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THE ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE RESEARCHERS IN EDUCATION

Improving Educational Outcomes Through Research

About AGRE

The Association of Graduate Researchers in Education (AGRE) operates from the School of Education at the University of the West Indies, Mona. The AGRE was established in 2006 but after a few years of being dormant, the association was re-activated in 2016.

Vision

AGRE, the leading research association for graduate researchers in the field of education

AGRE's mission and mandate are to:

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

The President's Message

The AGRE is pleased to share with you our fourth and final newsletter for the 2020/2021 academic year. This is the year that will be etched in history as students, educators and researchers grapple with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite the disruptions to traditionally held beliefs about and practices in education, the AGRE has remained committed to its mandate in providing opportunities for neophyte and expert researchers to develop their research skills and to expand their knowledge-base, with an ultimate goal of improving educational outcomes.

On behalf of the Executive Team from AGRE, I would like to extend sincere gratitude to the team from the Centre for Leadership and Diversity from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto, led by Professor Ann Lopez and members of the Association of Graduate Researchers in Education, led by Dr. Carmel Roofe, who graciously accepted an invitation to interrogate non-traditional research methodologies at our previously held professional development research seminar. This collaboration truly illuminated the high quality research studies being conducted by graduate students from the University of Toronto and the University of the West Indies. Certainly, we look forward to future partnerships.

As we usher in a new academic year, it is my hope that you will earnestly engage with the AGRE to bolster the quality of education that we provide to our nation by consuming and producing high quality research. May we collectively engage in research as a means of providing quality education in the face of many uncertainties as education remains a primary vehicle to bring about change.

Heartfelt gratitude to the amazing Executive Team and members of the AGRE. I wish for everyone a very rewarding 2021/2022 academic year and we look forward to seeing you at our biennial research conference on November 24, 2021.

Keriffe Clark
President
2020-2022





Duoethnography

- **Yvonne Chan**, a Doctoral candidate and **Lea Nsouli** a graduate student, two of the panellists from CLD presented on duoethnography, a non-traditional research methodology. In this research methodology the lived experiences of two or more researchers are explored through collaboration. *The varied backgrounds and life histories of the researchers are juxtaposed to provide multiple understanding of the world. Their research explores the development of identity within a colonial structure*, with the proposed paper title being: “Uncovering Identity Through Storytelling; A Tale of Two Educators of Colour”. An interesting caveat is that this methodology is not for everyone as it requires vulnerability and trust between researchers so they can challenge each other to reconceptualize past experiences and stories.

Narrative Inquiry

- **Entisar Yusuf**, a graduate student-panellist from CLD is employing narrative inquiry as a research design for her study on the experiences of institutional racism. *Entisar's research focuses on how black higher education students navigate higher education within public universities. Her inspiration for this research was derived from her own experiences as a black Muslim migrant in a Canadian university.* Narrative inquiry design is a qualitative paradigm that includes semi-structured interviews.

Culturally Responsive Practices

- **Beryl Zesseu**, a master's candidate, represented CLD as one of the panellists. Her research is still developing and *is focused on culturally responsive practices in school settings and how to ensure that diverse learners are prioritized in the education system.* Beryl's inspiration for this research was born out of her own experiences as a migrant student who benefitted from teachers who utilized culturally responsive strategies in teaching her which resulted in a learning environment that was conducive for her as she felt welcomed in those learning spaces.

"CLD is centred on leadership for social justice where conversations and research are focused on leadership, specifically preparing emerging leaders."

