



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

November 17, 2021

Creating Emotionally Safe Learning Communities: Teacher Educators Confronting School Violence

Conference Committee

*Professor Stephen Joseph - Dr Beular Mitchell - Dr Iris Hewitt-Bradshaw
Ms Lynette Tyson-Noel - Mr Roland Sealy - Dr Myrna Ransome*

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WELCOME

Dr Rowena Kalloo

President of Trinidad and Tobago Association of Teacher Educators (TTATE)



It is my pleasure to warmly welcome all participants, colleagues, friends and distinguished guests to the second conference of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Teacher Educators. Our first conference was hosted in 2017 with the theme of Re-imagining Teacher Education in a Post-colonial Space. We are indeed proud of the resilience and commitment of our members which has allowed us to continue that re-imagination, and once more host a conference in the time of a global pandemic.

The theme of this year's conference, "Creating emotionally safe learning communities: Teacher educators confronting school violence" addresses an existential challenge of 21st century learning communities. It is no coincidence that the 16 Days of activism to end violence against women begins on November 25th, and our conference is hosted in the

month of November. Educational communities offer infinite possibilities to tackle the culture of violence that our children and teachers face. It is our belief that teacher education institutions must shift the pendulum of professional development beyond reactionary responses to violence, to proactively create safe spaces for learning. Research is the basis of good decision making, and solid research is critical to addressing such a complex and multidimensional issue.

Our one-day conference promises to be a vibrant forum of research, discussion, and collegiality, regardless of the restrictions that Covid-19 has forced upon us. Our guest speaker, the distinguished Professor Hutchinson, holds deep insights into the underlying psychology and culture of our people and he will set the tone for the diverse and rich presentations of our teacher-educator researchers.

A special thank you must be extended to the members of our conference committee. Without their commitment and dedication to the task this conference would not have materialized. We would also like to thank our many supporters who generously provided resources and expertise. We wish you all an enlightening and enjoyable conference day.

GREETINGS



Prof Stephen Joseph, Conference Chair Dr Beular Mitchell, Conference Co-chair

We bring you greetings on behalf of the TTATE Conference Committee. We appreciate your support in advancing the cause of teacher educators who have been making significant contributions to the professional development of teachers in Trinidad and Tobago for several decades. This virtual conference provides another opportunity for us to develop further our professional identity through scholarship and research activities. Today's conference focusses on the problem of school violence and the role of teacher educators in creating emotionally safe learning communities for our students. It provides us with the opportunity to offer insights and share varying perspectives on a critical issue, which impacts our profession in a significant way.

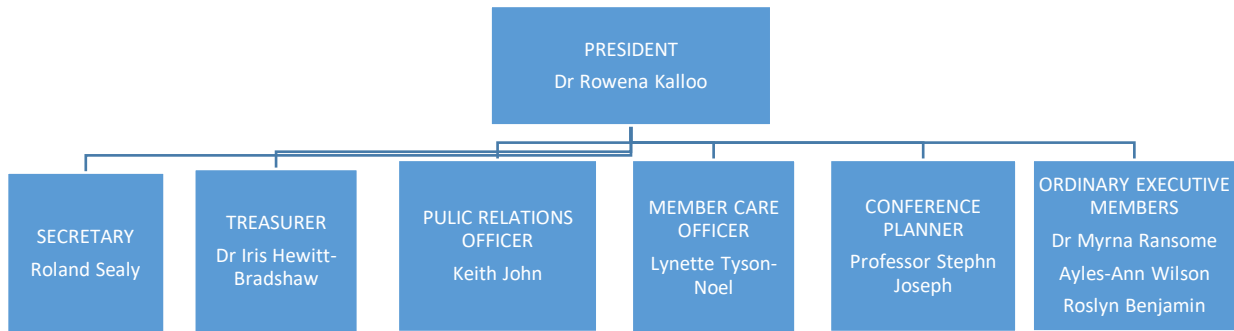
This is TTATE's second conference and we are pleased that over the last eight years, we have continued to pace each other along the path towards increased professionalism. We hope that through our interactions today, we would see ourselves as a community of practice with shared understandings, goals, and commitments. Our wish is that for each person, the conference would be an enlightening and stimulating experience.

ABOUT TTATE

The Trinidad and Tobago Association of Teacher Educators (TTATE) was born out of a belief that teacher education in Trinidad and Tobago is worthy of deeper focus and attention - that it is a field too long left ungoverned, given its significance in the realm of education. In the higher education sector, teacher educators are largely responsible for preparing teachers for classroom practice. These teacher educators perform several roles such as designers of curriculum, content knowledge specialists, programme and course coordinators, and supervisors of classroom teaching. They are also expected to engage in scholarly research and make presentations at conferences (Murray, Swennen & Shagrir, 2008). But teacher educators also operate in other school-based contexts as cooperating teachers and mentors who provide guidance to novice teachers and facilitate professional development of teachers at the primary and secondary level (Joseph & Mitchell, 2018/19, p. 99). Given the complex and dynamic nature of the job, TTATE intends to recognize and value the work of all teacher educators as they engage in a community of practice in Trinidad and Tobago.

TTATE was incorporated under the Companies Act, 1995 of Trinidad and Tobago on May 2012.

TTATE's Current Executive



TTATE's MISSION

To promote a culture of constructive dialogue among stakeholders in the education system about issues related to teaching and teacher education and to advocate for policies and programmes for teacher educators and teachers, informed by research relevant to the culture and context of Trinidad and Tobago.

