The Institutional Discourse of Development:
The postcolonial condition and the case of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

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Abstract:
Using a discourse analysis, the thesis will examine the impact of the postcolonial condition and the desire for integration in the institutional framing of human development reports, policies and programs. Three levels will be used to contextualize the Caribbean expression of human development. First, the international level will be represented by the UNDP, central organ of the international development engine to provide the context of the international discourse. Then, regional and national levels with a case study of Barbados and Haiti will be investigated and evaluate to what extent does the postcolonial condition and identity enable the regional integration into the international development discourse.

The paper seeks to verify empirically the Postcolonial criticism of development and produce IR Postcolonial empirical research on discourses to voice the Caribbean experiences. I argue that the region does not produce a counter-discourse to development and reject the claim that the postcolonial condition/subjectivity is an obstacle the use of the international development framework in the postcolonial Caribbean. To support my position, the notion of identity will be assessed highlighting the references to a regional identity put forward the unity of the region. The thesis will conclude that the attempt to foster a regional Caribbean identity is weaken by the ambivalence of the postcolonial subjectivity and the desire for integration

Keywords: discourse, human development, postcolonial condition, UNDP, CARICOM, Barbados, Haiti.

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1. Introduction

Globalization has drastically impacted development as a theory and practice. From the liberal ideal of economic growth and productivity, new approaches have emerged to be more people-centered, hence reframing the goals and practice of development. The UNDP’s (United Nations Development Programme) Human Development report is regarded as the guiding canvas for the betterment of individual lives (Hopper, 2018; McEwan, 2019). More than just a practice, development is a discourse that shapes ideas about the social world. It tends to represent inaccurately and categorize regions, states and people according to degree of development.

Whether it is from the perspective of critical development, dependency theory or Postcolonial scholars, several counter-arguments to the agenda of development have been voiced. Notably, Postcolonial scholars pointed out the impossibility of development, as it is known, in postcolonial states (Mahmud, 1999). They argued for alternatives to development denouncing the imperialistic and Eurocentric foundations on which development was built on (McEwan, 2001; 2019; Lewis and Mils, 2003). These critical perspectives aim at denouncing the mainstream discourse and practice of development that does not consider or minimize the involvement of the “developing” countries or regions in the process of development as one knows it.

The present research selects the Caribbean as it regional focus. I found that focusing on one region at different level provides the analysis with a wider and more detailed picture of the discourse held in relation to the postcolonial and development. The small island states within the region are first and foremost connected in the historical struggle that was the slave trade and colonization. This is the historical fond that the postcolonial state is building on to better the economic, political and social scenes. In the Caribbean, islands states joined their effort to advance the economic integration of the state and resilience by creating the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). This example illustrates the discrepancies between the Postcolonial discursive works and the unravelling of social practices. I want to confront the theoretical claims of Postcolonial scholars with the empirical development practices and discourses that are produced and reproduced in postcolonial institutions. To this aim the thesis asks: to what extent does the postcolonial condition and identity enable the regional integration into the international development discourse? The CARICOM development policies together with
Barbados and Haiti will serve as a case to uncover how the development is articulated and if it holds in the postcolonial society.

I argue that although the development discourse is rooted in imperialistic and western representation/considerations, the postcolonial subject is bound by the postcolonial condition to strive to become like the colonizer and therefore struggle to depart from the development discourse itself. I reject the claim that the postcolonial condition/subjectivity is an obstacle the use of the international development framework in the postcolonial Caribbean. To support my position, the notion of identity will be assessed highlighting the references to a regional/national identity that is separated from the Western discourse by putting forward the unity of the region.

Additionally, the research plans to answer the criticism concerning Postcolonial theory by contributing to empirical research. The theory has been criticized for how little it looks at the real-world and fix, in a practical way, real world issues. Even though the theory coincides with the concern of the intended research, it has been criticized for its excessive focus on discourse and representations. Yet, some scholars would argue that it pulls the attention away from what development is trying to do, that is to says solve material conditions such as poverty.

Before I assess and confront the postcolonial critique of development to the empirical reality that prevails in the Caribbean postcolonial societies, I must make sense of the previous research done in the field. This step will help review and identify the most relevant method to the present inquiry. First, I will look at the theory. Development theory and Postcolonialism regroup a significant amount of literature. Consequently, I made strategic choices to select literature on the theory and institutional practice of human development, Postcolonialism and the question of subjectivity as well as the discursive power of institutions. The theoretical literature will establish the hegemony of the UNDP to produce and reproduce the discourse of development. Also, the literature review will allow the research to be anchored in development and postcolonial research that acknowledges the role of the postcolonial condition in discourse formation. In the section that follows, I will build on the previous theoretical and methodological considerations to construct my case and method of analysis. I will identify the postcolonial condition and the desire of integration as the variables that intervene in the reproduction of the discourses. Then, I will conduct the study by analyzing the several international, regional and national reports and strategic plans. Finally, I draw the conclusions that there is a need for Postcolonial scholars to take into consideration the postcolonial
condition as a critical factor in the elaboration of development discourse in the Caribbean. As well, the notion explains the empirical evidence that the ambivalence of postcolonial condition enables the reproduction of development practices in postcolonial societies. Understanding the postcolonial experiences of development contributes to the betterment of its practice. Moreover, it helps elaborating appropriate programs and projects that respond to the embedded problems and roots of structural violence.
2. Theory

The literature will highlight the academic debates relating to development discourse and practice, the Postcolonial criticism articulated against the practice of development and its theoretical claims. First, I want to critically assess the available theoretical and methodological positions in order to construct a design that will produce coherent data and results. I will present different positions and assumptions of Development theory. I will explain how the practice and discourse of international development can be understood; both its academic conceptualization but also its institutional practice and the discourse that is reproduced in the context of development. Then, Postcolonial literature, which critically assesses development and its discourse will be reviewed in order to frame the research’s understanding of development and the central concerns and criticisms of Postcolonial scholarship. Additionally, the notion of discourse will be clarified, as well as the ways it relates to this present research. Altogether, these steps participate in the deepening of the paper’s understanding of the previous researches within the field which is critical to conducting this research (Escobar, 1995; McEwan, 2001; 2019; Zein-Elabdin, 2011). This section will introduce the methodological and theoretical approach that constitute the framework to examine the material and case studies.

2.1 Development

The first step is to understand what development discourse is and how Postcolonial theory can add to the analysis of discourse in the context of the developing postcolonial island state. I will provide examples of the analysis of those discourses and connect the Postcolonial criticism of the development discourse to my research. The following section introduces the presentation of the literature that will participate to the construction of the research design. I will introduce to the central theoretical claims held by Development theory, its key concepts to identify its field and discourse. I will also connect the debates that involve the question of alternatives and impossibility of development as these debates feed my argument and position.

2.1.1 Globalization and the developmentalist ideology

The present research focuses on development and how development discourse is expressed and used in a postcolonial institutional setting. I am not going to present a historical description of the field or practice of Development theory as many articles and books offer a detailed timeline of the establishment of the field (see Hopper, 2018; Escobar, 1995; Kingsbury, 2016 or
McEwan, 2009). However, I will refer to the basics of the mainstream development discourse and practice which will set the canvas for the identification of its core principles.

Defining development, as a concept in International Relations (IR), is complex. Development as a theory and a practice has developed to become the mainstream guideline for modernization and national economic growth; so much that it is hardly impossible to replace the word ‘development’ by another one to explain the same exact process that the notions refer to (Escobar, 1995: 5; McEwan, 2019: 161). Today’s practice and conceptualization of Development has changed since the notion was introduced. There was a shift from a more narrow and liberal view where development meant economic growth, to a multifaceted approach that scholars from neo-liberal and post-development perspective, participatory and sustainable development approaches contend to explain and structure (Hopper, 2018: 26). The “plural nature of development” makes it harder to define now than in the early days of the concept. For this reason, Hopper (2018) proposes to focus on the intend of development rather than what it is. The fact that there are multiple approaches and ways to development validates the multiplicity of definitions. Nevertheless, Hopper explains the aspects that make the development process. To most agencies and people working on the field, development primarily seeks to reduce global poverty and inequality by focusing on different areas of social, economic and political life (Hopper, 2018: 29, 30-31).

