



Re-IMAGINING RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITIES

QUALITY EDUCATION AND THE USE OF
RESEARCH DURING ABNORMAL TIMES



9:00 AM - 3:30 PM (EST)
NOVEMBER 24, 2021



MODALITY:
VIRTUAL — ZOOM

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ABOUT AGRE

The rebirth of the Association of Graduate Researchers in Education (AGRE) in 2016 was the dawn of a new era. The revitalisation of the association sought to promote the development of education practitioners as ardent researchers who will influence both policy and practice. Under the auspices of the School of Education at The University of the West Indies, Mona, the AGRE aims to improve educational outcomes through research. With this in mind, the AGRE strategises and executes targeted initiatives such as seminars, workshops, mentorship, and research conferences to bolster the research competencies, knowledge and dispositions of its members.

The AGRE operates on five critical pillars which forms its mission. These include:

- creating platforms to discuss and address issues and concerns related to education, locally and internationally;
- promoting professional development of members through seminars, conferences and mentorship;
- networking with key stakeholders in addressing issues and practices impacting education;
- augmenting the capacity of members in conducting high quality research; and
- collaborating with the School of Education faculty in conducting research relevant to issues and problems impacting the education system.

For the 2020-2022 term, the AGRE is led by a dynamic, innovative, agile and proactive team. Meet the Executive Team of the AGRE:





MESSAGE

Dr. Carmel Roofe
Deputy Dean of Graduate Studies and Research,
Faculty of Humanities and Education
The University of the West Indies, Mona

The AGRE's conference theme "***Re-Imagining Research Responsibilities: Quality Education and the use of Research during Abnormal Times***" leads me to reflect on my journey with AGRE since 2016 as a new academic staff member in the School of Education tasked with the responsibility of giving "new life" to an association that was considered important, but one that remained dormant for several years. Taking on this task required re-imagining research possibilities for educators who completed graduate degrees in the School of Education.

The AGRE has since expanded its membership beyond the School of Education at The UWI, Mona. What an amazing journey this has been to see the possibilities that have emerged from this re-imagining!

The task of preparing a message in my capacity as Deputy Dean of Graduate Studies and Research in the Faculty of Humanities and Education is therefore filled with subjectivities that I must wrestle with and seek to understand because of the role I have played in leading this association. As I think about these subjectivities, I think of a time when the word "subjectivity" was taboo in academic work and scholarship of educators as the goal of research was "objectivity". Then it was unheard of to illuminate subjective truths because we were taught that being objective meant adhering to the positivist paradigm where we isolate the self and feelings from anything academic or scholarly. This meant sometimes divorcing academic work from current sociocultural and emotional realities. However, given the expansion of knowledge and the world becoming increasingly a global village, educators have learnt that the

subjective has a place in scholarship and it is this subjective that gives us our true essence as humans existing individually and collectively. We have now learnt that it is okay to illuminate the subjectives, interpret them and provide justifications for the meanings we make of them. But while some educators have logged on to this new era and have conducted research that integrates the personal, professional, sociocultural, and emotional and have showcased the lived realities in academic work and scholarship, there are others who have not logged on or who do not know how to do this. The theme of AGRE's conference beckons us as educators in an era of a pandemic to expand our thinking to look beyond traditional ways of knowing and doing research.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us as educators that we need new solutions to the new problems that are arising if we are to provide quality education. The theme of the conference to some extent assumes that if we are to offer quality education we must begin, if we have not yet started, to re-imagine our research responsibilities to discover new ways of offering quality education in an era that is considered

abnormal. Furthermore, as I ponder the mantra of the idea of quality education and think about COVID-19 and the Jamaican students at all levels from nursery to university, I wonder if quality education is an elusive dream. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many educators feeling a sense of helplessness as we see the increasing number of students who are unable to participate in formal education, teachers and parents who are frustrated, and no one seems to have prepared or ready-made answers. Answers to many questions are not forthcoming because educators are carrying out their roles during abnormal times and the strategies of the past seem useless. It therefore means that research is needed now more than ever to help derive answers to the many questions and to derive solutions as we strive towards quality education for lifelong learning. AGRE has called us to search for answers and this search requires the use of ways we perhaps considered useless prior to the pandemic. As we search, let us begin with searching ourselves – an approach that allows us to wrestle with ourselves and reveal the hidden assumptions and biases we hold.

The Faculty of Humanities and Education, through the office of the Deputy Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, joins the AGRE in searching for new understandings through the promotion of non-traditional ways of knowing and doing. I encourage conference attendees to participate in the sessions in meaningful ways and to be open to pursuing new avenues for research beyond completing a programme of study. The office of the Deputy Dean of Graduate Studies and Research therefore congratulates the AGRE in leading this charge and wishes for all members of AGRE and conference attendees a successful conference.



MESSAGE

Dr. Marcia Rainford
Director, School of Education
The University of the West Indies, Mona

On behalf of the School of Education (SoE) I wish to offer heartiest congratulations to the Association of Graduate Researchers in Education (AGRE) on hosting its second biennial research conference under the theme: ***Re-imagining Research Responsibilities: Quality Education and the use of Research during Abnormal Times.*** The SoE is very proud of the quality leadership, hard work and dedication shown by members of the AGRE Executive body, led by President Keriffe Clark. Commendations to the two faculty advisors, Dr. Carmel Roofe and Mr. Miguel Ison, himself a graduate student, for their continued support of AGRE. One of the mandates of AGRE is to collaborate with the SoE in conducting research relevant to issues and problems impacting the education system. This year's conference is being held under very strenuous conditions as the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in restricting the number of persons permitted for face-to-face gatherings and will therefore be held online.

During the pandemic, the varied experiences of schooling and education of stakeholders worldwide have prompted a re-examination of what counts as quality education and have exposed inequities in education systems which have compromised the quality of education experienced by students of all ages. These inequities have been most acute in middle and lower income societies and have brought to centre-stage several critical issues that must be considered.

This pandemic has caused us to reconsider the importance of the social outcomes of schooling which have sometimes been downplayed in preference for academic

outcomes. We have come to appreciate the limitations of technology for providing experiential learning in disciplines such as the sciences and technical and vocational subjects; and that the technological solutions needed for pre-school and primary education are quite different from those for secondary and tertiary education. More people are now aware of the intricate relationships between teaching and learning, and some who may have thought that 'anyone can teach' are now having second thoughts. In this 5th technological revolution being advanced in some societies, many students have been left behind because of unreliable internet connectivity and inaccessibility to suitable devices.

The theme for the conference is therefore timely, and it challenges us to think again about how research can facilitate advancing quality education in 'abnormal times' such as during this pandemic. The SoE has supported and encouraged collaborative research between students and staff and is proud to be associated with this conference which allows for spotlighting such successes. As we contemplate our research responsibility as a School, we recognise the need to advance research that points to ways for solving some of these problems and not just identifying them. Further, we need to give voice to all stakeholders who are involved in education, including parents and students.

