part, so persons are generally no longer interested in the CSM. However, although the decline of the ISM

and CSM is harmful to the Carnival Culture of Trinidad and Tobago, the greatest blow comes with the diminishing popularity of Calypso and Kaiso. Calypso, according to Cambridge Dictionary is “a type of popular Caribbean song whose words are often invented as the song is sung and deal with a subject of interest at the present time.” Thereby was traditionally a form of socio-political commentary, addressing issues relevant to the day. Calypso artistes traditionally have the freedom to express themselves as they please, however claims of censorship in calypso have recently arose. “MC Errol Fabien claims a show promoter told him not to tell any “anti-PNM” jokes at a gig for which he was hired over the weekend.” (Webb, 2023). An article published by the Newsday newspaper, states that NCC Chairman and ex-Minister of Culture as well as acclaimed calypsonian Winston Peters, claimed he had nothing to do with and wants nothing to do with the censorship claims. Errol Fabian, took the public stating, “A calypso show is where, between the calypsonians and the MC, we deal with all societal goings on. If it becomes a pro-PNM charade then it is not of the people, it is of the few.” These claims came in the wake of Lady Gypsy, the sister of NCC Chairman Winston Peters, was prevented from singing her release, ‘Political Cemetery’ in the tents because it is believed to be an attack on the ruling PNM. With the season’s traditional artistic direction losing its way of being stifled, the very essence of Carnival would be lost in the future, as even masquerade bands are simply decorating costumes that look appealing, yet they lack the backstory many were initially acclaimed for. Bands as such as ‘The Lost Tribe’, subsection of Tribe the Band, previously attempted merging traditional wear and carnival costumes, and was well received, yet this was not continued into this year. The Lost Tribe in 2019, won ‘Band of the Year’ for their presentation of “Taj: A homage to the Taj Mahal” which featured myriad of costumes influenced by the Jaipur/Agra regions in India, touching the roots of the Indo-Trinidadians. More bands should use carnival as a medium to display our history and culture as The Lost Tribe did in 2019, as well as displaying other aspects of our culture, for example, in Brazil’s Carnival, costumes are based on native flora and fauna in some cases.

Brazil is the ideal blueprint for Carnival as their carnival is so ingrained in their culture and vice-versa, that major carnival cities in Brazil spend all year preparing for the Carnival season.

Some of Brazil's major carnival cities are Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Salvador, Bahia. Financial allocations for Brazilian carnival varies based on state, but the average investment is USD \$8 Million by the state government with the rest coming, "from sponsors, sambadrome ticket sales, samba school parties throughout the year that raise funds." (The Seattle Times, 2017). As Brazil's population surpasses 300 million people, focus would be brought to one of these city states- Salvador, Bahia. Salvador is the capital of the northeastern state of Bahia, the second largest state in the country, as well as the first capital of Brazil. Salvador is home to Brazil's history and Afro-Brazilian culture, as this coastal city was not only Brazil's first capital, but held the major port for its slave trade and sugarcane industry during the colonial era. Post colonialism, Bahia and the city of Salvador held onto their roots and used their identity to express the struggle their forefathers faced throughout their country's dark history. This historical identity translates into everything they do, including their carnival celebrations. Salvador's upper city, Pelourinho is home to one of the best and most popular samba schools in Brazil- Olodum. These schools, including Olodum, have multiple components, the main being practicing and performing for 'Carnival do Samba' which is essentially Brazil's carnival display, where they dance, drum and march as a band. As mentioned, the historical identity of the Bahians, natives of Bahia, resonates across all aspects of their life, and their carnival bands are no exception. Bahians maintain strong religious and socio-cultural beliefs, that is through the practice of the Orisha religion or Candomble, and preserving their historical community called the "Bloco Africo" which reinforces pride in African heritage and culture through music, dance, songs, cooking and education. The band Olodum, is founded from such a community in Salvador, where the name, Olodum, comes from the Yoruba "God of Gods" Olodumare, as explained by Joao Jorge, CEO of Olodum, to a group of UWI students on a trip to Bahia in 2019. This cultural immersion trip allowed the students to understand how culturally interconnected Brazil's carnival is with its history. Jorge explained, "In Bahia, the African deities and spirituality is important, even today, as it exists alongside the Roman Catholic church, and bits of this spirituality is part of our everyday lives. In Afro-Brazilian culture, we talk about "Axé" which is our life force, a divine power, and in Bahia, Axé drives everything we do. All our drums and beats here at Olodum