The academic discourse of development created a need for institutions and organizations that can carry out the vision and ideals of development theories. In the era of globalization, international organizations and institutions are now fully part of the apparatus of development. He argues they act as a controlling organ of the process and ensure the continuity of development practices. The main values and practices of Human Development are embodied by the UNDP. This program aimed to release the economic policy orientated development previously practiced for a more human orientated approach. The Human Development approach is framed as the “process of enlarging people’s choices”. This is the moto of the UNDP and is repeated in most development books and articles (Kingsbury et al., 2017: 33). This development framework does not only focus on the level of income but the ways in which it is spent, meaning that it wants to provide a possibility for individual to choose and not be constraint to/by their lifestyles. Not only does the UNDP defines Human Development, as well proposes a new way to measure it. The Human Development Index (HDI) measure what the UNDP defines as basic aspects of the standard of living. These calculations produce a scale with which countries are ordered to provide a picture of the world according to degree Human
Development (Kingsbury et al., 2017: 34-37). The goals of the UNDP are to empower and give all individuals the opportunity to choose and have agency over their life. Its measuring index has become a popular reference and requirement to assess Human Development. The UNDP transformed and continues bringing changes to how development is practiced. Making an agent of the international discourse of development and a means to facilitate the diffusion of the practice and discourse of development as it is defined today.

2.1.2 Development alternatives and Caribbean scholars
What interest the research of developing countries is new approaches to analyze development policies and the discourses that are embedded and reproduced in the practice of development. The development project is an influential process. As such, it takes account of the evolution of globalization and how it transforms how one thinks about and applies development. Therefore, several development alternatives have been created to bridge the inequalities formed between regions by the intensifying pace of globalization.

Although Caribbean voices on development are mainly focusing on economic and sustainable development, they feed the discussion and bring a regional perspective of development practices. Among these regional voices, Dookeran (2012) advances the partnership approach to development as a regional solution. He does not dismiss mainstream development approaches but argues that global efforts to development benefits small states. He presents the importance of an adapted project that can respond and accommodate small states and as such support the CARICOM and its common market. Also, the question of agency and sovereignty throughout the process is an important factor to the sustainability of the changes operated. In the case of small states, the partnership approach represents a significant opportunity for economic, social and political development. Most importantly, Dookeran (2012) brings up the question of levels as a framework where development is applied. He distinguishes the global, regional, national and individual levels and how differentiated impacts of the development projects and discourses affect different levels and areas of practices.

Other Caribbean scholars compile in their research the regional and national visions of development for the Caribbean. Jno-Baptiste (2010) tackles a discussion on identity and national development. Using a case study of Dominica, he interviews local former prime ministers to uncover the national sentiment on the Dominican identity and the nation’s vision of development. The research suggests that there is a valid connection between identity and the process of development. As well, he notes the ambivalent position of the Dominican people that seek to keep all the benefits of independence and reject the disadvantages that comes with
it (2010: 4). This ambivalence emerges from the expression of their identity, which will me explain in more details with the concept of postcolonial condition. Also, Lewis-Bynoe et al. (2016) who produce researches that pave a new path to resilience for the region and seek to better the regional current approaches to economic and social development.

Recent research conducted by Murh and Avezevado (2018) examines a new conception of development: South-South cooperation. They center their research on a case study that investigates the education development policies of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). The case study is rather theory-based which combines content and discourse analysis of policy documents, agenda and projects for cooperation. Murh and Avezevado’s choice to critically analyze development cooperation documents is explained by their goal to uncover the discourse and ideas that prevailed in the BRICS cooperation agenda. They noted that the researchers in the field, even the ones that studied the BRICS countries, did a separate examination of each country separately without comparing the BRICS with one another. Therefore, they provide individual as well as a comparative to identify the pattern of a common effort or “synergy” regarding development and education cooperation in the BRICS.

Development holds a set of practices and conceptual frameworks that are normalized to the point that it becomes a standard in world politics and global governance. The gap for international overseeing has been filled in majority by the UNDP that nurtures the development ideals (Escobar, 1995: 21; McEwan, 2019: 230-231). The UN provides measurements and rankings that are a reference for evaluating a country’s race against poverty. It is the institution’s guideline to asses to poverty however some critics argue that those criteria exclude many communities and people do not live in decent conditions but are categorized just above the UNDP’s requirements. This is one of the main criticisms within the Development field, however other scholarly field pointed out major arguments against development as it is conceptualized nowadays.

2.2 Postcolonialism and the Development project
Postcolonialism represents one of the most commonly used critics of development discourse outside of the field. I previously presented a brief assessment of the development scholarship and discourse; here I will provide a more detailed assessment of development practice and theory using the IR Postcolonial lens. I will review the Postcolonial literature on development,
the theoretical and methodological approaches held by scholars as well the question intersectionality.

2.2.1 The postcolonial theory and IR
Postcolonial theory emerges as a critic of the Eurocentric practice of International Relations. The theory attempts to denounce the discursive power of colonial domination and the knowledge that is based on Eurocentrism claims. It argues that the knowledge acquired about the world and social practices are rooted in Western thoughts that alienate other means and production of knowledge that do not subscribe to the Western representations. Postcolonialism studies the effects of colonialism on social practices and knowledge. Hence it “examines the interconnections and ‘hybridities’ created by the world-historical experience of colonialism (Ashcroft et al., 2013: 204; McEwan, 2019: 2).

Postcolonial approaches acknowledge the condition that emerges as a response to the colonial past. Therefore, I identify the various ways the notion “postcolonial” is used in academic literature. This step will allow to focus the research and understand how the postcolonial is conceptualized, consequently how it affects the discourse. Approaches to development discourse have been pointing toward several directions, understandings/ideas about the postcolonial. The two approaches regard the postcolonial for different means. First, the globalization approach to development ties the postcolonial to development as a marker, a temporal or geographical delimitation of the research. For example, the globalization understanding identify postcolonial regions as: Africa, Asia, the Caribbean or Latin America; but as well would consider the notion “postcolonial” to be the marker temporality, “what comes after the end of colonialism”. On the other hand, Postcolonial theory and scholarship talks about what is “postcolonial” as a condition, resulting of the colonial struggle and that affects outcomes in world politics and global governance. The understanding of the “postcolonial” determines if the research acknowledges the resulting effects of colonialism in todays political and social interactions (Ashcroft et al., 2013: 206-207).

Going further, Treacher (2005) examines the postcolonial condition and subjectivity to evaluate the colonized/colonizer relationship. He makes use of binaries such as colonizer/colonized, “West/non-West”, “subject/object”, “self/other” to help understand the “political and psychological condition”. There is an ambiguity that prevails in the realization of the postcolonial condition. It is twofold, the colonial subject is profoundly different to the colonizer and at the same time is urged to become like the colonizer (Treacher, 2005: 44). This ambivalence is the expression of the practice of colonialism that rejects the colonized while
reconstructing its identity and culture to become more like the colonizer. Quijano (2007: 171) argues that “the imaginary in the non-European cultures could hardly exist today and, above all, reproduce itself outside of these relations”. It is the conceptualization that will be used in to evaluate the impact of the postcolonial condition in the regional development narrative.

2.2.2 Postcolonialism and development
The Postcolonial-Development Debates compiles important positions that will help make clearer the goal of the research, method and argument. Scholars offer multiple critical views on development. Zein-Elabdin (2011) studies the relation between development and the discourse of colonialism by asking if development can be read as a colonial discourse. He differentiates the historical process of development, that is a “historical fact” and the chemically induced discourse of development. In addition, he denounces the process through which this discourse has given to the West domination over the rest of the world. This is done on the basis that the development discourse has been claimed to be a framework for all. From what is said about development, much points the figure at the ‘Third World’ describing the nations of the South as identical entities with issues that are the root of their ‘underdevelopment’. Postcolonial theory sees these representations as part of the Western discourse to support the development project. Zein-Elabdin (2011) argues that the “postcolonial” is critical to the analysis of today’s practices to uncover and question the hegemony of certain discourses and practices. Some Postcolonial scholars do not consider the development project to be relevant at all. Mahmud (1999), shares a less diluted perspective of alternatives to development, postcolonial imaginaries. He argues for the impossibility of development as we know it. The main criticism found in his work concerns the basis for development theory and practice. In view of the imperialistic and Eurocentric root of development he maintains that it is incompatible with the Postcolonial imaginaries and representations. It is a claim that the thesis intends to address in with empirical evidences to make sure to verify the argument in a holistic way.