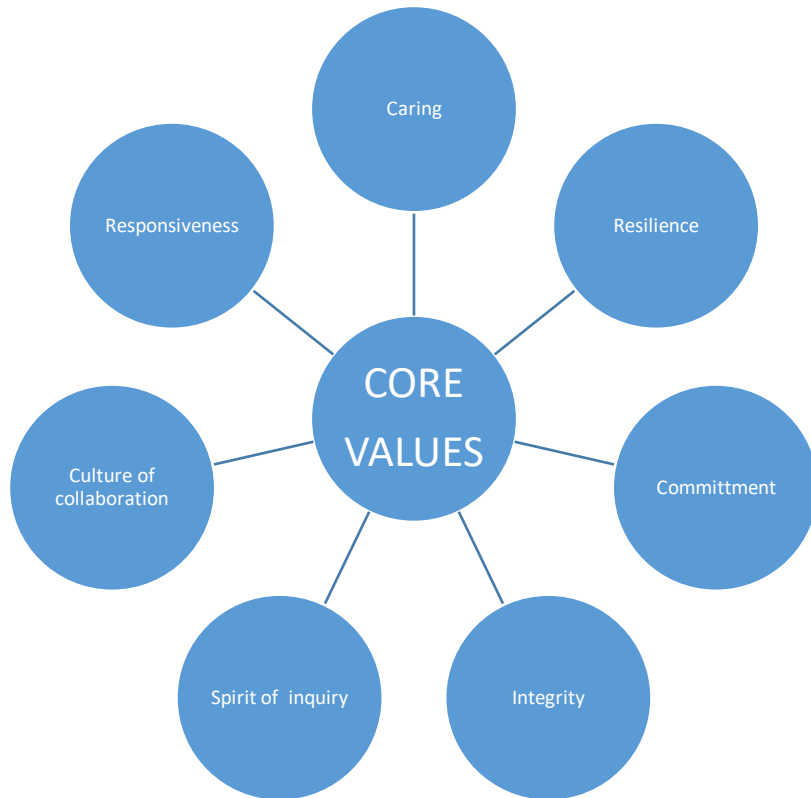
TTATE's VISION

To be a critical voice for professionalism and quality in teacher education towards enhancing the education of learners in Trinidad and Tobago

The **GOALS** of the Association are to:

- be the professional voice for teacher educators and teachers
- agitate for the clear articulation of policies and programmes that govern teaching and teacher education
- become the monitoring body for teacher education
- propel research in the local context about teacher education and teaching
- respond to global issues related to teaching and teacher education

OUR CORE VALUES



For more information, please visit our website at ttate.org.tt

CONFERENCE DESCRIPTION

The Trinidad and Tobago Association of Teacher Educators (TTATE) is pleased to host its Second (Biennial) Conference entitled - *Creating Emotionally Safe Learning Communities: Teacher Educators Confronting School Violence*. This virtual conference provides an opportunity for teacher educators to share new research evidence, teaching innovations, and to discuss the state of education in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean.

The goals of the conference are to:

- heighten awareness of the value of teacher educators as a major stakeholder group in education

- encourage research in the field of teacher education in Trinidad and Tobago and beyond
- inform policy that addresses the needs of teacher education and teacher educators
- forge professional partnerships with other teacher education institutions or associations in the Caribbean region.

This one-day conference includes a plenary session with contributions from the keynote speaker, TTATE executive members, and research presentations from members of the academic and professional community. These presentations are organized around the following seven strands:

1. Confronting the multiple dimensions of school violence
2. Curriculum and emotionally safe classrooms: the nexus
3. Gender, poverty, ethnicity, and their intersection with school violence
4. Vicarious Experiences of Violence
5. School Violence – the socio-psychological and academic impact
6. Creating Emotionally Safe Learning Communities
7. School violence, teacher education, societal change - the interplay

The conference committee comprises the following members:

- Professor Stephen Joseph
- Dr Beular Mitchell
- Dr Iris Hewitt-Bradshaw
- Ms Lynette Tyson-Noel
- Mr Roland Sealy
- Dr Myrna Ransome

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Professor Gerard Hutchinson is currently the Professor and Unit Lead in Psychiatry, at the School of Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS), University of the West Indies (UWI), St Augustine. He also serves as the Coordinator of the post graduate training programme in Psychiatry, St Augustine campus and is the University Examiner in Psychiatry for the four campuses of the UWI.

He functions as the Head of Psychiatry and Mental Health Services at the North Central Regional Health Authority (NCRHA), where he oversees and

coordinates the in-patient and outpatient mental health services of the NCRHA inclusive of the Stress Relief Centre and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinic.

Professor Hutchinson has authored or co-authored over 130 peer reviewed academic publications and his work has over 9000 citations. He is the national representative of the International Association of Suicide Prevention as well as the World Suicidology Network. He also serves on the Research Advisory Committee of the Caribbean Public Health Agency. Professor Hutchinson is a co-Principal Investigator of the Intrepid 2 project. His research interests are developmental studies, suicide and first episode serious mental illness (psychosis).