is carried forward by Axé, the Axé leads and we follow, we dance and march and parade behind it, and that is how we win, that is how we are where we are today. We here started from nothing, because African bands and samba schools were not allowed to participate, but now we let the world see what the Bloco has to offer, we no longer hide.” The passion and respect that Jorge as a band leader shows towards their history and culture, is an example of why the energy or ‘Axé’ of Brazil’s Carnival is second to none. At the band launch for Olodum in June 2019, the band’s theme for Carnival 2020, was “Mae” or “The Mother” which was represented through costumes which paid homage to Orisha deities, mothers of Egyptian Pharaohs (as the Pharaohs were a theme in previous years) and traditional afro-brazilian women as well. Furthermore, Carnival costuming from across Brazil, generally takes from its local history, or themed satirically after European history, such as the masquerade carnival in Sao Paulo, mimicking the European tradition of masquerade balls.

Moreso, Brazil’s carnival allows for freedom of expression, and has become the driving force for political discourse, as with Olodum challenging the rise of domestic violence in Bahia by raising awareness through its band and music. Olodum utilized their homage to the mother, as the medium through which they joined the fight against domestic violence. From the point of their band launch, items and signs branded with emergency numbers to “Stop Domestic Violence” were a common find and the issue of domestic violence in Bahia was brought up across many Olodum events. Another example of this, is the “Não é Não!” or “No means No Movement” which began in Rio de Janeiro in 2017, at Carnival, advocating for stricter laws to protect women against sexual harassment, especially during Carnival. This movement grew during Brazilian Carnival, with women brandishing “Não é Não!” clothing, tattoos and costumes to take to the streets of Brazil, so much so, that by the 2020 Carnival, the movement reached 17 states. Brazilian state governments also use Carnival as a time to encourage healthy practices, as such as getting checked for transmissible diseases as well as other lifestyle diseases, as this period is used to educate the population.

In conclusion, Trinidad’s Carnival seems disenchanted with itself, as compared to Brazil, where even the darkest aspects of its culture and history is on display. Better accountability and

allocation of funding needs to be done through policies which outline minimum and maximum allocations for these distributions or alternative mediums through which funding can be granted. Finally, Trinidad needs to take a page out of Brazil's cultural maintenance, with art forms as such as Chutney Soca, Calypso and Kaiso struggling for survival. The Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism needs to have better guidelines for and more communication with the organizers of these events and ensure they are managed properly, rather than dictated by private organizers. Trinidad's carnival also needs to have more culturally connected costumes as it has been tried and proven successful in the past. Brazil's carnival is the driving force for many other aspects of their society and culture, and Trinidad carnival, once managed well, has very similar potential.

Conclusion

The research paper, “The Latin American Blueprint: An analysis of Latin American policies that can aid cultural, sociopolitical and economic development in Trinidad and Tobago.” set out to analyze and assess various successful policies across the region and its applicability to Trinidad and Tobago. The Latin American region, due to its similar climate, history, sociopolitical and economic state, seemed the ideal area for policy assessment. The blueprint focused on four areas, namely, immigration, environment, education and culture.