It is my hope therefore, that not only will you have a successful conference but that these presentations will be converted to academic publications for wider dissemination. I wish you a very successful staging of this second biennial conference.

MESSAGE



Mr. Miguel Ison
Conference Chair



Ms. Ruth-Ann Edwards
Conference Chair



Mr. Keriffe Clark
Conference Chair

The Association of Graduate Researchers in Education (AGRE) has remained steadfast in scaffolding and providing support to graduate level educators. The leadership of AGRE continually explores ways and means to engage current, new and prospective members on their individual and collective research journeys. Our biennial research conference is one such avenue. This year's conference, under the theme '**Re-imaging Research Responsibilities: Quality Education and the use of Research during Abnormal Times**' is an indication of the commitment of the AGRE to

improve educational outcomes through research. Certainly, we are elated to provide this platform where you will be engaged in robust, thought-provoking and solutions-oriented discussions through the sharing of high quality research papers. We are also overjoyed that this year's conference has attracted a commendable number of graduate-level researchers. Additionally, we applaud the bravery of two undergraduate level researchers who will share their studies with us at this conference. In these abnormal times, the need for us as researchers at all levels to be actively engaged is illuminated.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the teaching and learning context in Jamaica and across the world. This switch to remote learning has been fraught with many challenges related to, *inter alia*, equity, internet connectivity, availability of electronic devices, parental support and teachers' competence in navigating the digital space. Admittedly, these challenges are not new, but they have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Therefore, it is imperative that we re-examine our perception and practices of 'quality education'. As researchers in education, we have to become agile and pivot, given the projections that COVID-19 may become endemic. Certainly though, implications are afoot. How should we conduct rigorous research while observing COVID-19 health and safety protocols and adhering to ethical standards? How can we gain the trust of participants who we may not be able to meet physically? How can we capture the voice and experience of educators and learners impacted by COVID-19? What effect has the pandemic had and what effect it will have on quality education? Throughout the conference responses to these questions and more will be provided by the featured researchers.

Our theme for this year encompasses four strands: *Beyond Traditional Research Methodologies, Impact of COVID-19 on Quality Education, Social Issues and the Role of Research and Research Positionality and Competence/Content Knowledge*. These strands have attracted submissions from local and regional researchers who saw it fit to share studies they have conducted and for some, are still conducting. In this regard, it is reassuring that there is still an interest in the execution of research even during the midst of the current pandemic. The abstracts submitted were peer reviewed and a developmental approach was taken to providing feedback to our presenters. With this in mind, we are pleased that twenty-four research studies will be featured this year. Coming out of today's conference, it is inevitable that you will leave with new knowledge or a heightened interest in carrying out a research study of your own.

As conference chairs, we pause to acknowledge the work, dedication, time and remarkable support from the committee members and all who have made invaluable contributions to today's conference. Moreover, we express sincere gratitude to our keynote speakers, panellists, presenters, AGRE members and all fellow educators, researchers and practitioners who have joined us for this conference. The AGRE remains resolute and true to its mandate and commitment to improve educational outcomes through research. We wish for you a very enlightening conference.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Dinny Risri Aletheiani, (PhD) is a faculty member at the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies and the Director of Southeast Asia Language Studies at Yale University. Her research interests are in the areas of curriculum studies, curriculum history, free schools and alternative education, history of schooling, education and policies in Indonesia and in Southeast Asia. Dr. Aletheiani was awarded a Fulbright scholarship at Arizona State University and currently serves as Vice President of American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (AAACS). She works with curriculum studies scholars from the US, Jamaica, South Korea, Japan, and Portugal, sharing research and translation projects on the works of international curriculum theorists under the AAACS Internationalization of Curriculum Studies Task Force. Dr. Aletheiani has been writing and translating excerpts of curriculum works written in late 1800 and early and mid 1900 by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, an Indonesian curriculum theorist (Aletheiani, 2016; 2021). She also serves as a faculty advisor to the Yale Indonesia Forum (YIF). Combining her research on curriculum history, oral history, technology and art-based approaches, she is currently working on the Sound Storytelling Project on Southeast Asia. Dr. Aletheiani has also been a dance instructor and choreographer, and has performed internationally. Her recent theatre and dance performances and choreography are on the documentary theatre titled *Islands: The Lost History of the Treaty that Changed the World* (2017), broadcast by NPR, RRI, and featured by BBC Radio.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Saran Stewart, PhD is an Associate Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs, and Director of Global Education at the Neag School of Education, as well as Faculty Director for the Global House Living and Learning Community at the University of Connecticut in the US. Formerly, she served as Senior Lecturer and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Education at the University of the West Indies, Mona. The focus of her research is on access and equity in education and teaching and learning in local and global contexts, utilising postcolonial, decolonial, (post)diasporic, and critical and inclusive pedagogical theories. Much of her research examines issues of race, gender, intersectionality and educational development through an international and comparative education lens employing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

Since joining the professoriate, Dr. Stewart has produced forty-seven (47) publications, including four(4) edited books, and she has delivered eighty-six (86) scholarly and special presentations; including thirty-six (36) invited keynote and guest speaker lectures around the globe. She is a Salzburg Global Fellow and the recipient of multiple awards including the 2019 Vice Chancellor Award for Excellence from The University of the West Indies and the 2018 African Diaspora Emerging Scholar award by the Comparative and International Education Society. Dr. Stewart is editor of *Decolonizing Qualitative Methodologies for and by the Caribbean* (Information Age Publishing) and co-editor of, *Each One Teach One: Parental Involvement and Family Engagement in Jamaica's Education System* (forthcoming, UWI Press), *Black Liberation in Higher Education: Considerations for Research and Practice* (Routledge) and *Race, Equity and the Learning Environment: The Global Relevance of Critical and Inclusive Pedagogies in Higher Education* (Stylus).