Other scholars situate their research in empirical evidence to contrast the common Postcolonial criticism. Cheryl McEwan (2001; 2019) takes part in this discussion. She defines the Postcolonial approaches that are used as a critic of the power that development practices embody and in which hands this power lays (McEwan, 2001: 93). In her article (2001), she entertains a discussion regarding the intersections between, Postcolonial approaches and development. She explains what connects and distances those approaches theoretically, plus
she makes clear the criticisms that are directed toward Postcolonialism analysis of development as a theoretical field and practice. She uses postcolonialism as a “way to criticize the material and discursive legacies of colonialism” rather than a temporal marker for the era that emerges after the end of colonialism (McEwan, 2001: 94). Besides, she argues that the main incompatibilities of the two theory lay in the intent of the theories (McEwan, 2019: 9). Development clearly aims to respond to practical issues with practical means. Whereas, Postcolonialism seeks to questions the underlying foundation of those same practice by denounce the Western misconception and representations of the non-West. Most importantly, she identifies the discourse of development as a central tool for its hegemony; language, pictures, adds, documentaries and other process of knowledge production reinforce the Western representation (McEwan, 2019: 85). Finally, her research, unlike other Postcolonial analysis of development, considers the empirical reality of development in postcolonial societies. She produces empirical research that diffuses the knowledge production and attempt of postcolonial countries, organizations and institutions to voice their own experiences.

2.3 Discourse and power
The notion of discourse is one of the main concepts of this research. It is tied to the different aspects of the practice development and the theory of Postcolonialism in particular. Therefore, it needs to be defined in to make sense of the different areas that are intertwined in institutional organization of development and its implications. I will present a few approaches to discourse and how this concept is at the basis of the methodological considerations for the analysis of the material. I identified two of the areas that consider and use the power of discourses to convey ideas and influence social practices: institutions and academia. They are areas that dictate what can be considered as knowledge and in what circumstances and how it can be implemented. They intervene notably in the creation of policies or programs like the development reports and strategic plan of international, regional and national institutions, namely the UNDP, the CARICOM or national development agencies.

2.3.1 Discourse in academia
Several scholars undertake to identify and comprehend academic discourses within the field of International Relations. Schmidt defines the third level of idea as a reference to the academic or scientific disciplines which entertain the basic assumptions that constitute the roots of the philosophies (2008: 306). Pourmokhtari (2013) writes on the academic discourse of IR about
sovereignty. Though, his findings are not dealing with the field of development, they still say something about discourses in the field of International Relations and its mainstream ‘West-centric’ origins and inclinations. Using a Postcolonial lens to criticize the notion of ‘state sovereignty’ and its understanding in IR, brings forward the domination of the discipline’s discourse on what sovereignty is and the conditions that are acceptable for states to engage in international relations with other states (Pourmokhtari, 2013: 1767-1768). This conceptualization of discourse will help when investigating the outreach of the international development discourse in the Caribbean’s institutions at national and regional level. In addition, it makes clearer the process of idea and discourse formation and change. It shows the agency of academia in formatting discourses of the social world and in the writing or consultations for development reports and policies. Moreover, he argues that the concept of sovereignty is rooted in the colonial legacy of IR, hence its choice of method to combine genealogy approach and a postcolonial approach. He chooses a genealogical approach to support the Postcolonial agenda. This method supplements the theoretical lens because it seeks to dissect the very discourses that are taken for the unchanging truth of International Relations by revealing the power relations and the agents of knowledge. The goal of this methodological approach is to question the truth that are dominating the academic discourse, in this case, it involves “investigating the past in a way that illuminates ‘how the present [has become] logically possible’” (Pourmokhtari, 2013: 1769-1770). He intends to highlight that the mainstream discourse of IR regarding the sovereignty of the state is rooted in power relation. There is an interaction between discourse and practice, one that allow academic discourse to exercise it agential power to direct how International Relations are studied. In the same way, the academic discourse on development, or how political actors talk about development ultimately has some effect on how it is considered by other actors. These power relations say something about the agency that resides in the one who detains knowledge. Academic discourse informs social practices like development. Consequently, it influences organizations and institutions to use academic concepts to frame realities and to try to solve “real life” issues such as poverty and lack of access to education.

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1 Here I do not question the empirical reality of poverty and lack of access to education. Rather, I point out the fact that the definition or understanding of these issues are to some degree reproduced through the academic and institutional discourses. Theses discourses tell us where and to whom, for example, poverty is a fatality; usually in “the South” (McEwan, 2019: 185; Treacher, 2005).
Discourse in organizations and institutions

Schmidt (2008) studies institutions and discursive change what she calls “discursive institutionalism”. In her article, she defines discourse as “the interactive process of conveying ideas” (Schmidt, 2008: 303), she argues discourse is not only tied to ideas or text, it also revealing the context as well as the structures and agency it conveys (2008: 304). Even if ‘ideas’ and ‘discourse’ are used interchangeably in some scholarly works on discourse, Schmidt argues they are not the same. The focus on ‘ideas’ only “tend to leave the interactive process of discourse implicit […]”. Ideas constitute the essence of a discourse, they are either normative or cognitive and intervene at three levels that she lists: policy, programs and philosophies (academia). Cognitive ideas are linked to how policies and programs make possible solving the issues they refer to, and altogether relate to the “principles and norms of relevant scientific disciplines”. Whereas, normative ideas connect to how policies and programs reach the “aspirations and ideals of the general public” (Schmidt, 2008: 306-307). She demonstrates the “transformative power of ideas and discourse” and their “influence in political reality” by differentiating cognitive and normative ideas, coordinative and communicative discourses (Schmidt, 2008: 307-309). When it comes to discourse two types are of importance in her research: communicative and coordinative discourse. They simply refer to a discursive interaction in distinct spheres of political life. Coordinative discourse occurs among the policy actors during the process of policy making and the adjustment that comes with the elaboration of policies. The communicative discourse happens between policy actors and the public. It entails an adapted discourse that can be clearly articulated to the rest of the political actors and the general public (Schmidt, 2008: 310). In short, it is made evident that discursive interaction is a factor that is at the forefront of the study of discourse.

Hence, the research points out that the success of a discourse does not entirely rely on the fact that it is “good” or “appropriate”. It is a combination of “relevance to the issue at hand, adequacy, applicability, appropriateness and resonance”. Schmidt provides an insight into how discourses work, yet let’s not forget the weight of academic literature and researches on Development that shaped the theory itself together with its practice (2008: 311).

The question of institutional discursive change informs the research question by mapping the power of discourse within the institution and the way it affects social practice. In the case of development, one comprehension better that it does not only refers to practice but also a discourse, a set of ideas that influence the political and social practice in a given environment. Vaidya (2018) explores the aftermath and the leverage of institutional discourse when states
act as a mean of structural violence in the process of enacting the development discourse (315-316). Structural violence “is the structural (non-agential) violation of such a set of values, which leads to harmful outcomes” (Vaidya, 2018: 317). His research points out the violence that can emerge out of actors or structure that seems peaceful, not harmful. It is a critic of the institutional arrangements of peace through systematic oppression, arrangements that like development that disqualify some communities and people within a state on the basis that their traditional practices or ancestral knowledge are incompatible with the mainstream developmentalist and capitalist ideology. The article is an empirical research that investigate the impact of the post-colonial structural violence of development policies on the Adivasi communities in Madhya Pradesh, India. Its central argument regards how “the developmentalist ideology and the modern state system constitute a framework for structural violence [...]” (2018:317). Institutionalized discourses support practices such as development programs which are fostered by an academic theoretical discussion on those same real-world issues.

To summarize, this section featured a detailed literature on discourse and its influence, role and impact in the social and political context. The concept of discourse can be used as a notion to guide the poststructuralist inquiry. I put to light the power of discourse within institutions and academia to influence social practices. These discourses reflect the agency and practices of the elite and social actors in power something that should be kept in mind when analyzing the material. Discourse is not just ideas or texts, but it says something about the context in which it is created and the distribution of power in the social world. Studying discourse and how it comes about help make clearer its impact in social settings to produce and reproduce development practices. In addition, the academic discourse concerning produces normative ideas that often integrate the principles and norms within a given society which has a greater impact in day to day practices.

