

ABSTRACT

Investigating Policy Formulation Processes In The Social Sector In regard to youth in transition from school to work in two Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago

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This dissertation has as its area of concern the political dynamics of policy development. The study seeks to add to the body of policy research on Caribbean SIDS, through (a) enhancing our understanding of the phenomenon of social policy formulation and (b) contributing to the generation of a theoretical framework for analyzing policy formulation processes in the social sector for Caribbean Small island Developing States (SIDS).

The study is located in the agenda setting stage of the policy cycle and within that stage examines the problem framing, contesting and policy articulation processes. The research design entails a qualitative study utilizing data systematized and analyzed applying the 'grounded theory approach' to construct comparative cases. The sites chosen for the study are Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago and the domain for investigation is youth in transition from school-to-work. The study uses the policy subsystem as its unit of analysis and achieves triangulation of the data by collection through three main processes : in-depth interviews, focus group sessions and archival and current material. Purposive sampling technique is employed for the key informants and in the case of the focus group with direct beneficiaries, who are in the main poor and marginalized youth, they have been selected from the communities of Laventille in Trinidad and Tobago and Pinelands in Barbados.

In order to answer one of the three research sub questions the study introduces two dimensions of governance 'sway' and 'coaction' which led to the conclusion that policy actors were engaging in less expansive governance and proceeding in the more closed, traditional hierarchical modes of governance. An emergent theoretical framework for assessing the policy formulation processes for Caribbean SIDS was proffered - the OHMA framework.

Keywords: Asha I. O. Kambon, governance, policy studies, youth, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago , Caribbean SIDS