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SESSION - A

OPENING SESSIONS

	<i>Moderator: Mr. Miguel Ison</i>
8:50 am – 8:55 am	Signing in
8:55 am – 9:00 am	National Anthem
9:00 am – 9:30 am	Welcome Mr. Keriffe Clark President, Association of Graduate Researchers in Education <i>Sink or Swim: Exploring the Efforts of a Research Association in Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic</i> Mr. Keriffe Clark Ms. Ruth-Ann Edwards
9:30 am – 9:35 am	Greetings Dr. Marcia Rainford Director, School of Education The UWI
9:35 am – 9:40 am	Greetings Mrs. Vivienne Johnson Senior Director, Policy Analysis, Research and Statistics Unit, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica
9:40 am - 9:45 am	Greetings Dr. Carmel Roofe Deputy Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, Faculty of Humanities and Education, The UWI
9:45 am – 9:50 am	Cultural Item
	KEYNOTE ADDRESS ONE
9:50 am – 10:20 am	Keynote Address Dr. Dinny Risri Aletheiani Yale University
10:20 am – 10:25 am	Logistics & Instructions

SESSION - B

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

10:30 am – 11:30 am	ROOM 1 Moderator: Elaine Williams	ROOM 2 Moderator: Kerry Taffe	ROOM 3 Moderator: Krystal Williams
	POSTER PRESENTATION Exploring Guidance Counsellors' Use of Play Therapy in Jamaican Schools Allison Lindsay *****	The Use of Phenomenology to Explore Student Engagement in one Community College in Jamaica Tamara Scott McFarlane *****	A Classification of Jamaican In The Written English of Selected Grade 4 Students: Implications For A Bilingual Test Scale Development Sandra Minott *****
	The Impact of Educational Games on Students' Attitude towards Mathematics Kenique Walker *****	Covid-Induced Virtual Teaching Practicum: Reflections from Pre-Service Teachers Keriffe Clark *****	POSTER PRESENTATION Teachers' Perception of using Patois in Teaching Home Economics in a Rural Secondary School Markion Stanbury *****
	The Storied Self as Curriculum Inquiry Carmel Roofe	Students' Level of Engagement Online and its Impact on their Academic Performance Adli Lewis	Exploring Jamaican High School Teachers' Emotion Regulation Strategies and Goals Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic Rohan McCalla

11:30 am – 12:30 pm	ROOM 1 Moderator: Gaye-Leon Williams	ROOM 2 Moderator: Terry-Ann Wallace	ROOM 3 Moderator: Krista Davis Williams
	<p>POSTER PRESENTATION</p> <p><i>Teachers' Use of Journal Writing in Building Critical-Thinking Skills in Visual Arts Students at a Jamaican Technical High School</i></p> <p>Nadine Clemetson</p>	<p><i>Applying Kaufman's Model to Assess the Importance of Research in Evaluating the National Unattached Youth Programme (NUYP) in Jamaica</i></p> <p>Yolanda Henry</p> <p>*****</p> <p><i>Access Denied? A photovoice exploration of access to quality education in rural Jamaica during a pandemic</i></p> <p>Shereca McGowan-Hunter, Heada Nichalls-Spencer, and Jovaughn Neil</p>	<p><i>Teaching Chemistry using a Blended Approach during COVID-19</i></p> <p>Elaine Williams</p> <p>*****</p> <p><i>Perception of Virtual Laboratories and Attitudes Towards Chemistry Among Jamaican Grade 10 Students</i></p> <p>Nicole Kerr-Walker</p>

12:30 pm – 1:00 pm
LUNCH

KEYNOTE ADDRESS TWO
Moderator: Ms. Ruth-Ann Edwards

1:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Keynote Address
Dr. Saran Stewart
University of Connecticut

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	ROOM 1 Moderator: <i>Rochelle Harris- Burrell</i>	ROOM 2 Moderator: <i>Adli Lewis</i>	ROOM 3 Moderator: <i>Tamara Scott McFarlane</i>
	<i>Learning French in the Covid Era: Lessons Learned from Creative Writing Activities</i> Ramone Styles *****	<i>Peace or Panic in a Pandemic: Narratives of Educators Across the World</i> Shanique Walker- Carty and Vestina Oates *****	<i>An Inquiry into Social Studies Teachers’ Experiences Teaching Global Climate Change in the Classroom</i> Camile Clarke *****
	<i>A Critical Evaluation of Summative Assessments for Graduate Students in a Human Resource Programme in a Jamaican University</i> Rohan McCalla *****	<i>The Perceptions of Belizean High School English Teachers Towards Social Media’s Influence on the Development of Reading Comprehension Skills</i> Marilyn Serrano *****	<i>Teacher Leadership during a Pandemic</i> Ruth-Ann Edwards *****
	<i>Spanish in a Pandemic? The Relevance of the Audiolingual Method in the Virtual Classroom</i> Denalece Wright	<i>Poetry as a Research Tool in Science Education</i> Miguel Ison, Sharon Bramwell- Lalor, and Camille Berry	<i>Supporting Jamaican Teachers through COVID-19 and Beyond</i> Carol Hordatt Gentles, Tashane Haynes Brown, Sharline Cole, Yewande Lewis Fokum, Schontal Moore and, ONeil Rattray

PANEL DISCUSSION

2:30 pm – 3:10 pm Zooming in on the Conference Strands
Moderator: Mrs. Camielle Michael-Patterson

3:10 pm – 3:15 pm **Video Presentation**

3:15 pm – 3:20 pm **Vote of Thanks**
Mrs. Tamara Scott McFarlane

3:20 pm – 3:25 pm **Closing Remarks**
Mr. Keriffe Clark



Dr. Therese Ferguson-Murray is a Senior Lecturer in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the School of Education (SoE) at The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica. Dr. Ferguson-Murray serves as the Programme Leader for Change from Within, a school-based initiative implemented by the SOE that addresses violence and indiscipline through school culture change. She is the Coordinator of the ESD Working Group within the SoE, and Programme Coordinator for the Master of Education Degree in Education for Sustainable Development, Global Citizenship and Peace. Dr. Ferguson-Murray has a co-authored book, book chapters, journal articles, book reviews and encyclopaedia entries to her credit.

Dr. Kamilah Hylton is an Associate Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Science and Sport at the University of Technology, Jamaica. She is a Fulbright Scholar and a member of national committees including the South Africa-Jamaica Joint Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation, the Inter-ministerial Taskforce on Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport and the National Anti-Doping in Sport Compliance Committee. She has a number of peer-reviewed publications and was granted a US patent for her work on carbon nanotube-mediated membrane extraction.





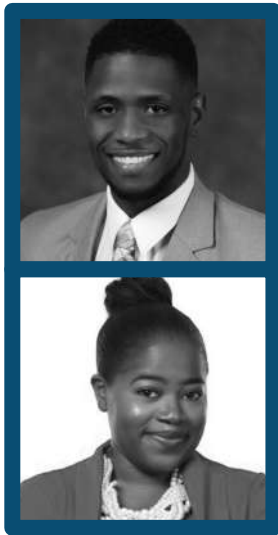
Mr. Jovaughn Neil was born and raised in an inner-city community called Kintyre, located in Kingston. To escape the culture of violence he actively participated in co-curricular activities in primary and high school to enhance his personal development. While pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in English at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona his level of co-curricular involvement was magnified. Mr. Neil became more involved in youth leadership and development, ascending the ranks of student government to the post of President.

Mr. Neil has subsequently been employed by The UWI in student services, where he provides administrative oversight to the student government. Executing his job gives him great satisfaction as he gets the opportunity to hone the development of young leaders. Mr. Neil has attained a Master of Arts degree in Higher Educational Management and he utilises this to bolster his services to stakeholders within higher educational institutions. Mr. Neil is a member of the Association of Graduate Researchers in Education.