In my research I intend to use the postcolonial approach to understand the Caribbean institutional discourse on development as well as addressing the main Postcolonial criticisms that have been directed toward the development discourse. A few of which I have mentioned earlier will be considering, however the main purpose will be to produce research that ties empirical investigation of discourse and its practical influence in the institutional framing the development strategy of a region and state. I plan to focus on the Caribbean as it is a region that is underrepresented in Western IR Postcolonialism scholarly work. The lack of academic
visibility of the region is a concern of the agenda of Postcolonial scholar that claim to diffuse the unheard voices and seen the unseen actors of world politics.
3. Methodology

In the previous section, I attempted to give a comprising review of the literature’s arguments and methods that deal with the intersections between the Development and Postcolonial academic work and discourses. The present research attempt to understand the extent to which the Caribbean institutional human development discourse differs from the International Human Development discourse. That is why in the following section I will stress the keys aspects and the central elements of the method to explain how it investigate the research question. First, I will introduce the framework of the research, that is the cases and focus, as well I will present the hypotheses and the basis on which they are formulated. Finally, I will define the variables and justify the choice of material, how it has been collected and in what ways it will help respond to the research question.

3.1 The focus of the research

3.1.1 Geographical focus and voices

In order to narrow the scope of the research, I set a geographical focus. The geographical focus is important to the purpose of the research, it is not only to narrow down the investigation but to give visibility to the Caribbean in IR Postcolonial scholarship. Here, I mean that the Caribbean islands states are highly overlooked. Within the field, it is argued that scholars from the Postcolonial tradition aim to breakdown stereotypes and offer a platform to showcase “how nations and cultures outside the west have developed their own knowledges about development” (McEwan, 2001: 95). It is a way for other voices to acquire or reacquire a place in the knowledge production process and able non-Western understandings of the world to be acknowledged in academia and within social practices. However, scholars within the field do not represent all regions equally which still perpetuate uneven representation of voices within the academic discipline.

The Caribbean seems to be overshadowed by the “influential” North American states and South America’s “controversial” states (Escobar, 1995), which leads to the underrepresentation of the region’s scholarship, political and social interests. Part of it could be explain by the size of the region, it is indeed smaller in terms of territorial size. As a consequence, the population is limited with other factors affecting population size in a drastic way (brain drain or natural
disasters for example), but the lack of academic visibility cannot only be attributed to the smallness of the islands.

3.1.2 The Human Development focus
The Development field is broad. There are several aspects I could have focused on in this research. However, I isolated an area of study to make the research more specific and replicable. Human Development is the area within which I will investigate to confront the discourse International Development and Caribbean institutional discourse and the extent to which they coexist in the postcolonial society.

I chose the UNDP as an actor of the International Development discourse. It is an international organ that cannot be dissociated with the development project as it is at the heart of the programs and reports it produces. Human Development can be broken down into many subcategories, a few of them are education and training, poverty reduction, youth development, community development. That is, by the definition of the UNDP, approaches that intend to advance people well-being and broaden their range of choices. It is the UNDP definition that determine the criteria selection for the material for analysis. Consequently, I will select the most updated Human Development report and Caribbean Human Development report to define the central arguments that they advance. These two documents will serve as a reference of the international discourse. All the other reports rather it is at national or regional level of the Caribbean are human development focus or development focus with a clear and delimited human development section.

3.2 Cases and material selection
Knowing that the previous Postcolonial research received criticisms for not acknowledging the empirical aspects of development could be an obstacle to producing results and a research that are anchored into a valid understanding of discourses, the process of development and the postcolonial condition. However, I recognize it is an opportunity to introduce the empirical inquiry and argue how it is central to the understand and record the non-western voices regarding development. To produce an educated response to development arguments and criticism, it is necessary to address the flaws that infiltrates the Postcolonial research and methods. That is why, I choose to put forward real-world examples to inform the analysis of discourses’ practical expression of the postcolonial condition/ identity will feed the investigation.
To do so, within the broader regional scope of the research, I aimed at two levels to examine the way the use of the international discourses of development and the postcolonial condition coexist within the Caribbean development path and strategy. This distinction of levels is used in the analysis as a demarcation following Dookeran (2012)’s consideration of the impact of development practices on different level and Murh and Avezevado (2018) prescription about cross-comparison of the member states within the organization in the context of South-South cooperation.

I intend to examine the regional institutional discourse, by doing so I must verify the finding at the regional level. In the case of my research, I accept as an agent of discourse institutions at the regional and national level. They form and enable the discourse to be diffused in the region. Even though these institutions are composed of individuals, these individuals are, nonetheless, acting as a corporate persona and represent the institution itself, according its norms, values and practices regardless of their own identity (Schmidt, 2008).

The national level serves as a verification of the scope of the discourse of the CARICOM. This will help test the variables that intervene on the national level. Here, I want to find evidence that confirm the similarities or expose the disparities in the core principles of the international and regional approaches to human development.

The regional level of the investigation will look at the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)’s articulation of the development project for the region. The CARICOM is the regional coordinator of economic regional integrational and development. As such, it is the most relevant institution. Plus, it comprises postcolonial islands states, relatively similar in all aspects which assures that the decision-making process is somehow even. It guarantees that the policies were equally agreed on and beneficial for all states. I selected two strategic plans: the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan for the Caribbean Community and the Human Resources Development 2030 Strategy. The national level uses two cases evaluating Barbados and Haiti’s replication of the regional human development discourse will include two reports and a list of programs and projects. Following Murh and Azevedo (2018), I want to assess the existence of a regional synergy. I chose to represent at least two different experiences of colonialism/postcolonialism that I distinguish according to official languages representation of different imaginaries and realities. The islands must be part of the CARICOM to verify the correlation of the human development initiatives. Hence, the case of Barbados features the Barbados 2013-2020 Growth and Development strategy and the Haiti case the 2018-2020
USAID/Haiti strategic framework and a national report as a table of programs and projects for development. The document has been chosen on the basis that they are applicable from 2016 and onward so that they refer to the same international context. The last criterion is that they inform on the Caribbean regional and national plans of human development.

3.3 Variables and method of analysis

3.3.1 Hypotheses, Variables and measurements
The research will look at two independent variables that are thought to influence the Caribbean human development discourse: postcolonial condition and the desire for integration. These variables lead the study to consider the following hypothesis: the Caribbean regional and national institutions will intensively subscribe to the UNDP human development because of the ambivalence produced by postcolonial condition that brings about a strong desire for integration.

The hypothesis resonates with McEwan (2019) and Treacher (2005) conceptualization of the postcolonial subjectivity. I argue against Mahmud (1999) who maintains that the postcolonial does not fit into the discourse of the development project. The postcolonial condition or subjectivity will be understood as the struggle or duality between the desire to become like the colonizer while being confronted with impossibility of the colonized subjectivity (Treacher, 2005: 44-45). It is measured by recording the reports’ references to a regional identity differentiated form the Western representation of the postcolonial and a strong sense of regional/national community while subscribing to the international framework for development. The desire for integration, which the research will understand as the extent to which regional and national reports express the intention or attempt to be part of the global effort for development. The level of integration within the international discourse determines the inclination toward the more Western discourse of human development on national level.

3.3.2. Method of analysis
My theoretical considerations in the investigation will be aligned with Postcolonialism. Scholars mainly focus on the discourse of development and its imperialistic roots and advocate for a deconstruction of development as it is today (Hopper, 2018: 65-66). My argument does not ignore the discursive domination of the Western over the practice of development but rather attempt to understand the empirical evidence of its practice in postcolonial states.

I will use a critical discourse analysis to examine the material. The main criticism directed toward discourse analysis is that it lacks the characteristic of a scientific method. Some scholars
within the field of IR, do not consider it produces unbiased, objective and valid knowledge (Milliken, 1999). However, those criticisms were pointing toward the use of speeches, letters and which can be emotionally charged and can refer to one individual. As a result, I answer this concern by conducting the analysis on reports and strategic plans written by the region’s institutions.

First, I will identify the defining aspects of the UNDP’s 2016 human development discourse. This is to establish the international development context to then be able to position the Caribbean discourse accordingly. I base my search on the key words of the UNDP human development definition. It commonly links the following notions (this includes synonyms) together “individuals”, “broaden choices”, “empowering people”, “poverty”, “HDI” and “universalism”. Also, I will evaluate the use of the notion identity and evaluate the issues it is connected to are more positive or negative in the reports. Then, I will compare the international and regional UNDP reports to see if any differences in discourse are perceivable as a mean to synthesize the international framework. Second, the Caribbean regional and national reports and programs will be critically analyzed by measuring the extent to which the UNDP key words are structuring the Caribbean strategy. Following Murh and Azevedo (2018), the regional and national levels are combined to verify the presence of a ‘synergy’ within the region. Contrasting these two levels I intend to measure the extent to which the CARICOM discourse is fully subscribed to by the states in the region. The research wants to determine the outreach of the Caribbean discourse at the national level. Finally, I will contrast international and regional discourse to present the disparities and similarities and weighing the influence of the discourses. The levels represent the extent to which the postcolonial condition impacts the discourse of development and how visible is it in the discourse related to identities. Altogether, the different steps of the method allow the research to identify the regional development discourse and the intervening factors that structure this discourse.
4. Analysis

The following sections will analyze the material by taking into account the Postcolonial theoretical understanding to construct an answer to the research question. That is identifying the extent to which the Caribbean institutional discourse on human development is opposed to the UNDP international human development discourse. The Caribbean regional and national levels will be investigated to point out any inconsistencies and will be contrasted with the International Development discourse that produces the UNDP as the leading Development organization.