Immigration, being the most dire area in need of improvement in Trinidad due to the influx of Venezuelan refugees and all the socioeconomic issues surrounding it, the researcher chose Colombia as the ideal candidate for this immigration blueprint. Colombia’s government maintains policies for accountability and protection of refugees either seeking permanent or temporary residence. On the contrast the Government of Trinidad and Tobago lacks policies in this regard, where refugees are not legally registered for a number of reasons, with little to no protection and provisions. It was conclusive that most aid and advocacy surrounding these refugees were provided by NGO’s rather than the government directly. Therefore, following Colombia’s immigration framework would prove successful for Trinidad and Tobago in monitoring and managing the Venezuelan Refugee Crisis. Next is the environmental blueprint, which is a topic of international concern and urgency, with Costa Rica being the perfect role-model for environmental sustainability at a global scale. Costa Rica’s detailed and planned out environmental policy elucidates everything needed for sustainability, biodiversity and ecotourism, all of which can be applied to Trinidad and Tobago, as the local National Environmental Policy focuses on similar goals, yet the planning and execution are almost nonexistent. Through following Costa Rica’s policy framework and applying it to local goals and target areas, Trinidad and Tobago very high levels of environmental sustainability, including biodiversity, food security and ecotourism. In expanding on environmental policies, Uruguay’s Marine policies can be used to help Trinidad’s in terms of the fishery acts and protecting oceans and other marines areas and wildlife.

Furthermore, Trinidad and Tobago's plans for free tertiary education, though once successful have fallen off detrimentally, improvements however can be made to this by following Argentina's tertiary education policies. The colossal mismanagement of GATE over the years has forced the government's hand in making cuts to the GATE program as well as the allocation of National Scholarships. However, if financial mechanisms and program regulations based off Argentina's policy framework for free tertiary education is applied, the nation can boast once more of providing free education from early childhood to a bachelors. Finally, the cultural diffusion in Trinidad's Carnival, can be addressed by looking at Brazil's carnival through the microscope. Though Trinidad's Carnival is financially successful, traditional elements and local cultural art-forms typically associated with Carnival are being lost to time. To combat this, through examining "Carnival do Salvador" in Bahia, Brazil, national policies can allow better allocation of funding and regulations should be put in place to allow Carnival to maintain its cultural roots whilst on display for the world. This includes ensuring traditional events are funded and allowed creative liberties as well as utilizing this period to display the nations history in an artistic manner, through costuming and song. Much like Brazil's carnival which is often the driving force for bringing forth political and social issues, displaying their history and providing socio-cultural education through carnival activities.

To conclude, the research paper has proven that Latin American countries can serve as ideal blueprints in policy procurement for Trinidad and Tobago, in spite of being faced with similar issues. In the field of immigration, Colombia has proven its policies dealing with the Venezuelan crisis are the best in the region, while Costa Rica is the global benchmark for environmental policy. Local financial situations and constraints are similar to those of Uruguay, who has rapidly risen to one of the regional leaders in Marine Life Policies and the protection of marine environmental spaces. Free tertiary education which has been a goal of Trinidad and Tobago's education system, though once short-lived, through following Argentina as the Blueprint for education, Trinidad may be able to boast of this yet again. Finally, Brazil's Cultural Blueprint, would build on Trinidad's

already successful Carnival to become a grand display of culture, tradition and history as it grows in the contemporary era.

