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**DEVELOPING SOCIAL POLICY FOR YOUTH
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO YOUNG MEN
IN SAINT LUCIA**

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DEVELOPING SOCIAL POLICY FOR YOUTH, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO YOUNG MEN IN SAINT LUCIA

At the request of the Government of Saint Lucia, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean/Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (ECLAC/CDCC) secretariat undertook a mission to Saint Lucia on 25–26 June 2001, to meet with a cross-section of representatives of governmental and non-governmental agencies and engaged in discussions on possible policy interventions to address the apparent social alienation of some sectors of the youth population and, in particular, male youth in Saint Lucia. The Government of Saint Lucia is concerned to describe accurately and fully the situation of young people in Saint Lucia and to formulate an integrated policy response to optimise the opportunities for development for all sectors of the Saint Lucian youth population.

Of particular concern to policy makers is the underachievement of boys and young men within the educational sector. Boys are more likely to fail, to develop behavioural problems, to experience isolation and rejection, and to drop out from the school system without certification or labour force skills. Saint Lucia, like the rest of the Caribbean, has witnessed decreasing levels of attendance and achievement of boys within the education system. The statistics show that despite relative equality in the enrolment of boys and girls at the outset of primary school education, significant drop-out rates occur between primary and secondary school levels (see Table 13). At tertiary level this is also obvious. As early as 1992/1993, only 39 per cent of those enrolled at tertiary level were males¹. This trend has continued in the 1990s.

In January 2000, the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports undertook a study on “The Learning Needs of Male Students in Saint Lucia’s School System.” This documented that male underachievement was apparent from Grade II, and was most marked for boys from rural locations. This suggests strongly that apart from gender variables, economic and social factors are also determinative of achievement within the education sector and, therefore, there is the need to be cautious about sweeping generalisation of male underperformance within the education sector.

¹ Bailey, Barbara: Women’s Education: The Caribbean Situation. Paper prepared for CARICOM/UNIFEM/ECLAC Caribbean Subregional Ministerial Conference in preparation for the Seventh Session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean. (Unpublished). 1997

Explanations offered for male underachievement in education included:

- (a) Teacher-related factors, such as poor teaching methods;
- (b) Student attitude to schooling;
- (c) Socialisation patterns both within the home and the school which emphasise greater supervision of girls; and
- (d) Inability of parents to assist or support students.

The study also pointed to poverty-related factors such as inadequate nutrition and the inability to meet transportation costs as impediments to full participation in schooling.

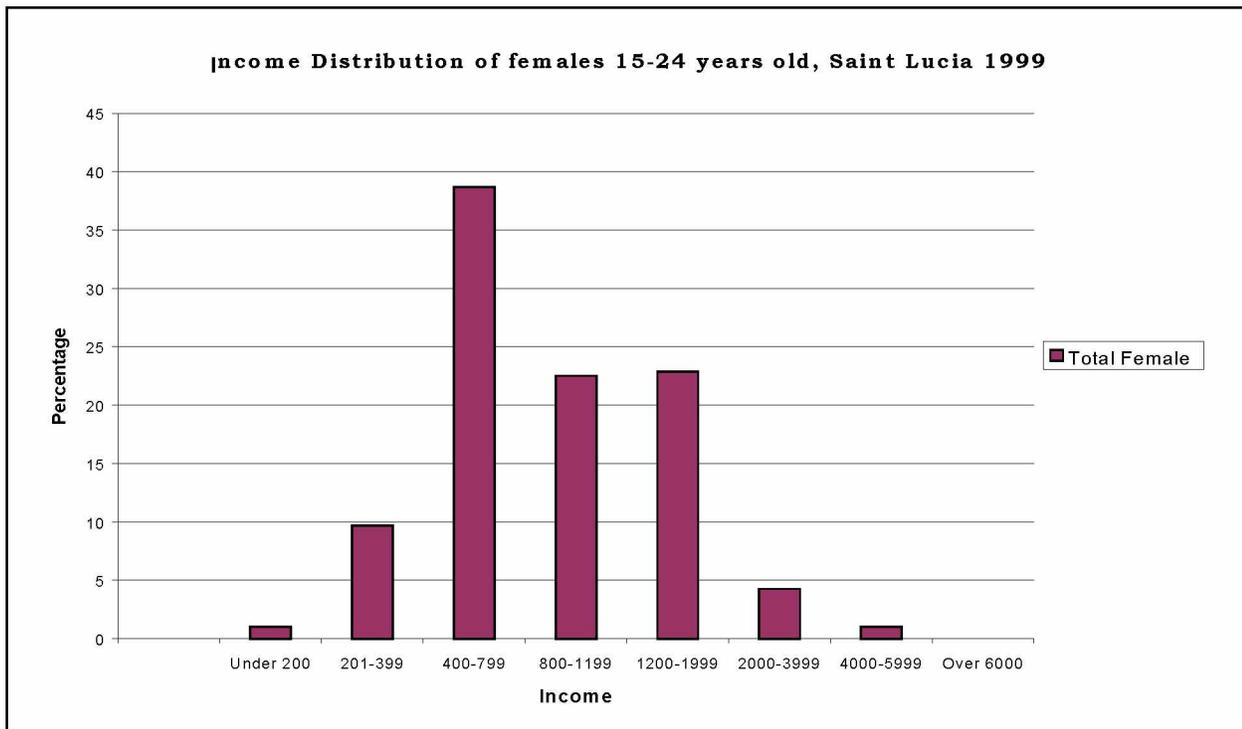
Similarly, a World Bank-commissioned investigation into male underachievement in Dominica, Grenada and Saint Lucia reported that females performed better than males on the Minimum Standards Test as well as on the Common Entrance Examination. This difference was also observable in the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) results, where girls did better in a cross-section of subjects including English and Mathematics.