First, I will set the key characteristics of the UNDP discourse of Human Development to establish a basis for comparison. It will help set up the framework of analysis and comparison in order to point out the convergences and divergences of the international and CARICOM’s discourse of Development. To do so, I will extract from two UNDP reports, the 2016 Human Development report and the 2016 Caribbean Human Development report, central arguments and concerns which help map out the discourse on the matter. I will then examine the strategic plans, program notes and reports in the Caribbean at regional and national level to single out the regional trends of the institutional discourse. At the Caribbean regional, the CARICOM 2015-2019 strategic plan and the Human Resource Development 2030 strategy will help structure the analysis. In addition, the case studies of Barbados and Haiti will illustrate the national level. On the one hand the Barbados 2013-2020 Growth and Development program strategy. On the other hand, Haiti’s development reveals that the country faces tremendous problems with its political, economic, health care, its overall infrastructures and education system it is important to keep in mind that those programs are strongly funded by international actors, states and organization. The lack of availability of the national policy document and the political turmoil in the country made it difficult to access the policy and strategic plans for Human Development in Haiti. However, it does not mean it does not exist. Therefore, the study of Haiti is supported by the table of government expenditures on programs and projects. As well, the Haiti’s USAID development program report and national programs and projects table to dig deeper into the issue.
4.1 UNDP reports and the International Development Discourse

On the international level, the UNDP represents the organ that diffuses the most prevalent development agenda and discourse. The organization provides frameworks and normative guidelines to reach this goal of called “Development” (Schmidt, 2008: 306-307). The UNDP is the international reference and act as a source of the International Development discourse (McEwan, 2019: 228-230; Hopper, 2018). The material I selected from the UNDP library of the 2016 reports focus on human development, with one situated assessment of the 2016 Human Development report in the Caribbean. I analyze the language in those reports to use the data as a reference of the international development discourse regarding human development, this will enable me to point out its occurrences in the CARICOM and the national development reports of Barbados and Haiti.

4.1.1 UNDP’s language on Human Development: international and regional focus

The UNDP is the central instrument of the implementation and assessment of development programs internationally. As such it generates most or if not all the global initiative for Development and compiles data on individual countries based of the different indices that it creates for measuring Human Development. This organization operates at the international level to boost the states involvement in global development and build a unified front with frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals, a common and comprehensive global agenda for sustainable development. Because of its agency in determining the discourse on Human Development programming and policing, the UNDP reports constitute the most relevant tool of comparison to the Caribbean discourse on Human Development.

The UNDP 2016 Human Development report is a presentation of the global Human Development strategy. Among the issues discussed in the Human Development report, the emphasis has been put on the few central arguments and ideas supported by the UNDP.

First, the claim that the Sustainable Development Goals are attainable and should be fulfilled in order to reach development for “everyone” is one of the central arguments of the report. Also, the ambition to reach “everyone” is linked to the notion of universalism which is the UNDP central concept to support the plans outreach. A combination of international and national universal policies is the tool the UNDP advance to be a solution the poverty and the lack of freedom for all humans. The organization is committed to empower every individual and give them access to sustainable Human Development.
“making human development resilient and empowering those left out using universal policies”; “The Report rightly recognizes that national policies need to be complemented by actions at the global level.”; “Universalism is key to human development and human development for everyone is attainable.” (UNDP-HD 2016, iii,1)

The universalist ambition is to some extent assuming that all individuals are the same however in reality contexts, historical and cultural backgrounds differ. It is strongly expressed when the discourse of development attribute values to societies based on ‘levels of development’, which consequently stigmatizes economic, political and social processes that do not subscribe to the same development criteria. This stigmatization composes an uneven and weakly representative of how development is conceptualized outside these ideals.

In addition to a very broad 2016 Human Development report, the UNDP published a regional report for the Caribbean human development. This configuration makes a clear difference in the focuses and how the region is represented. The decision of having a team of consultants translates the desire of the UNDP to not make an external assessment of the region’s challenges. As well, it shows the intent to provide an insider’s look into the characteristics of the Caribbean in terms of human development. It was prepared in consultation with the Caribbean scholars and intellectuals from local universities (lecturers, PhD candidates and researchers) as well as professionals (Ambassadors, CEO’s, Bank directors and independent consultant) however the lead authors are UNDP researchers based in the New York office of the organization. And as such, it contrasts with the universal “everyone” not differentiated by cultural, geographical and social terms.

The reports (UNDP HD 2016, UNDP 2016 Caribbean HD) denoted a strong focus on practical actions toward the betterment of human lives in accordance with the development agenda. It assumes that the challenges are solely practical. There is still within this regional report a clear demarcation of the UNDP’s discourse on human development. The indices and measurement remain a criterion for assessing the evolution of the process. According to the organization, two variables are identified as the obstacles to the Caribbean economic and social development: “(a) the burden of debt […], and (b) the cost of energy […]” (UNDP 2016 Caribbean HD, 41).

About the notion of identity, the UNDP 2016 HD have problematized and defined it. It mostly relates to the problematics of ethnic conflicts and the effect it has on individuals and their freedom of choice.
“Identity influences agency and autonomy” (UNDP-HD 2016, 8),

“Multiple identities influence an individual’s agency and well-being (functionings and capabilities” (UNDP-HD 2016, 92).

Thus, the UNDP-HD 2016 report accentuate the idea that the multiplicity of identities is a determining factor of individual well-being and agency. Still, the question of representation of non-Westerner societies and groups are not addressed; they are more stigmatized by the UNDP’s reading of multiethnic/multicultural societies. There is in the report a discussion of identity, yet the question of postcolonial struggle, identity and regional culture is neither developed nor mentioned as a key factor in the process of human development in the region. I argue it has to do with the inaccurate representation of the postcolonial populations and the false assumptions that prevails which shapes the reality to the criteria of the international development discourse (Treacher, 2005: 52-53, McEwan, 2019, 150-151).

Both reports issued by the UNDP are goal orientated and take pride in acknowledging “everyone” within the social sphere. The UNDP argues in their 2016 Human Development report they can and will “ensures development for everyone”. By creating a canvas with goals, targets and ideals to reach, the West promoted what they “judged to be a normal course of evolution and progress”, “an instrument for normalizing the world” (Escobar, 1995: 25-26). This instrument, the development project, by normalizing, also excluded or systematically rejected people, communities and states.

For instance, the Human Development Index became a tool for international development programs and is “truth” taken for granted. The capacity of the HDI to be a measurement that encompasses the several variations and expressions of social life in a comprehensive way is rarely questioned. However, the calculation of the HDI originate from three areas of social and human life (long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living). Rather, the findings of the UNDP HDI are used and reused as ‘the truth’ which creates a stigmatization of the ‘less/under/not developed states’, as they are called. Hence, it participates to the construction of a polarized representation of the world based on limited criteria, where the ‘developed’ dominates over the ‘rest’ because of its argued intellectual/academic, technological and political superiority (Treacher, 2005: 44). It is a discourse of uniformity where the other, the one who’s practices deviate from the international development agenda is considered “underdeveloped”.
In short, understanding the considerations and focuses of UNDP Human Development set a canvas for distinguishing the development trends that are similar on the international and regional levels. The next section, the concerns that Caribbean regional and national institutions for development present as critical that are not considered in the international development plan.

4.2 Regional and national trends in contrast to the UNDP’s discourse

The CARICOM is the regional organ I investigate to point out the regional institutional discourse on Human Development among Small Island Developing States. The two reports were found the most relevant, the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan for The Caribbean Community (CARICOM 2015-2019 Strategy) and the CARICOM Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy (CARICOM-HRD 2030).