Ms. Stephanie Sewell is currently the Senior Consulting Officer assigned to the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Secretariat. Prior to this appointment, she worked as a researcher at the Caribbean Policy Research Institute and at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information where she completed the research paper *"Time Out: Impact of COVID-19 on Education"*. While pursuing her Master's degree in Politics and International Cooperation from The University of the West Indies, she worked as a Research Assistant for Professor Verene Shepherd, where she was first exposed to the United Nations system, human rights advocacy and the call for reparations. Stephanie furthered this interest in advocacy and human rights to launch a campaign on Colourism in Jamaica, and was subsequently selected as a United Nations Fellow for People of African Descent in 2019. Stephanie now focuses on research areas related to addressing the inequities in the education system and challenges faced by Jamaican students.



ABSTRACTS



Sink or Swim: Exploring the Efforts of a Research Association in Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic

Keriffe Clark and Ruth-Ann Edwards

Post-graduate programmes, globally, require students to produce high quality research studies through research theses, research projects and dissertations. Traversing this research space will require students to demonstrate an understanding of research principles, practices and competencies. Creswell (2012), in acknowledging that not all educators appreciate and understand research, argued that research enhances knowledge, improves practice and informs policy debates. Against this background, the Association of Graduate Researchers in Education (AGRE), after a ten-year hiatus, was revitalised in 2016 with the vision of becoming the leading research association for graduate researchers in the field of education. The purpose of this qualitative exploration of the role of AGRE was guided by two critical questions: i) How do AGRE members describe the efforts of AGRE in fulfilling its mandate? and ii) In what ways has the AGRE evolved in its thrusts to promote research? For this study, data were collected through structured one-on-one interviews, document reviews and data from the AGRE's social media pages. The findings reveal the extent to which AGRE has been meeting its mandate in empowering researchers in education to promote research and prompt continued activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic, research association, AGRE*



Supporting Jamaican Teachers Through COVID-19 and Beyond

Carol Hordatt Gentles, Tashane Haynes-Brown, Sharline Cole, Yewande Lewis-Fokum, Schontal Moore, and O'Neil Rattray

Comparative studies of education systems and international surveys of factors that contribute to teachers' capacity to teach well, speak to the same notion that support is key and has implications for teachers' motivation, sense of self-efficacy and job satisfaction. These factors are associated with improved student learning (OECD, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2012). Anecdotal evidence regarding the first eight months of schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic in Jamaica suggested that teachers struggled because they lacked support – which affected their capacity to offer quality instruction. Therefore, there is value in documenting and understanding teachers' experiences during the pandemic to identify practices and strategies for supporting teachers now and in the future.

This mixed methodology study used an online Google survey to quantitatively capture responses to closed-ended questions and open-ended questions for qualitative analysis. A random cluster sampling proportional to size technique was employed to select 41 schools across all levels of the sector with 198 teachers surveyed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for quantitative analysis, while responses to the open-ended questions were analysed thematically using manual coding. The results provided a quantitative summary of methods used by teachers to reach and prepare students for exams during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the extent to which age, qualifications, years of teaching experience and competence affected method choice. Zoom and Blackboard Collaborate were the most frequently used technology tools to facilitate students online. Learning was also supported through the use of WhatsApp and posting assignments on Google Classroom. Internet connectivity and lack of access to devices affected students' participation in online sessions. Qualitative findings highlight emerging themes about teachers' experiences such as the negative effect of poor ICT skills, lack of equitable access to the internet, lack of leadership, inefficient organization, and underfunding, which all impacted teachers' well-being and their capacity to be effective educators. Implications for future public and local education policy are discussed.

Keywords: *Supporting teachers; teaching in a pandemic; teaching beyond COVID-19*



Exploring Jamaican High School Teachers' Emotion Regulation Strategies and Goals Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Rohan McCalla

While teachers' emotions in the classroom play an important role, it is under-researched. This research was intended to explore Jamaican high school teachers' emotion regulation strategies and goals while they operated in the classroom, before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. One corresponding research question was, "How do selected male and female teachers, from three Kingston-based high schools, describe their use of emotion regulation strategies, before, during, and after classes, throughout a school year?" A second question was, "What emotion regulation strategies have selected Kingston-based high school teachers reported using during the COVID-19 pandemic?" Using a multiple-case study design, three Jamaican high schools served as cases. Nine teachers from within the cases were interviewed about the emotion regulation strategies they used and the goals they set before, during, and after classes, throughout a school year, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Four of the teachers subsequently used WhatsApp messaging to contribute data regarding their emotion regulation strategies and goals during the COVID-19 pandemic. QDA Miner software was used to manage the data and aided with within-case and cross-case analyses.

Prior to the pandemic, teachers reported regulating their emotions using situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation strategies, before classes. They reported using the same five emotion regulation strategies, during classes. After classes, they only used attentional deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation strategies. During the pandemic, teachers used the same five emotion regulations strategies but in different ways. Teachers reported different emotion regulation goals throughout a school year, prior to, and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers reported using different emotions in the classroom before and during the pandemic. Before the pandemic, teachers reported feeling anger, frustration, happiness, and pride. During the pandemic, they reported feeling fear, anxiety, and distress. These findings contribute to the literature on teachers' emotions but further research is needed. The findings highlight policy and procedural implications for education stakeholders in Jamaica and further afield.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic, emotions, emotional intelligence, emotion regulation strategies, emotion regulation goals*



Applying Kaufman's Model to Evaluate the National Unattached Youth Programme (NUYP) in Jamaica

Yolanda Henry

The evaluation of TVET intervention and empowerment programmes has become an area of focus for many countries plagued with rising youth unemployment. This unemployment rate is linked to youth leaving school without certification or labour competency. Consequently, countries have been unable to exploit the untapped potential which exists in their youthful human capital. However, relevant training, which prepares youth with the requisite skills to function as part of the labour force, can be used as one strategy to maximize the observed potential. To this end, successive Jamaican governments have spearheaded various training programmes to address the needs of vulnerable youth, particularly those living in inner-city communities. However, many of these intervention programmes have either been unsuccessful or unsustainable. This is cause for concern because billions of dollars are expended on these programmes. This research focuses on exploring how Kaufman's five level model of programme evaluation can be applied to the National Unattached Youth Programme (NUYP) which was introduced in 2016 as a Youth Empowerment and Reintegration Programme undertaken by the Ministry of Youth and Culture (now Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information). It is one of several initiatives undertaken by the government of Jamaica, to address the issue of youth leaving school without certification or labour competency. The research focuses on assessing the impact of the NUYP on the lives of trainees. A concurrent mixed method case study design is utilized to carry out the study. The research is exploratory in nature and makes use of secondary and primary sources of data. Purposive sampling, involving 75 participants from a total of 225 trainees, is used in the data collection process. This research serves as a launching pad for further research.