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Morning Session

7:30-8:00 am

Zoom Login

8:00-8:45 am

Plenary Session (Virtual Platform)

National Anthem

Welcome Remarks - Dr Rowena Kalloo, President of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Teacher Educators (TTATE)

Greetings – Professor Stephen Joseph, Conference Chair

Keynote Speaker – Professor Gerard Hutchinson, Professor of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medical Sciences, The University of the West Indies

Topic: *Education and mental health - circular causal systems and the twin pillars of development*

STRAND: CONFRONTING THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Time: 8:50 am – 10:05 am

Chair: Dr Sharon J Jaggernaut

Dr Iris Hewitt-Bradshaw- *Tongues as whips: Identifying, analysing, and interpreting violence in verbal discourse in schools and classrooms*

Dr Godfrey St. Bernard; Dr Madgerie Jameson-Charles; Dr Rinnelle Lee-Piggott; Ms Shivana Chankar; Ms Safia King - *Secondary schools' efforts to mediate violence experienced by students*

Dr Leela Ramsook & Ms Marlene Thomas - *The Conundrum of Violence in Primary Schools: Mediation and Restorative Justice*

Q&A Session

Refreshment Break: 10:05 am – 10:15 am

STRAND: CREATING EMOTIONALLY SAFE LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Time: 10:15 am – 11:30 am

Chair: Mr Roland Sealy

Ms Faye Mc Kie - *Motivation for Management and Discipline in the Online Classroom: (Covid & Bullying during Schoology: What Works)*

Dr John Horsfall - *The Nature and Dynamics of Teachers' Trust in the Principal in Secondary Schools in Trinidad and Tobago*

Professor Jerome DeLisle & Ms Cheryl Bowrin - *What can Caribbean Studies on School Climate teach us about Reducing School Violence in Trinidad and Tobago?*

Q&A Session

Lunch Break 11:30 am – 12:00 noon

Afternoon Session

STRAND: CONFRONTING THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Time: 12:00 noon – 1:25 pm

Chair: Dr Myrna Ransome

Mr Webster Joseph - *The Effect of Explicit Comprehension Strategy Instruction on Reading Comprehension of Male Readers at the Primary School level in Trinidad*

Ms Sharon Pajotte & Ms Cheryl Bowrin - *Whose Safety and at what Expense? Teacher Educators' Perceptions of Safety in the Digital Environment*

Dr Godfrey St. Bernard; Dr Madgerie Jameson-Charles; Dr Rinnelle Lee-Piggott; Ms Shivana Chankar; Ms Safia King - *Violence in the Lives of Secondary School Students in Trinidad*

Q&A Session

STRAND: CURRICULUM AND EMOTIONALLY SAFE CLASSROOMS: THE NEXUS

Time: 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm

Chair: Ms Lynette Tyson-Noel

Dr Sabeerah Abdul-Majied - *The hidden curriculum in early childhood education: Snack time bullying and teacher responses*

Dr Rowena Kalloo & Ms Joann Neaves - *An Investigation of the Experiences and Perceptions of Corporal Punishment among 12 Student Teachers (in-service elementary)*

STRAND: VICARIOUS EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Dr Godfrey St. Bernard; Dr Madgerie Jameson-Charles; Dr Rinnelle Lee-Piggott; Ms Shivana Chankar; Ms Safia King - *Accounting for the Dynamics of Bullying on Social Media among Secondary School Students: Preliminary Insights from Sample Survey Data from Schools in Trinidad*

Q&A Session

2:50 pm – 3: 05pm *Closing Remarks - Dr Rowena Kalloo, President, TTATE*

ABSTRACTS

We are pleased to inform all presenters that the editor of the Caribbean Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies (CJMS) is willing to consider your articles for publication in a special 2022 issue. Please visit the CJMS webpage at www.u.tt/cjms for further information about the journal.



Dr Iris Hewitt-Bradshaw is an Assistant Professor in Language and Linguistics at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She holds a BA in Language and Linguistics, an M.Phil. and a Ph.D. in Language Education, and Diplomas in International Relations and Education. She has been a teacher educator for 23 years and researches issues in language in education and teacher education.

Tongues as whips: Identifying, analysing, and interpreting violence in verbal discourse in schools and classrooms

Physical acts that endanger life and limb typically dominate discussions of school violence. However, non-physical forms of violence may be equally prevalent, and their impact difficult to assess given their invisible, insidious nature. Direct or coded acts of violence in communication constitute one form of non-physical violence occurring in education settings. Such acts can have devastating consequences for the psychological well-being of stakeholders in education and undoubtedly contribute to some manifestations of physical violence. This presentation explores ways of identifying, analysing and interpreting violence in teacher verbal discourse from the perspective of the ethnography of communication and through the use of mediated discourse analysis. The research data consisted of one instance of authentic teacher-student classroom verbal interaction in an audio recording that was widely circulated on social media in Trinidad and Tobago. The interaction was analysed to determine what aspects could be typified as violence in teacher verbal discourse, and how the dynamics of the interaction link to the ethnography of communication in a post-colonial speech community where tongues can be used as whips. Such an interpretation draws on several theoretical constructs and highlights how historical, social, and linguistic forces shape ideologies, communicative contexts, and discourse events. Educational researchers of necessity must transcend a single occurrence of verbal violence to connect similar events to the context and the nexus of socio-linguistic practices that give rise to communicative behaviour. Further, the research indicates the need for expanded methodologies to recognize, research, and understand the multi-dimensional nature of school violence because of the tendency to normalize traditional classroom communication patterns, thus making them accepted and difficult to recognize as forms of abuse. This reflective process is also necessary if educators and officials are to devise research-based interventions and create more harmonious, non-violent learning environments.



Dr Godfrey St. Bernard is the Acting Director, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES), The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago.

His current academic interests include problems akin to population and development, applied statistical analysis, research methodology, evaluation research and social policy. His current research interests focus upon children and youth, population policy and dynamics in the Circum-Caribbean, violence prevention and safety promotion, vulnerability and resilience in small states, return migration and the measurement of social phenomena.