The discourse that emerges from the CARICOM reports is a depiction of the region’s ambition and challenges. Knowing that they are prepared in collaborations with the members states of the CARICOM, it also says something about the national goals of the individual member states. Staying on the regional level of the production of the discourse does not give insight into the overall regional narrative in the island states within the CARICOM. As a mean to verify the actuality and continuity of the regional development policies and plans, I will look more closely to the articulation of the Caribbean discourse on the national level as well by studying the Barbadian and Haitian policies and plans. This is to certify the application of this Caribbean narrative of development thoroughly in the region and ensure that it is not an isolated discourse.

Barbados and Haiti are both member of the CARICOM and as such have participating in the policy making process of the regional organization. Consequently, I assume Barbados and Haiti agreed to support the strategic plans and regional policies of the CARICOM. They have two different development profiles. On the one hand, Barbados features a remarkable economic growth and development; and arises as a development example by the UNDP standard. According to the UNDP, Barbados is a leading example among the Caribbean island states in terms of development and betterment of human lives. On the other hand, Haiti still struggles with post-earthquake and post-hurricane distress, being so the country is highly assisted by international and foreign organizations/programs that seek to “develop” Haiti, like the USAID which is the United States aid agency. In short, two divergent national development contexts
that will deepen the analysis by verifying the extent to which the CARICOM development discourse is subscribed to regionally.

4.2.1 Convergences: the international development discourse as a starting point
First, I noted similar trends between the Caribbean institutional discourse of development and the International development discourse. The CARICOM have quite mainstream Development goals altogether. The strategic plans are interconnected and support the same red thread and ideals for the region. The CARICOM-HRD 2030 refers to the CARICOM 2015-2019 Strategy concerning the question of regional identity and individual development, which I will explain later, is a central element of the Caribbean discourse for Development.

To set the context of the inscribing, the 2015-2019 CARICOM strategic plan was prepared in collaboration with all the CARICOM stakeholders, the funding was attributed by the Department International Development of the United-Kingdom (UK) as part of a wider effort for ‘Reform of the CARICOM’. It serves as guideline for the CARICOM member states, institutions and different bodies to build a common effort for the development, integration and growth of the Caribbean as a region (CARICOM 2015-2019 Strategy, i). The priorities of the plan: “Four strategic priorities […] Access, Equity, Quality and Relevance” (CARICOM 2030, XII) resemble, to some extent, the central goal of Human Development to broaden the choices of people. The capacity building approach is integrated to the CARICOM Human Development initiative which can be linked back to the UNDP vision for community development (Kingsbury, 2016:216; UNDP Capacity Development Guide, 2009).

“The framework for action will be implemented using […] Capacity Building Initiative (CBI)” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, XVII).

In the case of Haiti, many areas of intervention are mentioned (Democracy, Human Rights and Governance; education, energy, health, gender equity and women’s empowerment among others). The development strategy is as well marked with the international ideal of development and mainstream discourses of poverty. The emphasis is put on economic growth as a driver of successful development which again refers to the international development approach (USAID/HAITI 2018-2020) as seen by the UNDP.

Moreover, Human resources are placed at the center of the regional reforms as it states the people are a critical asset to the regional community. It emphasizes the need of a regional vision
to champion the initiative for education and training. Some of the core values the CARICOM aspires to foster in the Caribbean individual are:

“[…] good citizenship […], integrity […], professionalism […], diversity and multiculturalism […], innovation […], excellence […]” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, 39)


These are the values that are to be promoted by every individual touched by the HDR plan. They represent an ideal shaped by the Caribbean region for its citizen. The significance of the HDR 2030 strategy has been made clear on several occasion throughout the strategy.

“The HDR 2030 Strategy is a regional road map for the development of people” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, XVII),

“[…] a road map for the CARICOM Regional Education and Training Agenda”. Most interestingly enough the CARICOM “[…] seeks to ensure that our Community can fully respond to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, XIII).

Another convergence with the UNDP concerns education. The CARICOM education plan supports the SDGs goal 4 in education and training for the sustainable development of communities. This is a way to deepen the region’s involvement to the global effort for development but as well strengthen the region itself. Also, the emphasis on education and training as a driving force of the process is highly regarded as a trend of the International development framework (Hopper, 2018: 89).

“Education continues to be the engine of economic and social development through the investment in human capital” (BDP 2013-2019, 120)

“empowers our people […] the Ideal Caribbean Person” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, 40).

“Barbados: UNDP approved” is a tag that the state desires to retain, there is some kind of pride coming out of this position.

In addition, the Human Development section of the strategy Barbados supports the application of the CARICOM-HRD 2030 and SDGs. The acknowledgement of the country by the UNDP is of importance for the Barbadian governing bodies and make sure to point it out throughout the strategy, it does not only apply to Human Development but every aspect of the island’s
development. Barbados uses the UNDP definition of Human Development that argue for the empowerment and agency of individuals.

“Barbados has admirably achieved a ‘very high human development’ status in terms of the UNDP’s Human Development Index which combines indicators of health and educational status and livelihood” (BDP 2013-2019, 5)

“In the context of Barbados, human and social development initiatives are intended to ensure that all Barbadians enjoy healthy lifestyles, have full access to high quality and meaningful education and health services, and are able to fully engage and be active in their communities” (BDP 2013-2019, 119)

To sum up, the empowerment of the people is a central goal both on the regional and national level and alludes to the UNDP discourse and leading principles. The quoted sections of the material illustrate the organization’s striving attempt to fully take part in the international politics of development and conform to the basic requirement of the mainstream development framework. The evidence of closeness with the international plan entails that there is a strong foundation based on the UNDP’s ideals. To some extent, the effort of contribution to the global agenda for Development contradicts the Postcolonial arguments that the international discourse of the Development agenda does not fit to the Postcolonial societies. This ambivalent position is explained by Postcolonial theorists to symbolize the ambiguity of the postcolonial condition and sense of subjectivity. This is when the postcolonial subject struggle to rest within a determined identity.

4.2.2 Divergences: unity, identity and agency

4.2.2.1 Historical unity as a pillar to regional integration

Historical unity and regional traditions bear a substantive place in the establishment of the CARICOM as an organization itself and it is acknowledged in the policy documents. Again, the question of cultural diversity, linguistic and historical differences are stressed to ensure the plan considers all if not most of the different communities with the regional space. To the CARICOM, History is a pillar and a springboard to call into question the representation of the Caribbean postcolonial people. There are references to the colonial past and postcolonial condition of the region are a mean to consolidate the sentiment of their own regional identity, an identity that they own.
“throughout our history we have come up with solutions to defeat the most dire predictions and conquer the toughest challenges” (CARICOM 2015-2019 Strategy, iii)

“the Caribbean Community is populated by [...] culturally and linguistically diverse groups of people [...] historical roots to Africa [...] Aboriginal civilizations.” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, 9).

This issue of identity appropriation is linked to the Caribbean postcolonial subjectivity (Treacher, 2005). The Caribbean history as for colonialism maintain the fragmented view of the world, where the “West” is somehow more advanced than the “non-West”. This is a construction that persist and dictates behaviors in world politics. The document opens up by stating the strength of the Caribbean people/region and reinforce the idea of the struggle of the region in opposition to the global arena. In the light of the colonial past of the Caribbean, this accentuate the division “West” and the “Rest”. This shows that the “North- South” division is not only an academic matter but intervene in the regions’ conceptualizations of real-world international politics and dictates how state/regions/communities position themselves from the mainstream discourse of international institutions. “These binaries are not innocent but are bound up in the logic of domination; they have material consequences” (McEwan, 2019: 151).

This is the predominant influence of discourse like development, that it shapes the realities by dictating the conditions for values, practices, cultures and others aspect of the social world to be normalized (Pourmokhtari, 2013: 1767-1768). In addition, the question of temporality is raised, here again, confirming that the postcolonial condition does not just echoes back to the past as a “done deal” but to the ramifications of these practices on today’s world politics (Treacher, 2005:45).

The idea of “unity/togetherness” and “the spirit of Community” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, 9,31) is pushed forward throughout the discourse held in the reports. I argue here that the CARICOM attempts to emphasize the exposure of its regional culture and issues through the strengthening of the region cohesion. Also, evidences support that Barbados endorses the discourse of identity, community, togetherness and integration. The Barbadian strategic plan argues for the central position of the people of the nation. Hence, people are the foundation (BDP 2013-2020) of the country’s development. Stronger than a community, Barbadians are a family. The foreword of the Barbados Development and Growth plan reflects the national sentiment on identity and community.
“This collaborative effort is testimony of the spirit of ‘Team Barbados’” (BDP 2013-2020, iii)

“Together, the Barbadian family, in strength and unity, can ensure that Barbados’ success and future as a renowned progressive and unique small middle income developing nation state, is secured” (BDP 2013-2020, ii)

It is a mechanism that position the Caribbean’s experience of development outside the “West’s” conceptualization of the “South” as a uniform and identical people that experience the postcolonial condition and development in the same manner (McEwan, 2019: 267). The region does not wish to produce a counter-discourse to the Western mainstream development discourse per say. But in Postcolonial terms, this is understood to be an effort to “remove western negative stereotypes” about people, traditions and cultures in the Caribbean (McEwan, 2019: 206).