Keywords: *Youth unemployment, TVET, programme evaluation, inner city communities*



Exploring Guidance Counsellors' Use of Play Therapy in Jamaican Schools

Allison Lindsay

This generic qualitative study explored the use of play therapy by four guidance counsellors in three urban schools in Kingston and St. Andrew, Jamaica; an all-boys high school, a co-educational preparatory and high school, and an inner-city government primary school. It also included the data from two elite participants who teach Guidance and Counselling. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews on the Zoom platform. There were no observations due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The data were analysed using Creswell's method of thematic analysis through the lens of trauma-focused cognitive behavioural play therapy. The findings indicated that guidance counsellors use play therapy; and according to their school population and available resources, they have a high opinion of the modality. They have also experienced several benefits with students as well as personal and professional benefits for themselves. It was further suggested that the challenges of lack of resources, lack of parental support, and lack of a structured pathway to training in the modality are underpinned by Jamaica's culture which still regards play as undignified and relegated to children. Arguments were made that this aspect of our culture is helping to keep guidance counsellors in Jamaica, from seeking and embracing training in play therapy as an authentic and effective modality in working with children. The paper concluded that trauma-focused cognitive behavioural play therapy is a viable option to introduce play therapy in a way that is contextually and culturally responsive to the social issues of children at the infant and primary levels of education.

Keywords: *play therapy, guidance counsellors*



An inquiry into Social Studies Teachers' Experiences Teaching Global Climate Change in the Classroom

Camile Clarke

The concept of climate change education should be a key concern for policy makers internationally and in Small Island Developing States, as it features in more than one Sustainable Development Goal. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that teachers can effectively plan and facilitate meaningful learning experiences on the concept. This qualitative study explores the experiences of Social Studies teachers as they teach global climate change. A phenomenological approach was used to review teachers' self-efficacy to teach climate change, and with their knowledge and beliefs about global climate change. Five participants of varying years of experience as Social Studies teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured approach. A content analysis of Social Studies, Geography and Science-related curricula spanning the secondary education system shed light on teachers' experiences. The study revealed gaps in knowledge about the causes of climate change and limited inclusion of climate change education in the upper secondary curriculum for Social Studies. It also uncovered that younger teachers, and those who pursued science subjects in high school, had a stronger knowledge base of the concept. The results presented here have implications for national policies on Climate Change Education and Education for Sustainable Development. Further studies are needed to explore the experiences of Social Studies teachers' as they teach global climate change in the multi-contextual nature of our education system.

Keywords: *Social Studies, Climate Change Education, Global Climate Change*



Poetry as a Research Tool in Science and Technology Education

Miguel Ison, Sharon Bramwell-Lalor, and Camille Berry

Positivism as a worldview, is a perspective held in high regard by science and technology educators. However, classroom experiences have indicated that students' voices, as well as their non-verbal messages, are as equally important as the grades they obtain in understanding their learning processes. Unfortunately, the research designs associated with science and technology classroom issues may not always capture and communicate the nuanced lived experiences of students. Additionally, the strict academic writing requirement may limit and filter the students' voices, experiences, and emotions, whatever the research approach implemented. Consequently, the use of poetry is being posited as a way to communicate authentic students' expressions. Therefore, poetry represents a way to understand and make sense of the world that is not always possible through traditional research approaches. This paper aims to explore the role of poetry in the research process in articulating the students' emotional experiences related to learning. The findings indicate that poetry served as a tool to unearth latent emotions and experiences that accompany learning. The results provide a platform to explore this unconventional approach to the research process in science and technology education in the Jamaican context. In conclusion, poetry is a powerful way to communicate emotional experiences without the constraints of the rules required for academic discourse.

Keywords: *poetry in research, science and technology, authentic emotional experiences*



Teaching Chemistry using a Blended Approach during COVID-19

Elaine Williams

Chemistry students from an all-girls' secondary school in rural Jamaica, started online classes in March 2020 following a national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, instruction took the form of practical activities done at home, virtual simulations, videos, and kitchen ('cooking') activities. The aim of this exploratory sequential mixed design was to find out students' impressions of this blended approach to learning. Data were collected through closed and open-ended questions designed and administered by the researcher. The sample size was 58 Chemistry students from Grades 11-13 who had registered to sit the 2021 exams at the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) levels. Results from 36 respondents indicated that 67 percent preferred hands-on activities at school because resources were more readily available, collaboration with peers was more easily facilitated and feedback was timely when compared to them working from home. The findings led to a comparison of their mean School Based Assessment (SBA) scores with those of the two previous years. There was an overall reduction in 2020 and in 2021 by 5.53 and 2.31 percent, respectively, when compared to the mean scores of 2019. However, further analysis indicated that there was no significant difference due to the changes in the delivery of the practical component in these classes. These findings of students' performance in the blended environment will help to inform teachers' planning and delivery of activities for the academic year 2021-2022 which has started online amidst the third wave of the pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, Chemistry, CSEC, CAPE, blended approach



The Storied Self as Curriculum Inquiry

Carmel Roofe

Curriculum, as argued by Pinar (2004), is the collective stories we tell others about our past, present and future. In this sense, curriculum is envisioned as ever-evolving from a world of events that teachers and students experience based on their individual situatedness. Curriculum is therefore inextricably linked to the fluidity of life — from which experiences are derived. These experiences converge in classrooms and influence teaching and learning. This paper seeks to provide an intentional account of the author's interpretation of significant life events in the life of the author. It draws on the autobiographical research design to make sense of the storied self as a representation of curriculum inquiry. In utilizing autobiography, the author seeks to reveal the ways in which personal histories have influenced her as an academic and the purposes she seeks to fulfill. The author uses retrospective accounts through journaling to recollect memories to answer the question: "In what ways have my personal challenges propelled me to grow into the academic I am today?" Using a recursive approach between the academic and the personal the author recalls, analyses and synthesizes stories from the past, intertwined with stories of the present. From this synthesis the author seeks to discern what meanings these memories hold and the possibilities for transformed understandings. This presentation therefore offers insights into how autobiography can be utilized as a method for meaning-making in the curriculum of practicing teachers and during teacher preparation programmes.

Keywords: *autobiography, curriculum, teaching and learning*



The Impact of Educational Games on Students' Attitude towards Mathematics

Kenique Walker

This study analysed various literature on the impacts of educational games on students' attitude towards Mathematics. More specifically, the research reviewed literature relating to the impact of educational games on students' attitude and the benefits of using educational games when learning Mathematics. Google Scholar, UWillinC EBSCO, UWillinC ProQuest Central database, and reference lists of various article searches yielded a total of thirty-seven (37) research articles. The articles consisted of qualitative, quantitative, mixed-method, and meta-analysis/conceptual publications. Most of the articles presented a positive attitude towards Mathematics with the most frequent benefit reported for games for learning Mathematics being cognitive skills. The findings revealed that students had a positive attitude towards Mathematics when playing educational games and, whether computer-based or hands-on, these games benefitted students overall. Future research on the impacts of games on students' attitude towards Mathematics will help stakeholders in Mathematics education reform. It was recommended that educators consider grade level when selecting games for students. Also, consider the importance of clear objectives, rules, and tasks that are the appropriate level of challenge, and provide feedback.

