



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



The Sixteenth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity on Male Academic Performance in Public Primary and Secondary Schools

AUGUST 7, 2020

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Ministry of Education's Response to the Recommendations made in the Sixteenth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity on Male Academic Performance in Public Primary and Secondary Schools

Recommendation	RESPONSE
4.25. The Committee concurs with the recommendation of the UWI that a signature pedagogy be created by the MOE. The Committee recommends that this pedagogy should reinforce language and numeracy across the curriculum.	The Ministry of Education notes this recommendation and will consider the establishment of a working committee consisting of all stakeholders to develop a policy and implementation strategy to address the issue of male underachievement. Underpinning this strategy will be the understanding that there are factors within and outside the school environment that impact male academic performance in public primary and secondary schools. Additionally, in heterogeneous jurisdictions such as Trinidad and Tobago, the strategy will need to be multifaceted.
4.26. Notwithstanding that there are SSSD interventions to support male students (APPENDIX XIII), the Committee recommends that the MOE establish additional mentoring programmes within schools in order to connect male students with male role models within their communities and to foster a greater level of connection between males and the school environment.	The Ministry of Education will consider the implementation of this recommendation. The Student Support Services Division of the Ministry will continue to offer mentoring opportunities through community initiatives under its Parenting in Education programme.
4.27. The Committee agrees with the following stakeholder recommendations: • The recommendation of TTUTA that teaching should be promoted as a viable career option to males; and • The recommendation of the UWI-ROYTEC for an enhanced MOE and Service Commissions Department (SCD) marketing strategy for teacher trainees:	The Ministry of Education notes this recommendation and has begun to research this area to ascertain the extent to which persons pursue teaching as a viable career option at the tertiary level and their subsequent entry into the education system.

Ministry of Education's Response to the Recommendations made in the Sixteenth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity on Male Academic Performance in Public Primary and Secondary Schools

Recommendation	RESPONSE
○ to foster greater understanding and awareness of the teaching profession; and ○ To emphasise the strength of the profession in a manner that is gender blind.	
4.28. In spite of the MOE's efforts to mitigate gender stereotyping through teacher training, the Committee recommends that additional measures are taken to eliminate gendered stereotypes.	The Ministry of Education will continue its efforts to address gender stereotyping through teacher training and make the necessary changes at the level of the curriculum and pedagogy as individuals and students progress through the education system.
4.29. The Committee recommends that the MOE in conjunction with the MSDFS and other key stakeholders develop in-school programmes for the provision of early intervention strategies to recognise and treat with students facing challenges within the home/community environment such as poverty and abuse.	The Ministry of Education, through the Student Support Services Division will continue to collaborate with MSDFS, the Trinidad and Tobago National Council of Parent Teacher Associations Inc. and Parent Teacher Associations at the school level. The Student Support Services Division of the Ministry will continue to provide interventions as follows: • targeted intervention: an early intervention approach for students who have recently manifested certain "at risk" behaviours; if necessary, further assistance is provided through School Social Workers, Guidance Officers and Psychologists; • universal intervention: a preventative approach to psychoeducational intervention at the whole school and whole class level.

Ministry of Education's Response to the Recommendations made in the Sixteenth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity on Male Academic Performance in Public Primary and Secondary Schools

Recommendation	RESPONSE
4.30. The Committee recommends that the MOE consider the implementation of additional measures to facilitate dialogue between the school administration and parents such as: • Parenting programmes that incorporate counselling sessions for both students and parents to address poor parenting skills or treat with challenging issues within the home environment; and • Facilitation of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Meetings outside of standard work hours to accommodate increased parent participation.	The Student Support Services Division of the Ministry will continue to provide services to parents through the Parenting in Education programme. The programme is facilitated through psychoeducational programmes, workshops, Support Groups and Parent Teacher Associations meetings. If conflicts exist between parents and children, services are provided to both parties. Parenting Programmes are often conducted outside of work hours and sometimes on weekends to facilitate working parents. These interventions tend to include the family unit in the conduct of assessments, individual and group counselling, family interventions, home visit, academic and career counselling, consultation, networking and referrals for further specialised care, where necessary.
4.31. The Committee recommends that the MOE prioritise research (inclusive of ethnographic studies) into the factors surrounding male academic under-achievement in collaboration with tertiary education institutions. The Committee also proposes that the MOE collaborate with other Caribbean jurisdictions to research the effectiveness of their gender-based interventions.	As indicated in the Education Policy Paper (White Paper) 2017-2022, the Ministry of Education is committed to the conduct of research to inform policy development to further the goal of effective governance and administration of the education system. In this regard, the Ministry notes the recommendation of the Committee and will prioritise research into the disparity between male and female achievement. The Ministry will therefore continue dialogue with tertiary learning institutions to facilitate collaboration on research and the execution of its overall research agenda.