Having been primarily responsible for the establishment of the Master of Science in Development Statistics offered in the SALISES, Dr. St. Bernard continues to serve as the Co-ordinator of that programme, except for the academic year 2020/2021 when he was on sabbatical leave. Since 2017, Dr. St. Bernard has been engaged as the UWI lead researcher of a hemispheric project entitled the Rights of Children and Youth Partnership (RCYP) in Latin America and the Caribbean. More recently, he has become the Lead Researcher in an International Project established to measure comprehensive wealth in Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. St. Bernard has authored several scholarly works including monographs, peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters and technical reports. Dr. St. Bernard has been an active member of the Caribbean Studies Association since 1993. He served on the Executive Council of the Caribbean Studies Association during 200-2014 and was the President of the Caribbean Studies Association during 2012-2013. Since 2020, he has been Editor-In-Chief of a new journal entitled the Journal of the Caribbean Association of Professional Statisticians.



Dr Madgerie Jameson-Charles has been an educator for 42 years. She worked as a Common Entrance teacher (1980-1998) At the Ave Maria Girls' Primary School and guidance counsellor (1998 – 2006) at the Entrepot Secondary School Castries, Saint Lucia. She also worked as a student advocate at the University of Otago (2006 – 2009). She is presently employed as a lecturer at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus (2009 to present).

She is the holder of a Bachelor of Science in Psychology (The University of the West Indies), a Master of Education, Education for Employment (University of Sheffield, U.K.) and a PhD in Education, Learning and Instruction in Higher Education (University of Otago, New Zealand). She is a trained counsellor and has received training in individual and group counselling, focusing on psychodrama and play therapy. She is also trained in critical incidence. She also received training in mediation.

As a guidance counsellor, Dr Jameson-Charles provided psychological support to students, provided career guidance, conducted parental training, initiated peer counselling initiative at the school. She was also the Head of Department for Health and Family Life Education which was taught as a stand-alone subject at Entrepot Secondary School. She also provided support to staff and conducted several workshops on teacher stress and teacher burnout. She also ensured that she received continuous training in counselling.

As a student advocate at the University of Otago, she provided support to students experiencing transition issues. She was a mentor for international students. She also received specialized training in suicide interventions (2007). Dr Jameson-Charles has provided EAP services to one of the major supermarket chains in Saint Lucia from 2002 to 2006. During that time, she provided support to staff members with various issues. At The UWI, she lectures in Fundamentals of Education Research, Cognition and Learning, Measurement of Educational and Psychological Constructs, Research Methods and Statistics in Education, and Health and Family Life Education.

Dr Jameson-Charles has been involved in several youth development projects in Grenada, Anguilla, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. She supported the development of initiatives that would enhance positive youth development. Her research interests are teacher education and professional development; high stakes testing; youth guidance, empowerment and development; education for employment; making transitions; organizational development; and learning and instruction in higher education.



Rinnelle Lee-Piggott, PhD (University of Nottingham, UK) is a lecturer in Educational Administration at the University of the West Indies (St Augustine, T&T). A former primary school middle-management leader, Dr Lee-Piggott's interests focus on principal leadership, social justice leadership, education privatization, school culture, school and system improvement and schools facing challenging circumstances. She is a feature speaker, consultant and an associate editor for the new 'Equity in Education and Society' journal. Recent publication: A coauthored chapter, "Doing social justice leadership in challenging circumstances: Principals' perspectives" (2021) in K. Arar, D. Örüçü & J. Wilkinson (Eds.), *Neoliberalism and education systems in conflict: Exploring challenges across the globe*.

perspectives" (2021) in K. Arar, D. Örüçü & J. Wilkinson (Eds.), Neoliberalism and education systems in conflict: Exploring challenges across the globe.



Shivana Chankar is a full time Research Assistant attached at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, working on the Rights for Children and Youth Partnership Project (RCYP). She is currently an MSc student in Sociology at the UWI, St. Augustine. Ms Chankar obtained her B.Sc. in Sociology in 2016. Ms Chankar is very interested sport studies and conducting research in her field of Sociology.



***Safia King** is a full time Research Assistant attached at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, working on the Rights for Children and Youth Partnership Project (RCYP). She is currently a PhD student in Sociology at the UWI, St. Augustine. Ms King obtained her Master's Degree in Sociology (Distinction) from the University of the West Indies in 2021. Additionally, she graduated with her B.Sc. in Sociology and a minor in International Relations and Social Development Policy and Planning in 2016. During her capacity within the field of academia, Ms. King is very interested in conducting research especially sociological research, therefore exploring all areas of human behaviour to gain a*

greater understanding of individuals and societies.

Secondary schools' efforts to mediate violence experienced by students

Schooling provides formal and informal learning opportunities to students who are expected to become aware of and understand themselves and their environment. At school, they are given the opportunities to reflect on the contribution that they will make in nation-building. Therefore, schools are charged with the responsibility to facilitate the development of the whole child. However, administrators and educators have been grappling with many challenges that impede their mandate. One of the challenges is the increasing incidence of school violence and growing numbers of students affected by multiple sources of violence. The purpose of this paper is to examine the education structures, practices and relationships that are employed by school personnel to reduce violence and enhance the wellbeing of youth in four secondary schools across Trinidad and Tobago. This research is part of a larger study that employs a mixed methods study on education and youth well-being in the Americas from the perspectives of secondary school personnel, including teachers and parents. This paper answers the following questions: (1) How do secondary schools facilitate students' well-being? (2) What education and schooling structures, practices and relationships are employed to enhance the lives of youth by reducing violence? The qualitative data from 6 focus group semi-structured interviews were analysed using an iterative thematic analysis. The preliminary findings highlight narratives of despair, deficiency and discontinuity, even amidst the efforts to better the life chances of students. The existence of inadequate social structures and unstable relationships do not sustainably contribute to reducing violence or facilitating student wellbeing. Findings, thus, point to the need for greater forms of support for schools to assist in the mitigation of violence experienced by youth. The recommendations point to a multi-sectorial approach to improve the secondary students' wellbeing.