Keywords: *Mathematics, impact, educational games, students' attitude, attitude, benefits*



COVID-Induced Virtual Teaching Practicum: Reflections from Pre-Service Teachers

Keriffe Clark

The unexpected COVID-19 pandemic has jolted the education system and challenged strongly-held conceptions, beliefs and practices of teacher education and training. In Jamaica, like other territories, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an emergency reaction to teaching and learning in a virtual space with the expectation that, *inter alia*, pre-service teachers will undertake their practicum exercise in a manner in which they have not been prepared. Teaching practicum, according to Clark (2021), is the avenue through which pre-service teachers initialise their development as practitioners. Hence, a critical aspect of this development is classroom management. Classroom management encompasses social and emotional development, character development, academic gains and collaboration (LePage et al., 2005). But what are the experiences of pre-service teachers who engaged in a twelve-week teaching practicum that was conducted virtually? With this core question in mind, the purpose of this qualitative research was to understand the experiences and to share the reflections of four pre-service teachers who were compelled to undertake, in a virtual space, their 12-week teaching practicum as the capstone component of their 4-year course of study. To appreciate the reflections of the participants, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and lesson plan reflections written by the participants and the findings are presented using a thematic approach.

Keywords: *COVID-19, virtual teaching practicum, pre-service teachers, reflections*



The Perceptions of Belizean High School English Teachers Towards Social Media's Influence on the Development of Reading Comprehension Skills

Marilin Serrano

Social media has become integral to the culture of socialization, adolescence and education. In fact, Agustrianita (2017) asserted that social media is used as a support for learning activities today. However, social media's inception has introduced changes in reading and writing; therefore, teachers must explore the extent of its usefulness as a tool in education. This exploratory sequential study probed Belizean High School English teachers' perception of social media's influence on reading comprehension skills. This mixed-method study incorporated data collection methods whereby the qualitative findings influenced the development of a survey instrument used to collect quantitative data later in the study. The qualitative data collection included the use of 12 teacher interviews via Zoom and vignettes via Padlet. The findings showed that teachers perceived social media as advantageous; however, students lacked knowledge of its proper use. Sixty-five participants completed an online survey created using these findings. Survey results, presented through box plots, illustrated how teachers perceived social media in aiding the development of reading comprehension skills if students knew how to use it effectively. Conclusively, it was determined that teachers acknowledged social media as being beneficial and detrimental for use in developing reading comprehension skills. This study was significant to the students and the teachers who have been using social media as instructional tools. One of the significant recommendations of this study was the implementation of a Digital Literacy course in the high school curriculum.

Keywords: *social media, reading comprehension skills*



Teachers' Perception of using Patois in Teaching Home Economics in a Rural Secondary School

Markion Stanburry

Standard Jamaican English (SJE) is the official language of Jamaica. However, the language spoken by most Jamaicans is Patois (Pollard, 1998). Hence, when used in the classroom, students are more receptive, attuned to and excited about learning. This propelled the desire to explore teachers' perception of the use of Patois while teaching Home Economics at a rural secondary school. Six participants were selected and interviewed using questions such as; What are teachers' perceptions of the use of Patois in teaching and learning during Home Economics classes? For this study, the generic qualitative approach was used, data were collected and then analyzed. The findings revealed that teachers favoured using Patois to teach. They agreed that, apart from increasing their command of the classes, Patois enhanced the learning environment as the students were more confident and comfortable, participation increased and concepts were readily grasped, which facilitated the objectives being covered. Reflected also in the findings was the issue of communication barriers and students transitioning from Patois to SJE, especially when they would had to write examination papers that would be assessed externally. The need to use both Patois and English simultaneously during teaching was required to minimize these challenges. Using Patois to teach thus amounts to utilizing what the students know to teach the unknown (Schneiderman, 1986) which is SJE.

Keywords: *patois, home economics, standard Jamaican english, language*



Teachers' Use of Journal Writing in Building Critical-Thinking Skills of Visual Arts Students at a Jamaican Technical High School

Nadine Clemetson

The study explored teachers' use of journal writing in building critical-thinking skills among Visual Arts students at a Jamaican technical high school. The study was aimed at exploring the strategies teachers use to foster critical thinking, in addition to journal writing, as well as the teachers' perception of journal writing to develop critical thinking skills in Visual Arts students. A qualitative case study was used as the research design for this study and data were collected using interviews and document analysis. The study involved a total of three teachers from the selected high school. There were varying levels of analyses used in exploring the interview data, two of which included: open coding and selective coding. The study revealed that the teachers used several strategies to engage students in critical thinking, including: question and answer, research, portfolio, journal writing, and critical analysis. The study also revealed that teachers had a positive perception of journal writing and considered it to be absolutely important in building critical thinking skills in students. Finally, it was revealed that the teachers took students through several stages when writing the reflective journal, such as, the writing of an artist statement, development of portfolio pieces and critical analysis of artworks.

Keywords: *critical thinking; strategies for critical thinking; technical high school; journal writing; visual arts, qualitative study*



A Critical Evaluation of Summative Assessments for Graduate Students in a Human Resource Programme in a Jamaican University

Rohan McCalla

This qualitative research was aimed at evaluating how summative assessments were written across courses in the Master of Science in Human Resource Development at The University of the West Indies, Mona. Document analysis was first used to collect data on the levels of cognitive learning objectives and aspects of the outcomes for the summative assessments, specific to the research methods course, between 2016 and 2020. A process of critical reflection and reflexivity influenced the analysis of summative assessments over the same period, for eight other courses in the programme. Preliminary findings show that students were predominantly tested on the two lowest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of learning outcomes (remembering and understanding). While the other four levels (applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating) were used, they were limited. Additionally, the actions the students were to perform were at times unclear and students were sometimes asked to perform the incorrect actions or the wrong verb was used. Furthermore, some questions with the same problem were repeated in different years, while some assessments appeared to have been adjusted to serve an online assessment environment. These findings contribute to previous work on summative assessments and add new literature that is specific to graduate students' assessments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students expressed a range of emotions in their research methods summative assessment about studying and being assessed online during the pandemic. The findings have potential legal, psychological and emotional implications; therefore, greater scrutiny of summative assessments in this programme is needed.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic, Bloom's taxonomy, summative evaluation, emotions*



Access Denied? A Photovoice Exploration of Access to Quality Education in Rural Jamaica during a Pandemic