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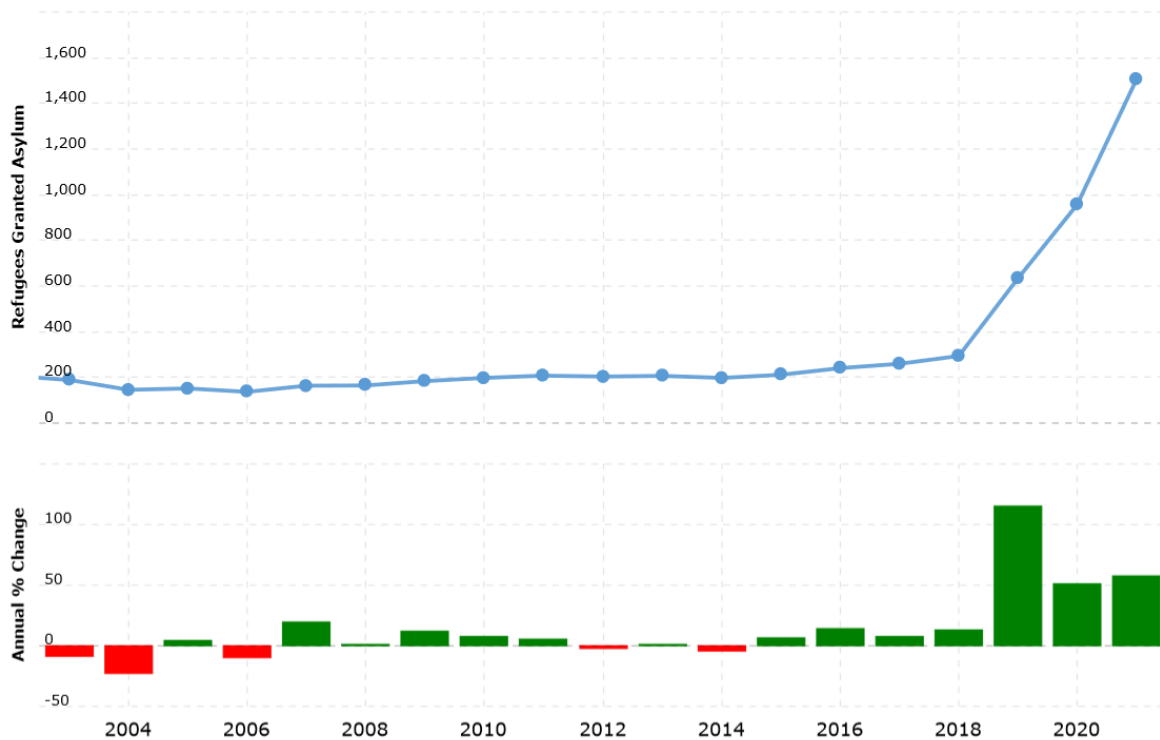
Appendix A

Graph of Colombian Refugee Statistics 2003 – 2023

The Graph below shows the findings, provided by research done by the World Bank that:

- Colombia refugee statistics for 2021 was **1,504.00**, a **57.16% increase** from 2020.
- Colombia refugee statistics for 2020 was **957.00**, a **50.95% increase** from 2019.
- Colombia refugee statistics for 2019 was **634.00**, a **115.65% increase** from 2018.
- Colombia refugee statistics for 2018 was **294.00**, a **13.08% increase** from 2017.

Furthermore, the number of refugees granted asylum increased exponentially after the passing of