The evidences found in the reports lead me to maintain that it is an initiative of regional unification to distinctively dissociate themselves from the Western ideal of human development as well as joining the global effort for development by integrating the Caribbean the region seek to reproduce itself (McEwan, 2019: 209).

4.2.2.2 The ‘Ideal Caribbean Person’: individual identity as a glue

One of the main differences is the significance of building a regional cohesion and strengthen the idea of regional identity by making it an institutional concern. The CARICOM attempts to stimulate a greater attachment to the region by reinforcing individual’s identities of the people. The Caribbean human development logic is articulated as a continuation of the ‘Ideal Caribbean Person’ document which portrays the characteristics that are to be encouraged and developed in the Caribbean individual to build a strong, relevant and reliable Caribbean Community. “It targets […] its values from that document” (CARICOM- HRD 2030, XII). The individual connection to the region’s vision is a mean to the regional economic, political and social integration into the international sphere.

There is a constant back and forth between the policies and how they are linked to shaping the “Ideal Caribbean Person”. The organization wants to fortify the notion of identity as a glue that bring the strategy together as well as reminding how essential the support of a regional identity/person is to the plan altogether.
“The implementation of this strategy […] will lead to robust policies and programmes that would help us shape that “Ideal Caribbean Citizen”” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, XIV)

“This participatory and interactive approach […]” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, 22)

The plan’s approach can be differentiated with traditional development plans, it clearly puts the emphasis on the empowerment of people and individual development which is a concern of UNDP Human Development or critical development/post-development theory. But even in those approaches the notion of personal development is not taking into consideration together with cultural, ethnic and religious characteristic that are intertwined within the identity and historical ties of the people that the UNDP want to bring to development.

In this sense, “the Ideal Caribbean Person” is a deeper approach of the individual development. It denotes the importance of the individual level in the development of policies and the desire to involve citizens in the development of their region. It seems that the CARICOM believes its citizens to be the driving force of the regional development and the global integration.

“The vision articulates the belief in the personal power of every Caribbean citizen […]” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, 38)

The initiative plans to promote and give exposure to the people of the region as a tool to reach the regional goals of global integration and visibility of the Caribbean civilization. The development of the “Ideal Caribbean Person” is a mean to “strengthen[ing] the CARICOM identity and spirit of community” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, 31) to face the challenges that come from the region but also from the international space. There is, in some sense, the idea of the creation of a regional identity that can be position on the international level as one entity, an accurate representation of the postcolonial Caribbean and not a record of false assumptions produced by the Western discourse on the “rest” (Escobar, 1995).

The creation of an Ideal Caribbean Person must be problematized. It emerges as a strong solution for the CARICOM. It would be interesting to understand how this comes about; to better understand how the CARICOM members and agencies process the creation of an individual as a driving solution for the development of their region. Hence, the CARICOM aspires to detach its identity from the Western representations of the postcolonial people. The description of the ‘Ideal Caribbean Person’ is the materialization of the resistance to the dominating discourse of the West (Treacher, 2005: 44). The profile lists several values,
characteristics and qualities that makes the ‘Ideal Caribbean Person’. Among the first characteristics:

“Ideal Caribbean Person, defined by CARICOM as someone who, among other things:

- is imbued with a respect for human life since it is the foundation on which all the other desired values must rest;
- is emotionally secure with a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem;
- sees ethnic, religious and other diversity as a source of strength and richness;
- is aware of the importance of living in harmony with the environment;
- has a strong appreciation of family and kinship values, community cohesion, and moral issues including responsibility for and accountability to self and community;
- has an informed respect for the cultural heritage [...]” (CARICOM 2015-2019 strategy, 35).

One could argue that the characteristics are not different from the mainstream idea of individual development. However, I argue it is in accord with the postcolonial subjectivity and as such it is a boost for the strengthening of the Caribbean postcolonial identity formation. The act of putting into words the CARICOM’s ideal in an official institutional document participates of the development of a discourse of regional identity. It is another representation of the Caribbean individual. Yet, it is not a Western construct, but it is still a polished canvas that intend to format what the Caribbean individual is or ought to be. It raises the necessity to know if the postcolonial representation is just another construction or the result of a hybrid version of itself. Nevertheless, it is a representation of the Caribbean produced by the Caribbean and in this sense, it differs from the Western stereotypical “helpless underdeveloped islander”. The notion of an “Ideal Caribbean Person” bring up as many questions as any Western representations of the postcolonial.

4.2.2.3 Agency and common regional issues at the center

The agency of the CARICOM to build its vision based on the needs and specific challenges the region faces is an asset to development process. The question of agency is of great importance in the case of Haiti due to the circumstances that leads the country to development. Nonetheless, the goals of the region are strongly represented.

An example of the challenges that the region identifies on top of the commonly agreed agenda are the wastage of education and admitting the multileveled aspect to education. The wastage of education is one specific problem face by the region that is not traditionally address in
development policy (CARICOM-HRD 2030, XII). It occurs when there is access to a structured education system, however this access is not resulting in the use of the education acquired. It represents a focus that is an adjustment to the simple act of providing education for all but rather ask the question how to sustain and use this education.

Even though, the UNDP considers the multidimensional aspect of human development (UNDP 2016 Caribbean HD, 3), this is an aspect that is not instigated as a concern of the international development discourse on education. Besides, the CARICOM human resource development program advances that the creation of a catalog of options is necessary to answer the need of different people with different experiences of education: the 2030 strategy “[…] is intended to provide multiple pathways for success” (CARICOM-HRD 2030, XIII). The strategy deals with several issues that are peculiar to education in the Caribbean (gender and achievement, the use of technology within the learning environment, development of skills for adults and out-of-school youth, the use of creativity for personal and regional development and fostering innovation). This method recognizes the diversity of the Caribbean social settings and the uneven multiplicity of education levels across ages.

Plus, less emphasis is put on numbers and measurement and more attention is put into weaving situated policies and a people centered vision that portray the diversity of needs and experiences of the region. The report acknowledges the importance of personal development for the sake of the individual’s well-being rather than just for the utility of it as a mean to economic development. They believe Human Resource Development is “[…] not only for the economy, but also for personal development and good citizenship (CARICOM-HRD 2030, XII).

Regarding the national reports of the Haitian government, little has been recovered of the development process and policies. By assessing the number of programs allocated to human development, I get a better picture of the priorities of the Haitian government. However, one cannot say with certainty the extent to which the Haitian government have agency over these projects and programs. The lack of access to the programs and projects reports makes it challenging to display the exact details of the extent to which each actor involved in planning and funding the programs. I used the table of project and programs expenditure from the Haitian government webpage to assess and give a picture of the areas of priorities. I counted and regrouped the project by sectors of intervention, which were already provided in the original table. The table shows that the 5 main sectors of intervention are energy, youth, sport and
civism, institutional reinforcement followed by tourism and transportation. Some correlations can be made with the USAID strategy that pushes forward resilience, economic growth and governance. It is most likely that a significant number of programs are indeed USAID funded which can explain the choices of focus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs and project sectors</th>
<th>Number of projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSPORTATION</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENERGY</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WATER AND SANITATION</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRICULTURE</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTITUTIONAL REINFORCEMENT</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOURISM</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUTH SPORT AND CIVISM</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHERS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1- Haitian programs and projects sectors*

The management of the development strategy echoes back to the international development framework, the question for identity, cultural and historical aspect are not mentioned as a determinant factor of development in the USAID projects. Rather the organization name the priority of the strategic framework as such: “U.S. National Security Interests [...] Assert U.S. leadership [...] Foster economic opportunities for the American people [...]” (USAID/HAITI 2018-2020, 4). The priorities stated by USAID are strongly suggesting that the means employed in Haiti are to benefit the United-States (US) and strengthen its leadership in Haiti.