Shereca McGowan-Hunter, Heada Nichalls-Spencer, and Jovaughn Neil

Jamaican students, for many years, have had to face the ongoing challenge of access to quality education. While there are many factors that affect students' ability to receive formal education, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these; thereby impacting the overall quality of education. With the current shift to online teaching, students in some rural communities have been denied access to quality education due to unreliable internet connection as well as the unavailability of technological devices. This study seeks to ascertain the role poverty plays in students' access to quality education, the role of parents in enabling students to access quality education; and the roles and responsibilities of community members and policy makers in enabling students access to quality education. Through the use of photovoice as a qualitative research methodology, twelve participants were selected through purposive sampling. Seven participants were students from a school within the rural community and five participants were parents of students from the selected rural school within the community. Participants engaged in focus group discussions and semi-structured interview sessions. Data were also collected from participants' photographed images, taken using prompts, and narratives from focus group discussions and interviews with participants. Preliminary findings indicate that access to quality education has been hindered by limited availability of internet service and appropriate devices, leading to feelings of frustration and anger on the part of parents and students. On the other hand, students have unconsciously resorted to discovery learning and self discovery to fill the gaps created from limited access to online classes. Subsequently, parents have become lifelong learner, alongside their children, as they assist them in obtaining the knowledge and skills needed to receive quality education during a pandemic.

Keywords: *quality education, pandemic, access, photovoice*



The Use of Phenomenology to Explore Student Engagement in one Community College in Jamaica

Tamara Scott McFarlane

Phenomenology is a powerful research genre that can be used to explore different perspectives or the cumulative experience of participants within a research context. It is a philosophical method of examining realities as phenomena, and proponents believe that it is through the shared, lived experiences of all participants that the researcher will arrive at an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Students enrolled in continuing education programmes in community colleges hold expectations for matriculation into advanced studies. For this objective to be met, a model for student engagement based on empirical data, must be developed. This research genre will be used to explore student engagement at a community college in Jamaica. The research aims to gather robust data to get an in-depth understanding of students' experiences in the continuing education programme that led to their success, or lack thereof, at the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) level. From the findings of the study, there is the expectation that an effective model for operating the continuing education unit at the named community college can be developed. The conduct of this research requires that the researcher takes a post-positivist interpretive paradigm, as it allows for greater interaction between participants and researcher and it engages teachers as reflective practitioners — learning by “standing in their shoes”. This interpretive paradigm allows for multiple truths that are socially constructed and constantly changing (Khan, 2014). This presentation provides an examination of the major tenets of phenomenology, as a research genre that will facilitate the researcher getting a detailed description of the experiences of students in a continuing education programme through reading, reflective writing, re-reading, and re-writing.

Keywords: *phenomenology, student engagement*



Spanish in a Pandemic? The Relevance of the Audiolingual Method in the Virtual Classroom

Denalece Wright

In keeping with the pace and desires of human development, there have been thrusts to move towards a service economy. Certainly, one of the fundamental assets to effectively function within this landscape is one's ability to communicate in several languages. Why? Hardach (2018) posits that countries which actively nurture different languages have witnessed benefits such as a more prolific workforce and improved trade relations. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated calls for students to be better prepared to communicate in foreign languages and the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) is designed to equip Jamaican students with the knowledge and skills to become competitive in the world of work. Thus, it is imperative that foreign language educators thoroughly investigate methods most appropriate to counter the problems hindering students' progress within the foreign language classroom. This research was executed to address the problem of students having a challenge with retaining Spanish verb forms, which adversely affected their performance. For this study, the audiolingual method, which is prominent within the spheres of foreign language education, was explored for its efficiency in aiding students' retention of verb formation in the target language. Secondly, this study focused on the factors causing poor retention in the virtual Spanish classroom. This action research was conducted in an all-boy institution, with a sample of 29 students at the Grade 9 level, ranging from age 12 through 18.

The study relied on qualitative data collected from a focus group interview and anecdotal records, along with quantitative data that were collected via a survey and an analysis of students' assessment grades. The findings of this paper revealed that there were several causes that impacted students' retention, but suggested that the audiolingual method proved effective in improving students' ability to retain Spanish.

Keywords: *virtual classroom, audiolingual method, Spanish*



Teacher Leadership During a Pandemic

Ruth-Ann Edwards

Global pandemics have the potential to negatively or positively influence how teacher leaders continue their practice. Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated inequities that impede quality education being delivered to some students. Furthermore, the inaccessibility to resources has reduced the ability of teacher leaders to influence colleagues who they now do not see as often in a physical space. Thus, this generic qualitative study explored the concept of teacher leadership for a group of teachers who are regarded as teacher leaders and were working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, it looked at how the pandemic affected the teachers' practice of teacher leadership, what motivated their practice of teacher leadership, as well as the challenges they faced while practicing teacher leadership during the pandemic. The study captured the lived experiences of eight participants who were purposefully selected. Data was garnered from interviews, observations and documents. Data were analyzed through content and thematic analysis. The findings revealed that the meaning of teacher leadership for the teachers did not change throughout the pandemic and their practice of teacher leadership was predominantly motivated by their love for their students and their craft, although faced with numerous challenges while practicing teacher leadership. As such, I recommend that pre-service and in-service teachers be exposed to the concept and course - 'Teacher Leadership' as it impacts the execution of their duties, especially during a pandemic.

Keywords: *teachers, teacher leaders, teacher leadership, pandemic*



Learning French in the Covid Era: Lessons Learned from Creative Writing Activities

Ramone Styles

One goal of Jamaica's Vision 2030 is World Class Education and Training and one indicator of an educated Jamaican is the ability to speak a foreign language. Hence, there has been a significant thrust to expose Jamaican students to foreign languages, specifically Spanish and French, through the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) at the secondary level. Researchers such as Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016) opined that writing is regarded as a difficult task in foreign language learning. Creative writing is perceived as one of the approaches that can help students become more proficient in writing. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of creative writing activities, specifically using storyboards, to improve the written expressions of Grade 7 students of French. The study was designed under the paradigm of qualitative action research. A sample of ten Grade 7 students of French at an all-girls institution in Kingston and St. Andrew, was selected using the purposive sampling technique. Prior to the intervention, the students lacked the motivation to write, and when assigned writing activities the submissions were below the required standards for the grade level. The data collection was through focus group interviews, a one-on-one semi-structured interview, and observations. Guided by two research questions, the study focused on the reasons for the problem and assessed the effectiveness of creative writing activities. Based on the findings, the use of creative writing activities motivated students to write. However, there were a few limitations identified. Notwithstanding creative writing activities, a specifically creative storyboard can be implemented as a 21st-century learning method in a foreign language class to enhance writing skills.