Marlene Thomas is a retired Senior Instructor at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She worked at the Centre for Education Programmes and taught Curriculum Studies, courses in General Education Studies and coordinated the practicum component of the Bachelor of Education degree. She has served in Teacher Education in Trinidad and Tobago for more than twenty years.



Dr Leela Ramsook is an Assistant Professor at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She has published papers in refereed journals and participated in various educational workshops. She has a keen interest in research and has presented papers at conferences both locally and internationally.

The Conundrum of Violence in Primary Schools: Mediation and Restorative Justice

Violence in schools, including cyberbullying, is an increasing phenomenon at the primary school level. It has made headlines on print and social media, amidst many concerns by the general population. This study sought to identify the issue of violence at primary schools and intervention strategies that may be adopted to minimize the problem. A quantitative approach is adopted to glean the challenges students and teachers face, as well as possible solutions via mediation and restorative justice to mitigate the conundrum. The sample comprised 62 primary school students between the ages 10 to 12 years, from 6 primary schools. Data were collected through questionnaires while analysis of data was conducted using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that many students were victims of physical violence. Some experienced psychological violence through threats and fearfulness, while others were emotionally traumatized, with feelings of unworthiness and helplessness, by small groups or cliques. However, there were a few students who indicated that they were not victims of violence but witnessed situations. The study concluded that violence is prevalent in primary schools. It is expected that interventions such as adoption of mediation and the principles of restorative justice can minimize the occurrences.



Faye Mentore McKie's early professional experience began as a pupil-teacher at Marlborough RC and In-Service Teacher Training, Kingston, Georgetown. She later acquired an Associate Diploma in Natural Science; BA English and Literature; M.Ed. International Teaching and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. Early Childhood Education, transferring from Walden University. Mrs Mentore-McKie served as an ESL instructor, and Chair of Education (Ag.) 2008-2011. She currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Education. During this time, she conducted professional presentations at First Teacher's Congress (IAD), Cancun, Mexico in 2009; Annual Teacher Induction Ceremony USC, 2010; International Literacy Conference, NCU, Jamaica, 2011; Teacher Professional Development at USC; and TUTTA Annual General Meeting, Trinidad, 2019. Mrs. Mentore-Mckie participated in several professional partnerships and community engagements including a conversation with the current President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Paula Mae Weeks, (ORTT), 2019, and former President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Anthony A. Carmona in 2016 and 2017 in relation to operations and projections of Bethlehem Star, a literacy transformation registered NGO, that targets transformation via literacy in schools in At Risk areas in Trinidad. She also met with the former Minister of Education, Anthony Garcia, in relation to the Association for Early Teaching Professionals in the Caribbean (AETEPCA), a motivational (2014) registered NGO, a project that supports, via motivation, trained and in-training teachers in Trinidad and Tobago. This association was founded in 2014. She received awards and commendations in the form of Teaching Excellence, University of the Southern Caribbean, 2009; School/Library Support Development, Success RC, 2017; and Letter of Commendation for School Support/Agency work, from Principal of Success RC. She conducted five annual award ceremonies of AETEPCA in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019/20 and is publishing "Be it Unto Her", a book retelling of the story Bible and Jesus Christ from a woman's perspective.

Motivation for Management and Discipline in the Online Classroom: (Covid & Bullying during Schoology: What Works)

Twenty-first (21st) Century classroom management emphasises engagement over discipline. This approach is founded on the principles of humanistic psychology that highlights intrinsic motivation. In engaging classrooms, unlike the traditional discipline dominated management techniques, communication reigns. The advocated ration of communication to discipline stands at 90% communication to 10% discipline. The Problem: While conducting evaluations for student-teachers who were completing teaching practice sessions 3 and 4, it was noted that many teachers of the 2020/2021 School Year struggled with the new demands of online teaching brought on by the Covid19 pandemic. Like the varying strains of Covid19, bullying and other forms of indiscipline present new and challenging faces. Novice teacher-trainees, in particular, those without teaching experience could not cope. One teacher asked to drop the class and pick it up at a future session. Some students did not attend to teacher's instructions. Some used the video apps to appear upside down during teaching sessions. Some disappeared and appeared, claiming loss of electricity. Some spoke out of turn. However, it was also noted that some teachers adapted, successfully using motivational principles are also seen to work even in the current context. The presentation, "Motivation in the Online Classroom: What Works" presents the testimonies of a Standard Two teacher who has successfully employed motivational strategies in her Schoology Classroom to engage students and attaining the curriculum goals.



Dr John Horsfall has been an educator for over 36 years. Born in *Morecambe in the North of England*, he earned a degree in *Physics from the University of Manchester* and trained as a teacher in *Newcastle*. After working as a *Physics and Mathematics teacher in Sunderland* he joined *Voluntary Services Overseas (V.S.O.)* and was posted to *Anguilla*. After six years in *Anguilla* he moved to *Trinidad*, teaching at various schools, including *Fatima College*, before gaining a post as a *founding teacher at the International School of Port of Spain (I.S.P.S.)*. He was the *high school principal at I.S.P.S. for 16 years* and introduced many new programmes to *Trinidad and the Caribbean*. He has also taught at a *premier international school in Jakarta Indonesia* and most recently has worked as a *tutor on the Dip. Ed. programme at UWI*. His qualifications include a *B.Sc. (Hons), P.G.C.E., M.Ed., Ed.S., and an Ed.D. in Educational Administration*. His doctoral research focused on the *nature and dynamics of trust in schools*.