Colo

Appendix B

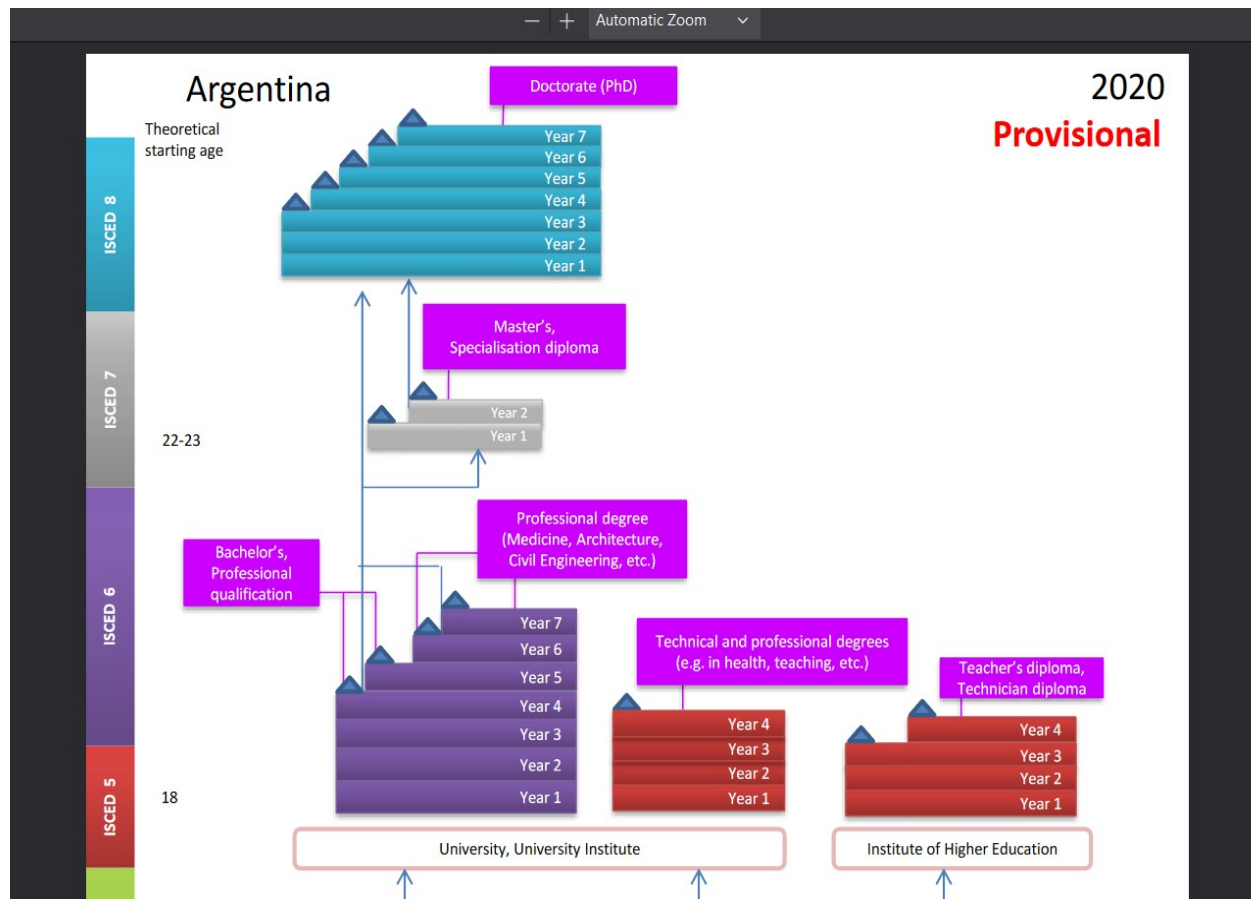
Questions for Environmentalists Ms. Analisa Rasheed and Ms. Vieanna Tirbanie at the IWM Forum in collaboration with Rotary Club Felicity Charlieville.

- Costa Rica is typically seen as a global leader in sustainable development due to its environmental practices, however it's food security and tourism are heavily rooted in these practices as well. From first hand experience, is this true and if so, how effective is it's food security and is eco tourism viable in Costa Rica?
- Do you believe Trinidad has adequate policies in place for environmental sustainability?
- What policies do you believe Trinidad and Tobago can adopt from Costa Rica?
- Due to the similar climate, is Costa Rica the ideal frame work for environmental sustainability in Trinidad and Tobago?
- How do you believe greater interest can be taken in the environment and in agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago for younger generations?

Appendix C

Argentina Educational System Diagram acquired through Argentina Education GPS.

Tertiary Funding is provided until the point of exit from the University Institute, upon which a technical, professional or Bachelor's Degree is awarded.



Appendix D

Photos from the Trip to Salvador, Bahia, Brazil at Olodum's Theatre (2019) In 2019 the researcher was part of a student cultural immersion trip to Brazil, where the group spent a lot of time around Olodum and its owners, learning about their history and how carnival works for them.

Image 1. The group at Olodum's Headquarters with CEO Joao Jorge



Image 2. Joao Jorge teaching a visitor to play Olodum's carnival drums (With themes from previous years as seen on the drum designs.)



Image 3. The group at the Olodum Headquarters



Image 4. The group at Casa do Olodum, Pelourinho. This is Olodum's cultural museum in the city of Pelourinho, as many it is a popular tourist destination.



Image 5. The group at the Candomble do Olodumare, the house of worship for Olodumare, the Orisha God which the band Olodum honors and is named after. The “Mae do Casa” (Middle, White clothing) is the resident “House Mother” in charge of all prayer activities and is consulted by the CEO of Banda do Olodum when proceeding with activities for the carnival band. This is to ensure the Gods approve of what the band is doing as the House Mother is the highest religious figure in the community, said to “speak to the Gods” and state their will. Therefore, the band’s activities, themes and general decisions are done through a sense of divine approval by the House Mother and by extension, Olodumare.

