

Catering to the Minority: The Expectations of the Curriculum by Undergraduate Males

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Introduction: Context and Background

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- The study was conducted at two higher educational institutions in Jamaica
- Einstein, “not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted”
- Usually, when there is a problem at any level in education, the fingers are pointed at the curriculum.
- In higher education, the curriculum can be considered as the head and centre of the overall teaching and learning transaction.

Purpose of the Study

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The purpose of this study is to understand the expectations and experiences of a sample of undergraduate males from two tertiary institutions in Jamaica as it relates to the content taught and the teaching methodologies employed by faculty.

Research Questions

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Main Research Question

1. What are the expectations of the curriculum of a sample of undergraduate males from their tertiary institutions in Jamaica?

Sub Questions

1. How do undergraduate males feel about the content used in the higher education curriculum?
2. What are males' reactions to how they are being taught by faculty in their higher education classrooms?
3. What do undergraduate males think are some best practices that can improve their tertiary experience and attract more males to pursue higher education?

Review of Literature

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1. A Paradigm Shift in Higher Education - (Iton, 2009; Selingo 2015)
2. The Content of the Higher Education Curriculum - (Khan & Law, 2015; Semaj, 2017)
3. Understanding Males in the Learning Environment - (Andersson, 2014)

Methodology

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Research Design: Generic Qualitative Study

Sampling Technique: Convenience and Purposive

Participants: Males were undergraduate students from Jamaica. 16 males were interviewed while 36 males were observed

Site: Two tertiary institutions in Jamaica

Methodology

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Data Collection Methods: Observation, Face to face interviews and Focus group interviews

Data Analysis: Memoing, First cycle coding, Second cycle coding, assertions and logical analysis

Trustworthiness and Validation: Member checking, peer review and reflections

Ethical Considerations: Informed Consent, Maintaining of Privacy and Confidentiality and Honest Disclosure of Results

The Findings

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- *Socialization and experiences in secondary school determine males' perception of higher education*
- *Males face challenges with the teaching style and content in higher education curriculum.*
- *Males demand revision of content in their higher education curriculum.*
- *The physical higher education classrooms are unattractive to males*

The Findings

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- *The teacher-centred approach does not appeal to male learners.*
- *Undergraduate males conduct and deportment in classes affects teaching and learning.*
- *Males feel pressured and overwhelmed by the higher education marking and grading system.*
- *Males prefer male instructors in their higher education classes.*

What's Next?

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1. Curriculum Reform
2. Widening Access
3. Inclusion
4. Differentiated Learning