The Nature and Dynamics of Teachers' Trust in the Principal in Secondary Schools in Trinidad and Tobago

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate the levels of teacher trust in the principal (TIP) in secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago, and to explore ways in which teachers perceive TIP to be built or diminished. Responses were received from 103 secondary teachers to determine TIP levels and to find whether those levels were dependent on school type, length of service, or teacher gender. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with nine teachers from a variety of school types and with different TIP levels to examine the principal behaviours that build or diminish trust. This study found that levels of teacher TIP in Trinidad and Tobago are low when compared to US and other international norms. In addition, no significant relationship was found between teacher TIP and school type or length of service. However, TIP levels were discovered to be different for female and male teachers. This study found that the mechanisms by which principals build or diminish trust were related to the themes of human relations, power relations, conflict, competence, reliability, communication and principal selection. Principals are responsible for the trust environment of their schools, and therefore it is recommended that they should have an understanding of the ways in which trust is built or lost. This should be reflected in principal selection, training and support. The findings from this study indicate that further research on trust dynamics is warranted. In addition, the role played by gender in trust relations in Trinidad and Tobago schools deserves further study. This study offers the first quantitative study of teacher TIP levels in Trinidad and Tobago. It further reveals some of the mechanisms by which principals affect TIP levels in the unique context of secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago.



Jerome De Lisle, PhD is Professor of Education Leadership at the School of Education, Faculty of Humanities & Education, UWI. St. Augustine. He is also Deputy Dean, Graduate Studies and Research of the Faculty of Humanities and Education. His major areas of research are in educational measurement, assessment and evaluation. He has published widely in several international journals such as Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice; Applied Measurement in Education; and Gender and Education. He has held several individual consultancies and sub consultancies for the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education and agencies such as

Cambridge Education and the Montreal-McGill consortium. In 2015-2016, he was technical lead at the UWI SoE for the consultancy for the independent review of the New Primary School Curriculum.



Cheryl M. Bowrin, B.A., M.Ed., is a Senior Instructor (Curriculum Studies, Teaching of Primary Social Studies, Research Methods, Educational Foundations and Practical Teaching) at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She has taught at all levels of the education system of Trinidad and Tobago for the past 28 years, and also delivered courses to the Bachelor of Education students at the School of Education, UWI (St Augustine, and Open Campus) and in St Vincent. At present, she is completing a Ph.D. in Education (Walden University) with focus on the issue of Teacher Professionalism in Trinidad and Tobago. Her personal credo is that "education makes the difference" in the lives of individuals.

What can Caribbean Studies on School Climate teach us about Reducing School Violence in Trinidad and Tobago?

School violence is the use of power to harm another, whatever form that takes. The etiology of school violence in the Caribbean includes high levels of bullying, verbal abuse, and bystander disengagement, coupled with low levels of positive actions such as prosocial behaviour and inclusivity. Community and school violence are increasing in the Caribbean. Although there is evidence of higher incidence and frequency at all levels, violence is often more severe in the secondary school. Some Caribbean authors associate the increase with the implementation of universal secondary education (USE). However, a more likely explanation is unintended consequences from a stratified and examination-oriented system. This inevitably results in hopelessness, low levels of engagement, and limited support for students experiencing learning challenges. Data from international learning assessments such as PIRLS suggest that the problem may be the persistent negative tone within the system rather than severe episodic events. School climate is a heterogeneous, multidimensional and malleable construct focused upon the quality and character of school life. It reflects norms, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning and leadership practices, and organizational structures which ensure that all stakeholders feel socially, emotionally and physically supported and safe. In the last decade, several studies on school climate in the Caribbean were conducted. In this paper, we first summarize recent Caribbean studies and then highlight key findings on school climate in the primary school from a 2016 report to the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education on the issue. We analyze data from

2388 students, 1680 parents, and 410 teachers in the primary schools using both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (EFA & CFA). We find evidence for the role of school connectedness as a key protective component. We hypothesize that the failure to develop strong connectedness accounts for the specific etiology of school violence observed.



Webster Joseph is a primary school teacher at his alma mater. He has over a decade of teaching experience at the Standard Four and Five levels. His interest in reading comprehension piqued when he worked with students who often struggled in that area. His desire to improve the reading comprehension of students led him to his current research that explores the effect of explicit comprehension strategy instruction on developing readers. Webster has a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in Primary Education from the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT). He was a student from the first cohort of students enrolled in the programme. He also holds a Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Health Promotion with Distinction from the University of the West Indies (U.W.I.), St. Augustine. He is presently a post-graduate student at the UTT completing his Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Education.

The Effect of Explicit Comprehension Strategy Instruction on Reading Comprehension of Male Readers at the Primary School level in Trinidad

Literacy research suggests that boys generally underperform academically when compared to their female counterparts (NAEP, 2010), including in specific areas such as literacy achievement (NLT, 2012). Furthermore, empirical data link the struggles boys encounter in literacy to disruptive classroom behaviour (Alloway et al., 2002). This sometimes contributes to school violence as boys become disengaged from learning activities that depend on reading proficiency. Explicit comprehension strategy instruction (ECSI) has been suggested to be effective in improving reading comprehension of students in other educational jurisdictions (Tiruneh, 2014). This presentation shares results from a larger study I conducted that sought to determine the effect of ECSI on reading comprehension of readers in the Trinidad context. This could be important to address the disruptive behaviours of boys at the primary school level. The mixed-methods study utilized a repeated measure fixed-factor design. One hundred and sixty-eight students from two schools in one Education District participated. Four classes were randomly assigned to experimental and controlled groups. Experimental groups were taught using ECSI while controlled groups were taught using Traditional Comprehension Instruction (TCI). An oral reading fluency (ORF) assessment was used to determine the reading proficiency of students. A pre-test and post-test design was used with a six-week intervention. Repeated-measure ANOVA was used to determine significant factor interactions. Descriptive statistics were also used to compare groups. Three significant factor interactions were observed. ECSI improved comprehension score means of

developing readers ($M=+0.32$) while those with TCI ($M= - 0.25$) fell. More specifically, male developing readers were found to respond more favourably ($M= +0.85$) to ECSI than their female counterparts ($M= -0.07$). ECSI has a positive effect on the reading comprehension of male readers. The implications of this study can inform classroom instructional practices to engage males in literacy learning which may ultimately reduce incidents of male disruptive behaviours in classrooms.



