



GENDER DIFFERENTIALS AT THE SECONDARY & TERTIARY LEVELS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE ANGLOPHONE CARIBBEAN



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This research project is managed by the Regional Coordinating Unit of The Centre for Gender and Development Studies (CGDS, RCU) with inputs from its units at Cave Hill and St. Augustine. It represents the first comprehensive research effort that seeks to provide analysis of the socialization influences and demographic factors that may contribute to gender imbalances, at the secondary and tertiary levels of the education systems in the region with respect to enrolment, participation and achievement.

Funded primarily by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the wider research programme on Gender Differentials enjoys counterpart funding from The University of the West Indies (Mona Campus), The Royal Netherlands Embassy to Jamaica, The CIDA-Canada/Caribbean Gender Equality Programme (CCGEP): Barbados and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and The United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization. It has also enjoyed continuous regional attention, interest and commitment at various levels, including the Ministers of Education and Chief Education Officers, of the countries under investigation. Additionally, through presentations to the CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development, regional heads of government have become familiar with and extremely interested in the research programme and its outcomes.

On October 25-28, 2004, a 4-day Training Workshop was conducted, at the Le Sportel Inn, Trinidad and Tobago, to introduce members of the 4-country-Research Team to the history, geography, demography and social dynamics of all countries included in the research and to highlight current issues and challenges in the respective countries' education system. Additionally, the workshop was used to:



The Principal Researcher completing classroom observations



Students in St. Kitts during Pilot Study



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1. Review the research themes, questions and specific country issues which inform and guide the research;
2. Train research teams in the requisite methodology for the successful and timely completion of field research, particularly in the areas of convening focus group discussions, administering questionnaires, completing classroom observations, ethics in research, and conducting interviews;
3. Review and modify all research instruments, as required; and,
4. Confirm project logistics (including budgeting, reporting structures and time lines).

The Workshop finalised twenty-four research instruments, as well as guiding protocols (included in a Field Manual) which were subsequently disseminated to all research teams. data collection was completed during the period November 2004 - April 2005. Thereafter, tenders for data processing were received, with the most competitive bid coming from The Planning Institute of Jamaica. Data coding, entry, processing and preliminary data analysis is expected to be completed by December 2005.

Plans are underway for the completion of a comprehensive analytical report. This report will be used to guide policy and facilitate the convening of a stake holders meeting, through which the research findings will be disseminated. It is expected that the information coming out of the research will facilitate/initiate dialogue around plans for the implementation of the recommendations. ■



The Principal Researcher addresses participants in the 4-day training workshop held in Trinidad & Tobago