Webinar Highlights

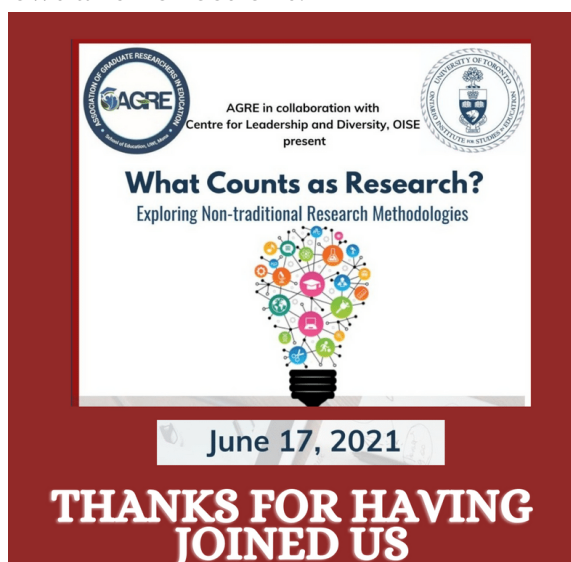
Photovoice

Headia Nichalls-Spencer, a master's candidate, represented AGRE as a panellist, exploring photovoice as a non-traditional methodology. She noted that photovoice is a fairly new research methodology which began in the early 1990s. *It involves the blending of narrative with photography to explore community issues; it builds on the traditional practices of individuals and communities where images and words are used to express community issues, culture, history and even desires.* Headia highlighted that the goals of photovoice are: to enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns; promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through small group discussions of photographs; and to reach policy makers.

Shereca McGowan-Hunter, a master's candidate, also represented AGRE as a panellist and participant in the study: "Exploring the Experiences of Adult Learners in Higher Education in Jamaica". She noted the use of participatory action research methodology within the research. *Shereca highlighted that change is a fundamental end product of action research while focusing on the tenets of participatory action research as requiring involvement, critical engagement, empowerment of participants and the use of critical dialogue.* Additionally, she noted that dialogue was critical to the process and integral to the methods employed. The specific methods employed in the research were: photograph analysis through focus group discussions, interviews and reflections.

"The aim of AGRE is to inspire and encourage the use of research in practical ways. Through this collaborative session a legacy is being created and history is being written."

Jovaughn Neil, a graduate student, was the final panellist who represented AGRE and who also participated in the study, "Exploring the Experiences of Adult Learners in Higher Education in Jamaica", shared the impact of the photovoice research on participants. He showed sample photographs taken by participants along with the accompanying narratives for each. *Jovaughn shared a few ways in which the participants were impacted: it provided relief during the pandemic, by aiding participants in sharing and processing their emotions; it provided a community of support during the pandemic; and participants were able to co-construct solutions together as adult learners within the same space and with similar experiences.* Jovaughn noted some positive outcomes: the methodology enabled critical thinking; developed critiquing skills of participants and resulted in the transformation of participants in terms of their mindset. Finally, he noted some of the ways in which advocacy could emerge as an end product of the research.



Meet the Panellists

IT WAS A PLEASURE TO HAVE HAD THE FOLLOWING RESEARCHERS EXPLORE NON-TRADITIONAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES



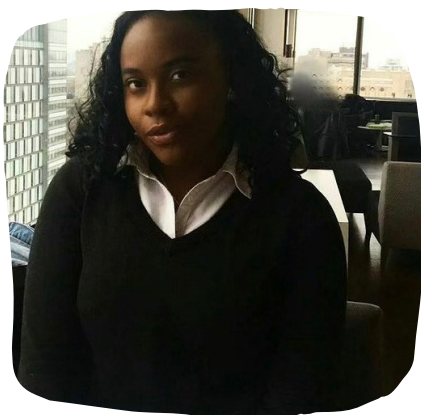
Lea Nsouli
OISE



Yvonne Chan
OISE



Entisar Yusuf
OISE



Beryl Zesseu
OISE



Heada Nichalls-Spencer
AGRE



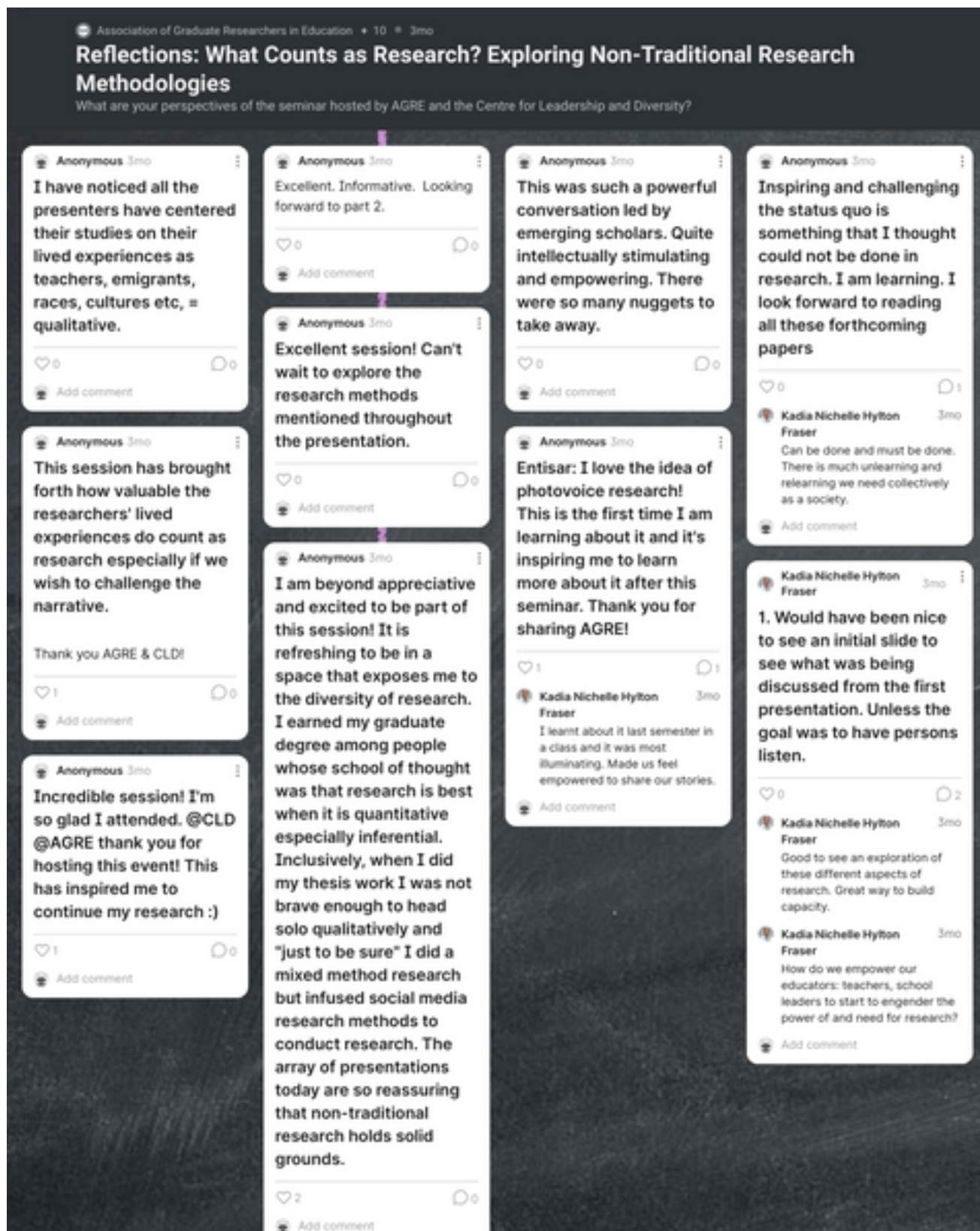
Jovaughn Neil
AGRE



Shereca McGowan Hunter
AGRE

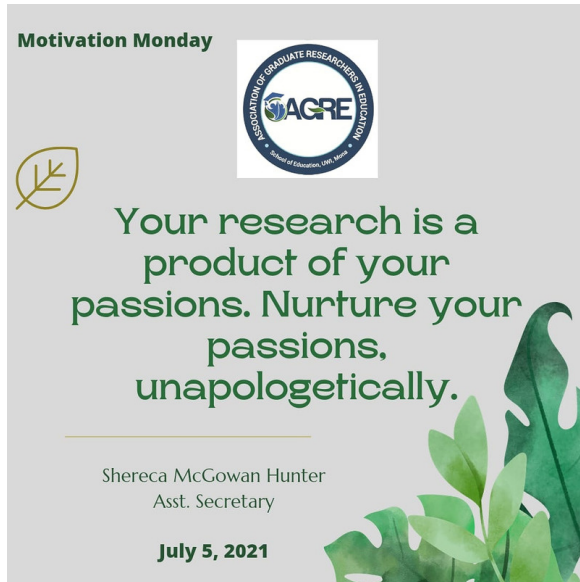
What were your thoughts on our PD?

WE ASKED PARTICIPANTS TO SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON THE SESSION FACILITATED BY STUDENTS FROM THE OISE AND AGRE. HERE ARE SOME PERSPECTIVES



MOTIVATION MONDAYS

AGRE's Motivation Monday initiative started in May 2021 and continued in this quarter. The initiative acts as a source of motivation and inspiration for it's members as well as others on their research journey.



The AGRE congratulates and celebrates the following individuals on their respective achievements:

- Elsa Calliard-Burton is commended for her recent presentation at the Jamaica Association of French Teachers' Annual General Meeting. The title of her presentation was "**Strategies to boost online student participation in French classes**".
- Congratulations to Karnette Bachelor Evering on sharing her story "**Operation CARE: Compassion, Attention, Respect, Empathy**" in the recently concluded Jamaica Teaching Council's Teacher Empowerment Webinar. The webinar was dubbed Leading by Example: Teacher Cooperation, Collaboration and Caring Stories during a Pandemic.

Coming Soon!

- Research conference November 24, 2021
- Research publication seminars
- More professional development research webinar workshops
- Research mentorship for postgraduate students
- AGRE's official website
- AGRE's Podcast

Connect with us:



[agrejamaica](https://agrejamaica.com) or agrejamaica@gmail.com



CALL FOR PAPERS