***Sharon Pajotte** has served in the field of education for the past 30 years and is currently a senior instructor at the University of Trinidad and Tobago (CEP). She is a PhD candidate, and her research interest is in the area of ‘teacher mathematics efficacy’. Her passion for teaching, alongside her quest for advancing quality and excellence in education, resonates as she inspires her students to continually strive to be ‘the best teacher’ that they can be. Her mantra: ‘failure is not an option.’ Ms Pajotte is also a founding member of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Teacher Educators.*



***Cheryl M. Bowrin, B.A., M.Ed.**, is a Senior Instructor (Curriculum Studies, Teaching of Primary Social Studies, Research Methods, Educational Foundations and Practical Teaching) at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. She has taught at all levels of the education system of Trinidad and Tobago for the past 28 years, and also delivered courses to the Bachelor of Education students at the School of Education, UWI (St Augustine, and Open Campus) and in St Vincent. At present, she is completing a Ph.D. in Education (Walden University) with focus on the issue of Teacher Professionalism in Trinidad and Tobago. Her personal credo is that "education makes the difference" in the lives of individuals.*

Whose Safety and at what Expense? Teacher Educators’ Perceptions of Safety in the Digital Environment

Navigating the digital learning environment as part of the new normal is not without its challenges. Teacher educators and students have been exposed to vulnerabilities and threats that compromise their mental and emotional stability. This ‘lack of safety’ in the online teaching-learning environment has resulted in the adoption of a more ‘cautioned, measured approach’ and raises concerns about instructional quality and the learning climate fostered. Notwithstanding, institutions of higher education have typically sought to establish and maintain positive learning climates which are endorsed in their management policies and procedures. Such environments are described as equitable, safe, friendly, caring, supportive, nurturing and mutually respectful and tend to focus on students’ well-being. Numerous studies were conducted in an attempt to understand students’ experiences in the digital learning environment. However, little is known about its influence on faculty and how they have responded to critical experiences in this context. This study seeks to understand teacher educators’ perceptions of the influence of the online

experience on their mental and emotional security, and the implications for the quality of instruction and learning climate fostered. The key research question to be addressed by the study is ‘How do faculty members perceive their sense of safety within the digital learning environment?’ The study was conducted using a qualitative case study design involving the faculty of one teacher education institution. Participants were selected using purposive sampling and informal interviews were used to collect data. The data were analysed to extract codes and themes and to establish patterns that reflect faculty’s perceptions of the influence of online learning on their mental and emotional security. The outcomes of this study have the potential to provide data-driven evidence to stakeholders in higher education institutions about the need to ensure the safety of both faculty and students.



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Violence in the Lives of Secondary School Students in Trinidad

Through schooling, children and youth are provided with formal and informal learning opportunities to gain awareness and understanding of themselves, societies, relationships with others and the environment. They learn to discover ways in which they can contribute to the development of society and even the world. Across Trinidad and Tobago, the existence of violence in the lives of children and youth has been highlighted from time to time by local mainstream media. Such violence experienced within and outside of school may threaten students' well-being, cause them to become cognitively and emotionally disengaged from learning and rob them of their right to high quality education. Systematic and empirical findings highlighting the prevalence of

such violence in local settings remain largely unavailable and unknown. This paper reports empirical findings on multiple dimensions of violence that secondary school students experience across Trinidad. The findings emerge from the administration of the Juvenile Violence Questionnaire during October 2019 to March 2020, a broader multi-perspectival, mixed methods study on education and youth well-being in the Americas. The data pertain to a sample of 407 students aged 11-17 years attending 14 secondary schools in Trinidad. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS. The findings point to secondary students experiencing conventional crime ($p=0.95$, 95% CI: 0.92 – 0.97); child maltreatment ($p=0.59$, 95% CI: 0.55 – 0.64); victimization from their peers and/or siblings ($p=0.85$, 95% CI: 0.81 – 0.88); sexual victimization ($p=0.29$, 95% CI: 0.24 – 0.33) and indirect victimization having witnessed violence ($p=0.85$, 95% CI: 0.81 – 0.89).

These findings permit further analyses of variations in students' violent victimization according to socio-demographic characteristics and other related school-based, familial and community experiences. Our findings have utility for personnel with interests in creating and sustaining child-friendly schools



Dr Sabeerah Abdul-Majied is a Lecturer and Course Coordinator of the Bachelor of Education Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme at The University of the West Indies (UWI) St. Augustine. She has over 30 years teaching experience mainly at the primary and university levels. Her expertise is in Early Childhood Teacher Education specialising in Curriculum planning and development. Her research interests, conference presentations and publications focus on Children's Social and Emotional Development, Data Driven Decision making, STEM, and Early Childhood Teacher Professional development. She is the President of The UWI Early Childhood Caravan.