To summarize, the notion of agency is central in the development process, it is a factor that drastically changes how policies and plans are created. The CARICOM leads it development planning by infusing its ideals in the reports and plans for the region. On the other hand, Haiti lack control over its development as a result of its current weakened state. The country counts heavily on the support of other international actors which creates uneven power relations between the island and the intervening international actors. The agency of Haiti is diluted and hardly visible with the external deciding bodies. Hence, the discourse that is spoken about the country’s development is a representation of the Haitian reality. Consequently, it participates to the reproduction of Western representations of the ‘South’ (McEwan, 2019: 182-183).
4.3 Summary of findings

I investigated the international, regional and national level to identify the pattern and how the development discourse is presented from the leading regional institution to the small island member states of Barbados and Haiti. I will draw some conclusion in the following part to make clearer the findings of the discourse analysis.

The data illustrates the duality of the discourse express on the regional level is reproduced on the national level. However, on Barbados’ side the relevance of a regional identity and community is less visible. Indeed, fewer mention of the CARICOM and other regional ties were made in the report. By subscribing to the global development agenda Barbados is in accord with the regional institutional discourse. Nevertheless, the central concept of the ‘Ideal Caribbean Person’ that is excessive at the regional level is somehow toned down at the national level. The Haitian voices are alleviated under the multitude of external interventions. The unavailable information on development funding, unable the research to understand how it can affect the discourse and practices of development in Haitian institutions. Concerning Haiti’s position regarding the CARICOM’s emphasis on identity and togetherness, it is not replicated in what has been recorded so far. The focus seems to be on practical aspects such as measurement of economic policy, governance and citizen capacity which resemble the HDI.

It is made clear, in the CARICOM reports, that the regional institution strives to integrate fully the international community. It does so by joining the global initiatives of the SDG’s and other global agendas. However, the region insists in “carving out” its multifaceted identities and human development goals, a way to challenge the prevailing discourse on the South that is created in the North (McEwan, 2019: 189-190; 267).

To contrast, the Barbadian position is neither counter nor pro-international development framework in its entirety. Rather it raises the same doublespeak as the CARICOM where the efforts to promote strong regional or national identities does not cancel the striving attempt to integrate the region within the international discourse. To Barbados, the improvement of citizen is the path to national success. Here, the ‘Ideal Caribbean Person’ is resonating but not enough to link it strongly to the question of the postcolonial condition and the identity struggle that the CARICOM illustrates clearly, individual development is key. The profile of Barbados is an example to the Caribbean in terms of growth and Human Development to the UNDP; which ultimately is an asset to the region’s integration process. The question of economic integration
supports the national effort for development. Integration is the dominating motivation for Barbados. Regarding identity, it is the sense of belonging to the national ‘family’ that the country uses as a mean to create the sense of togetherness. But the duality of the discourses uncovered at the regional level is not as detectable.

It clear that here is a doublespeak. An aspiration to be like the colonizer but as well the aversion and the hatred directed toward the colonizer. The western discourse portrays the “Other”, the one outside of the West, as a people in need of development, that must reach “our level” (McEwan, 2019: 172-173; Treacher, 2005: 53). Thus, I advance that this need of reaching the western goal is engrained into the postcolonial subject which is conflictive with the repulsion and will to be freed from the ties of submission. Postcolonialism maintains as central the idea that the impact of past practices impacts the present of communities and especially postcolonial societies. In this sense, the discursive power of colonialist social structures and practices are important to consider and understand outcomes that are visible nowadays in these societies.

Yet, from the UNDP standpoint, no specific attention has been given to those issues that cannot be grasped by only focusing on practical aspects of human development. The underlying issues of colonialism that the development discourse brings about such as the representations and binaries, North-South power relations, ‘worlding’ or the globalization of Western development knowledge as truth (McEwan, 2019: 150,152,163,166,168-169); remain unattended for in the human development framework of the UNDP. Most concerns raised by Postcolonial theory are silenced. Precisely, the question of community and local identities as related to the impact of colonialism and how some of its social structure subsist and are not confronted as a factor limiting the outreach of those policies.

As well, the categories the international development discourse creates do not adequately consider the multiplicity of experiences and knowledge of “development” thus can turn a peaceful enterprise into an oppressive restructuration of individual realities into a uniform picture of the world (Vaidya, 2018). That is creating a reality ignoring the pressing issues of a societal trauma postcolonial state must build on. That is the discourse that tends to be reproduced among the policy and program planning to the extent where it becomes “everyone’s” reality or truth and it is considered a defiance of the accepted discourse to depart from this specific discourse. The impossibility to move away from the mainstream discourse representations can foster structural violence. This structural violence can be exemplified by the centrality of indices and statistics which pushes in the forefront the idea that development
can be quantified and measured. It poses a problem regarding the generalization of representation and categorization of countries based on the measurement of development, but also the lack visibility of the knowledge and needs of some smaller communities (Vaidya, 2018: 317).
5. Conclusion

To conclude, this research investigated regional and national institutions within the Caribbean: the CARICOM, Barbados and Haiti as a mean to identify the impact of the postcolonial condition on the Caribbean discourse on human development. The purpose was to verify the extent to which the international development discourse and its frameworks, embodied by the UNDP, coincide with the region’s goals and priorities. Considering the previous Postcolonial work, the research considered the following hypothesis: the postcolonial condition/subjectivity is an obstacle the use of the international development framework in the postcolonial Caribbean.

The analytical reading of the regional and national Caribbean plans and programs put to light several aspects of international politics and global governance as well as the weight of the postcolonial condition and subjectivity in the region’s conceptualization of development.

At the regional level, the findings distinctly indicate that the CARICOM pushes forward a regional identity and framework to perfect Caribbean individuals. The ‘Ideal Caribbean Person’ description has been problematized pointing out the representation it produces of the Caribbean individual. The CARICOM 2015-2019 Strategy and the CARICOM-HRD 2030 are key policy document for the edification and durability of the vision of the regional institution. They illustrate the institutional choices made by the region to ensure a strengthen and competitive region on the international scene. Both documents showcase the significance of the regional history, identity and the spirit of community. All policies and programs are linked back to the ambition to see the rise of the “Ideal Caribbean Person”. The analysis of the policies produces by Caribbean institutions and agencies bring insight into the postcolonial subjectivity, which ultimately exposes the multiple voices and experiences of the postcolonial condition and development (Treacher, 2005: 45). The making of an “Ideal Caribbean Person” represents a mechanism of defense against the persisting effects of colonial practices in the present day. The “Ideal Caribbean Person” is the ambition to reconstruct an identity for the Caribbean individual that is anchored into the real experiences of real individual with the Caribbean reality of the international and regional challenges of this century. Nonetheless, this approach is not flawed and to some extent constitute yet another representation of the postcolonial. Postcolonial scholars would argue that this project is an attempt to express their own voices and to give visibility to the multiplicity of experiences of development in postcolonial societies.
Hence, as much as the CARICOM motivates the reinforcement of the regional identity it has little repercussion of the national level. Barbados is in tune with the global development agenda and discourse together with the accentuation of the national identity and culture to boost the country’s development and international integration. On the other hand, Haiti illustrates another side of the problematics of development which is the question of dependency and agency.

First, the argument of Postcolonial scholars on the impossibility of applying the development framework in a postcolonial context needs to be reformulated and nuanced. It would be invalid to claim that the CARICOM attempts to produce a counter-discourse to the international development discourse, nor it would be accurate to argue for the impossibility of the development project solely based on the incompatibility of its imperialistic and Eurocentric foundations with the postcolonial condition. Rather, I note that the postcolonial condition was a strong factor and uniting vector for the regional identity, as a group of states. But still, also a factor of ambivalence where the desire of international integration and involvement in the global agenda dominated the regional and national discourse overall.

Finally, the deeply rooted Western representation of non-Western states subsists and tend to frame external development interventions. The Caribbean regional and national reports provided empirical verifications that the argument of impossibility must be contrasted. The research made evident the struggle of identification, visibility and representation that the postcolonial region faces. The difficulty emerges from the necessity to subscribe to the dominant development discourse, a Western one, when as well trying to challenge the institutional discourses and representation of postcolonial societies that does not acknowledge the multiplicity and diversity of experiences within and amongst the postcolonial Caribbean states.

For future inquiry, the postcolonial condition could be considered as a factor that enable the international discourse of development due to the ambivalence that it produces, rather than an obstacle to the use of this framework. It could be a way to explain in empirical research the accomplishments of the development framework in other postcolonial states and regions.
Bibliography


