

Males in Higher Education: Lessons Learnt

**Presenters: Shanique Walker-Carty
& Trevis Morgan**

*UWI Association of Graduate Researchers in Education
(UWI-AGRE)*

Introduction: Context and Background to Study

- ▶ **The study was conducted at a three co-education tertiary institutions located within Kingston, Jamaica.**
- ▶ **Men are seldom seen pursuing higher education combined with dismal performance in some disciplines, particularly english-based modules**
- ▶ **Concern starts at the secondary level transitioning into post-secondary [school to prison pipeline]**
- ▶ **Males are often ostracized and blamed for societal problems**



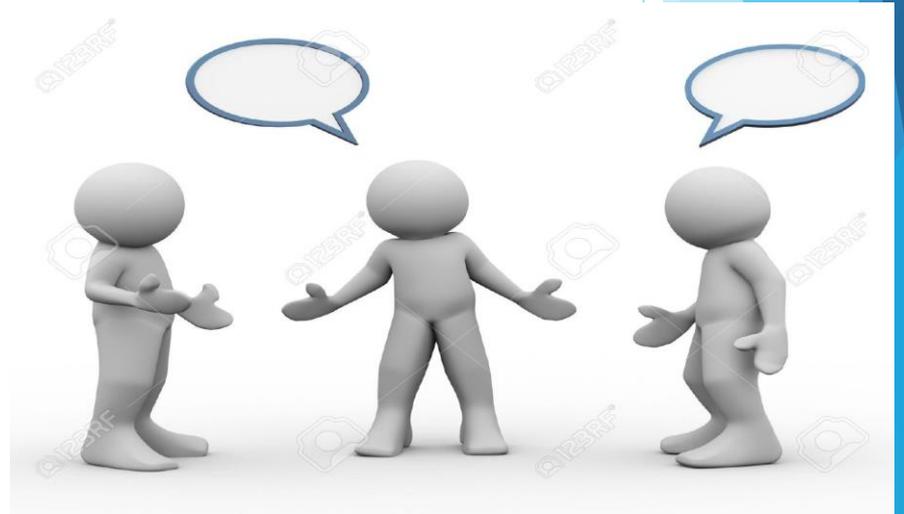
□ Are males becoming the forgotten gender in our higher education institutions?

- **Figuroa and Reddock (2004) cited by Plummer, Mclean and Simpson (2008) expressed that “the number of women graduating each year from the University of the West Indies now exceeds the number of men” (pg. 3).**
- **Plummer, Mclean and Simpson (2008) showed that “the gender balance has been undergoing change for some years now, by 1974 female enrolments at the Jamaican campus passed 50% for the first time and by 1982 they exceeded 50% for all campuses” (pg. 3).**



Purpose of Research

To engage discussion surrounding the decline in male enrolment in higher education institutions as well as the underperformance of the few who participate in English-based modules.



Research Questions

The research was guided by the following questions:



1. How does the programme choice influences males' decisions to enroll in Higher Education Institutions?
1. Is there a relationship between societal factors and the decline in male enrolment in Higher Education Institutions?
1. What are the males' reasons for the decline in their enrolment in Higher Education Institutions?

Review of Literature

- 1. Historical Privileging of the Male Gender (Figueroa, 2004)**
- 2. Societal Factors**
 - a. Reluctance to re-socialize**
 - b. Self-esteem and Identity issues**
 - c. Lack of male role models**
- 3. Unattractive Programmes and Degree Choices (Selingo,2015) and Mastekaasa & Smeby, 2008)**
- 4. Gender Gap in Higher Education (Barone, 2011) and (Jacob, 2002)**

Methodology

1. Multi-method study, which employed:

- a. **Primary Sources** - Sample of students, administrators and lecturers from three higher educational institutions in Kingston, Jamaica
- b. **Secondary Sources:** Use of online articles, local and international journals articles, books, official school records and local and international newspapers

2. Sampling method

- a. **Purposive Sampling**

3. Methods

Observations, Interviews, document review and questionnaires



Methodology

- ▶ **Data Analysis: Tabulation, Plotting of Statical Graphs, Coding, Memoing, Assertions, and logical analysis**
- ▶ **Reliability and Validity: Member checking and reflections were done. Researcher will avoid intuiting, bracketing and indulging based on personality.**
- ▶ **Ethical Considerations: Informed Consent, Maintain Privacy and Confidentiality and Honest Disclosure of Results**

The Findings

- ▶ **Males have challenges with the teaching methods used in higher education (language modules)**
- ▶ **Males think the duration of their program is too long (dropout)**
- ▶ **Males think the courses are not preparing them for employment (additional training after earning a degree)**
- ▶ **Males do not see the value of education (get rich quick, sports, scamming)**
- ▶ **Family and societal pressures (Family wants them to get a government job for the benefits)**
- ▶ **Males area of study - 40% Science and Technology, 20% Education, 20% Business Studies, 20% other**

Findings

What would you have changed about the programme?

- **50% more hands-on courses**
- **35% more work experience/internship**
- **10% less theory courses**
- **5% change the assignments grading system**

Males prefer male instructors/lecturers for practical courses but prefers females for theory

Males prefer when a male assess them versus a female

Moving Forward

- 1. Revise the Content taught - There is a disconnect between the knowledge taught in higher education institutes and the requirements of recruiters and employers. As such, a revision of the content taught to reflect the needs of the labour force will do more good than harm (Andrews & Higson, 2008; King, 2003; Yunus & Li, 2005)**
- 2. Offer more attractive programs within a shorter duration. Have a system where a degree is granted after completion of a required amount of short programs.**