The hidden curriculum in early childhood education: Snack time bullying and teacher responses

Behaviours are classified as bullying in early childhood when young children engage in aggressive actions that for example exclude their peers from groups and games or call them derogatory names (Arseneault et al., 2006). Victims of bullying can suffer physical and psychological distress. An important understanding when working with young children is that early childhood educators should maintain positive and supportive relationships and interactions for teaching excellence and to create a caring learning community (NAEYC, 2019). Oftentimes teachers may not recognise bullying because it usually takes place out of their sight. This information is however important for teaching effectiveness as the formal curriculum occurs together with the hidden curriculum. This ethnographic case study is part of a larger study of children's social and emotional learning, which explored "snack time" to understand what type of bullying behaviours, if any, occurred among six-year-old primary school learners. Over a twelve-month period, six children at three

primary schools in Trinidad and their two teachers, were the participants. The research questions were: What are the acts of bullying (if any) which occur among six-year-old primary school students during snack time? And: How do teachers respond to acts of bullying brought to their attention? Findings were that bullying occurred and the most common theme was “Confiscating snacks from a peer”. The other themes were “Using Peers as substitutes” to take the rap for snacks they did not eat; “Extorting services for snacks” and “Using a Peer as a sentry” to guard a snack. Teacher behaviours were indifference or insensitivity to the situation. The study concluded that teachers need professional development to manage bullying and victimization and to develop children’s social and emotional competence.



***Dr Rowena Kalloo** has been an educator for over 30 years, beginning her career as an Integrated Science Teacher at a Senior Comprehensive. She has worked as a popular Science Educator at Niherst, and as a teacher educator at the Corinth and Valsayn Teachers’ colleges. She held the post of Assistant Professor of Education at University of Trinidad and Tobago, where she facilitated the launching of the B. Ed programme. She now holds the post of Lecturer in Education (Biology) at the University of the West Indies in St Augustine. Her special interests are science education, STEM, environmental science and conservation, innovative classroom practice, gender, and peace-building discipline.*



*An educator for the past 36 years, **Joann Neaves** is now a Senior Instructor at The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT). She is presently pursuing a PhD in Curriculum Studies in the area of Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education. Exposure to various aspects of the Education System of Trinidad and Tobago include primary school teacher, early childhood facilitator and teacher educator. She believes that this vocation is her gift from God as her passion for making a difference in the lives of students has never waned. Her mantra is: Education – the never-ending journey that leads to life’s fulfilment.*

An Investigation of the Experiences and Perceptions of Corporal Punishment among 12 Student Teachers (in-service elementary) of Trinidad and Tobago

Corporal punishment is a post-colonial legacy widely accepted as a disciplinary method throughout the Caribbean. The research on corporal punishment has shown that it can have

negative effects on children's psychological, physical and emotional development. In 2001 the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education (MOETT) signalled to the educational community that corporal punishment should be abolished as a method of discipline from all schools in Trinidad and Tobago. The prohibition became law in 2015. Corporal Punishment is the antithesis of student-centred pedagogies which have been formally introduced at teacher education institutions. However, there is credible evidence of resistance to ending corporal punishment in primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago. Such evidence raises questions on the effectiveness of present programmes of teacher education. Regardless, there is sparse research on the prevalence, and push factors promoting the continued use of corporal punishment in classrooms. In response to this gap in knowledge, an exploratory mixed-methods study has been initiated to investigate the experiences of corporal punishment among a small sample of in-service B. Ed teacher trainees. A 23-item researcher-developed questionnaire as well as interviews elicited teachers' beliefs, perceptions, experiences, and practice of corporal punishment. Data collected were analysed using simple descriptive statistics, as well as thematic analyses of open-ended responses and interviews. Preliminary questionnaire data from a sample of 13 participants revealed they were all aware of alternative methods of discipline. A minority of teachers believed that corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline. Teachers' responses also suggested that programmes can be made more robust by targeting specific classroom behaviours as well as teacher belief systems. This early data implies the need for increased problem-solving skills to successfully negotiate the complexity of classroom discipline. The results of this pilot provide feedback that supports the feasibility of applying the questionnaire to a larger sample from which statistically significant data can be obtained.



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*Accounting for the Dynamics of Bullying on Social Media among Secondary School Students:
Preliminary Insights from Sample Survey Data from Schools in Trinidad*

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, children attending secondary schools in Trinidad have been victims of violence in numerous public settings. Whether in the home, community or in school settings, such violence has often been manifested vicariously on different social media platforms. Such knowledge is necessary to inform the work of teacher educators and other allied professionals who seek solutions to the ills associated with bullying on social media platforms. This paper seeks to examine the socio-demographic and other related societal factors that are associated with two risks, that of being a victim and that of being a perpetrator of social media bullying among children attending secondary schools. Between October 2019 and March 2020, data were obtained from two sample surveys targeting 407 students aged 11-17 years attending public secondary schools in Trinidad. Under the auspices of the Rights for Children and Youth Partnership (RCYP) Project, the Use of Social Media and ICT Questionnaire and an adaptation of the popularized Juvenile Violence Questionnaire permitted the merging of the respective sample data. Based on preliminary results, 16.5% (95% CI: 13%, 20%) of secondary school students were bullied on social media. In contrast, 8.8% (95% CI: 6%, 12%) displayed bullying behaviour. The survey data also provide evidence indicating that students had higher risks of ever being bullied or ever displaying bullying behaviour if they reported ever sharing videos or photos with violent content on social media. Age differences were observed to the risk of ever being bullied while ethnicity was observed to be linked to the risk of displaying bullying behaviour. These preliminary findings inform useful localized explanations for stakeholders who have interests in counteracting the harmful effects of social media bullying.