

ABSTRACT

Key Organisational Processes  
of Four Tertiary Educational Institutions  
in Trinidad and Tobago

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Tertiary education is a key factor in the development of human resources for personal advancement and national development. In spite of its importance however, there is a dearth of research on activity in this sphere of education in the country. The study of configurations provides increasing evidence of organisational diversity and the need for multidimensional analysis of the complexity of organisational forms in the sector.

This study explored the configurations of selected tertiary educational institutes in Trinidad and Tobago. The main intention was to describe the diverse forms which seemed to have emerged and to examine key forces which explained or gave rise to these configurations. Key forces which were examined were: organisational processes; goals; elements of structure; cultures and contextual variables - age, size, ownership, technology and organisation/environment interface.

In this thesis, the methods used were mainly qualitative, although some measure of quantitative analysis was also utilised where it enhanced the collection and analysis of data. Key informants at institutes included in the study provided data which were inductively analysed. Additionally, policy/content analysis of written documents and statistical analyses of questionnaire responses were used to present an overall understanding of emergent organisational forms and functions.

The study found that each of the four institutions conformed to organisational configurations similar to those proposed by Mintzberg (1983) and supported in research by Hardy (1991). The four configurations were: the operating adhocracy; the simple structure; the machine bureaucracy; and the collegial professional bureaucracy. The study also found that the key organisational processes and other factors examined, cohered together to facilitate internal consistency of structure and functions, and gave rise to these distinct organisational types.

Key words: Ruby Alleyne; tertiary; post-secondary; higher education; public; private; organisational processes; configuration; culture; goals; ownership; size; age; structure; technology; organisation/environment interface.