Association of Graduate Researchers in Education

**Theme: Re-Imagining Research Responsibilities:
Quality Education and the use of Research during Abnormal Times**

Since the turn of the 21st century and more recently with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, educators and researchers alike have been challenged to assess their roles. In this process of assessment, there is a deeper call for the reconceptualisation of traditional and conventional, to embrace novel and unorthodox ways of viewing and practising research and education. Similarly, the concept of what constitutes quality education, as promulgated by Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), is put up for scrutiny. It is within this context that the AGRE invites academics, teachers, students, researchers and other stakeholders to interrogate and share their findings on these issues at our second biennial research conference.

Research Conference Strands

1

Beyond Traditional Research Methodologies

2

Impact of Covid-19 on Quality Education

3

Social Issues and the Role of Research

4

Research Positionality and Competence/Content Knowledge

COSTS

- ❖ **AGRE Members: \$1000**
- ❖ **Presenters:**
 - Local - \$1000
 - International – 10 USD
- ❖ **Graduate Students (with ID):**
 - Local - \$1500
 - International – 15 USD
- ❖ **Educators:**
 - Local - \$2000
 - International – 20 USD

IMPORTANT DATES

- ❖ **Deadline for Abstract Submissions:**
Friday, September 17, 2021
- ❖ **Acceptance Date:**
Thursday, September 30, 2021
- ❖ **Conference Date:**
Wednesday, November 24, 2021

Submit Abstracts (no more than 300 words)
and profile (no more than 50 words)



Email:
conference.agrejamaica@gmail.com
for additional information.