Keywords: *French, creative writing activities, COVID-19, foreign language*



Student's Level of Engagement Online and its Impact on their Academic Performance

Adli Lewis

The closure of schools on March 18, 2020, in Jamaica due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ushered in the generalized use of the online modality for instruction. To support this modality, various management tools were used; therefore, it is necessary to evaluate their effectiveness as well as build a repository of best practices to be used in future. This quantitative research will take place at three rural primary schools close to Portland, Jamaica. The purpose of the quantitative study is to determine the effectiveness of attendance management tools during the teaching and learning process while schools operate online. These management tools include Google registers; Excel sheets and graphs and other database software (VAST Learning system); and checklists used by schools. The method to be employed in this study is a five-point Likert scale to ascertain the effectiveness of the tools used as well as students' academic grades before and after the inception of the online modality. The findings will be compared to a school that did not use those systems. The data analysis and presentation will be done using T-testing, methods of central tendency, graphs, and charts. The findings of this study will improve the collaboration within schools and the need to have systems in place that will ultimately enhance students' academic performance through better measures of accountability.

Keywords: *COVID-19, management tools, teaching and learning*



Perception Of Virtual Laboratories and Attitudes Towards Chemistry among Jamaican Grade 10 Students

Nicole Kerr-Walker

This study presents findings of 124 Grade 10 students' perceptions of Virtual Laboratories and its relationship with their attitudes towards Chemistry using a multi-method quantitative design. The multi-method design is a sequential design, which involved a quantitative survey in Phase one, followed by an intervention using Virtual Laboratories in the second phase. Two adapted survey instruments (The Perceptions to Virtual Laboratories and Attitudes towards Chemistry) were administered to 124 Grade 10 Chemistry students ($M = 42$, $F = 81$). Most respondents of the students had a modest attitude to Chemistry (83.9%). Although most respondents found the classes boring (86.3%), most respondents considered Chemistry valuable and perceived that the skills learnt in Chemistry will be important for their future (77.4%). There was a significant and large effect on interest in Chemistry and learning Chemistry ($F(2,122) = 6.74$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .10$); 43.5% had a high perception of Virtual Laboratories, where 58.9% perceived that Virtual laboratories would help them become confident in recognizing laboratory equipment. Spearman's rho correlation results showed a low positive correlation ($r = .22$, $p < 0.05$) between students' perception of virtual laboratories and their attitudes toward Chemistry, which was significant.

In Phase 2 of the study, a sample size of 15 consenting students from the 125 participants and their teachers were trained and performed two to four Chemistry laboratory exercises using the CoreSciences Learning platform. These students then completed the Perceptions to Virtual Laboratories and Attitudes towards Chemistry instruments at the end of the intervention as a post-test. The students' pre-test scores and post-test scores were matched. A Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test showed that there was no significant difference ($Z = -.491$, $p > .05$) between students' Attitude to Chemistry scores before and after they participated in using virtual laboratories. T-test results showed that there was a significant difference ($Z = -2.069$, $p < .05$) between the scores of students' Perception of Virtual Laboratories ($N = 15$) before and after the intervention. The effect size was calculated to be a modest effect of .55, which suggested a notable shift in students' perceptions of virtual laboratories after the intervention. The findings imply that there is merit in using virtual laboratories in teaching Chemistry. However, students' attitudes to Chemistry need further exploration.

Keywords: Virtual laboratories, Chemistry, student attitude



Peace or Panic in a Pandemic: Narratives of Educators Across the World

Shanique Walker-Carty and Vestina Oates

The educational landscape was forced to convert their physical walls into digital learning spaces. Governments around the globe ordered the closure of schools to curtail the spread of the novel Coronavirus. Many questions surrounding equity, psycho-social effects and the digital divide among learners have become increasingly popular during this pandemic. Whilst much academic discourse is happening, it is mindful to note that little is mentioned about the feelings and views of the teachers at the center. The purpose of this study is to understand how a group of educators from seven countries feel about their level of preparedness to deal with the digital learning space. This study therefore aims to collect qualitative data that can be used to develop and implement policies to treat educational issues arising from crisis and pandemics. Data will be collected using structured virtual interviews that will be analyzed using a thematic approach. The study will reveal the narratives of educators from Jamaica, the USA, England, China, Nigeria, St. Maarten, and the Turks and Caicos Islands, who experienced peace or panic during the novel Coronavirus pandemic.

Keywords: *teachers, digital learning space, coronavirus pandemic*



A Classification of Jamaican in the Written English of Selected Grade 4 Students: Implications for a Bilingual Test Scale Development

Sandra Minott

English remains the global economic language of power. Yet, its many varieties throughout Anglophonic territories, such as the Caribbean, bring into question the proficiency of many speakers of such varieties. Scrutiny of most early childhood Caribbean writers reveals a continuous discrepancy between genders and performance, extending academic levels. Soon questions arise about other factors such as reading levels and their bearing on dialect shifting; but, does reading reduce dialectal shifts in the written English of its users, and what instrument can be used to capture such changes? This paper, therefore, examines how the three language variations found in the written English Composition of selected Grade 4 Jamaican students are influenced by reading level and gender. The project inspects this influence by the use of a piloted bilingual test scale. The research design consisted of a mixed-methods approach and a sample of 110 students as well as their English Language Arts Teachers from three primary schools within Kingston, rural St. Andrew and Clarendon. The instruments were analyzed, first by conducting a two-phase piloting test and alternate forms of reliability testing (e.g. test-retest, Cronbach Alpha, descriptive statistics). Factor analysis was used to conduct validity checks on the instruments. The study provides some insight into the relevance of using the instrument within the Jamaican context, specifically in Corpus Linguistics.

Keywords: *English, bilingual, reading level*

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THANK YOU

The Association of Graduate Researchers would like to thank all contributing parties for the invaluable support provided throughout the planning and execution of this, the second staging of our biennial research conference. Certainly, we extend special thanks to the following individuals:

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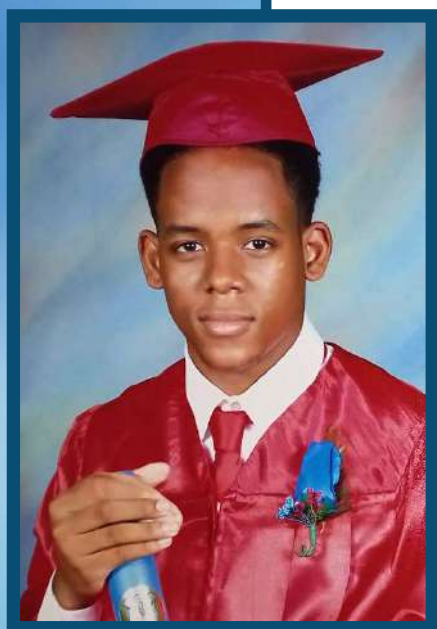
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Congratulatory Message

YOU DID IT!



CONGRATS SEAN KNIGHT!

Your aunt Jennifer and cousin Krystal congratulate you on your recent High School graduation and successful achievement in the 2021 CSEC examinations.

May today's success be the beginning of tomorrow's achievements. We also wish you a very Happy Birthday.

Love always!



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