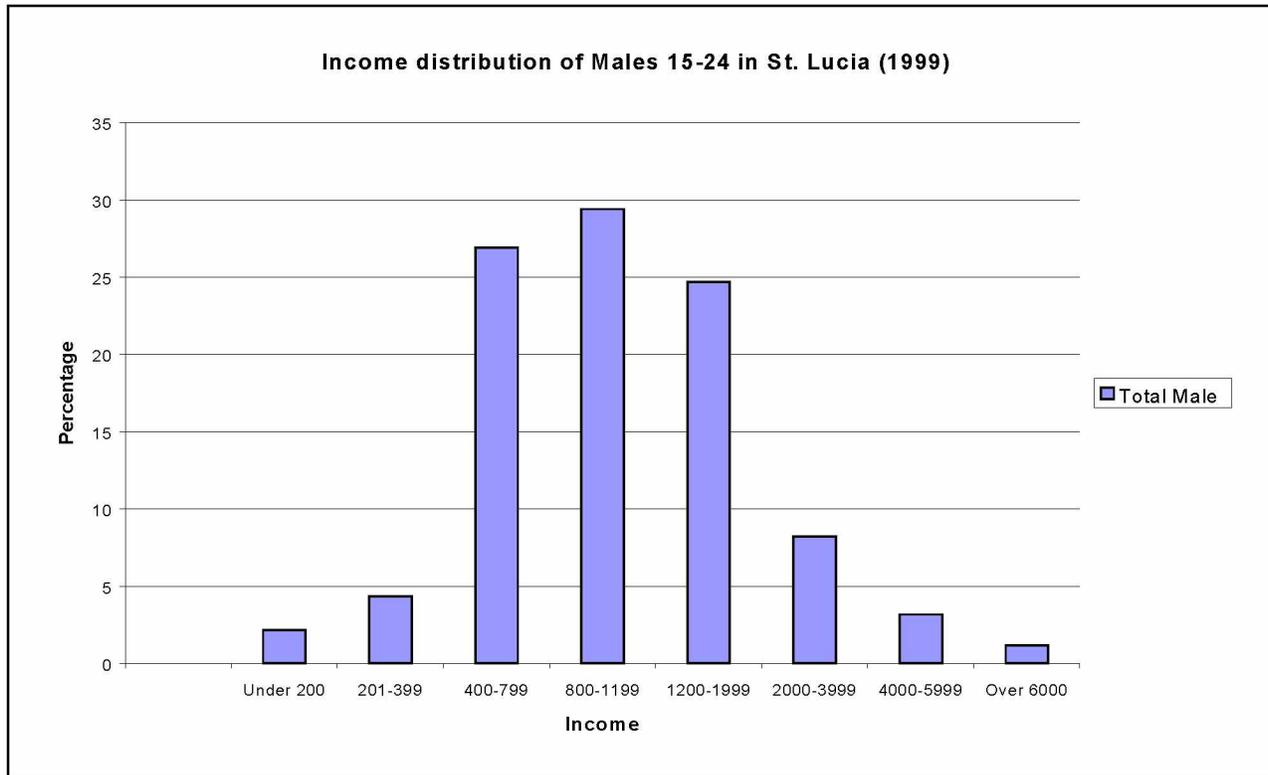
Significant for policy makers, however, is the finding that the performance of students, both male and female, was far superior for those attending single-sex schools as opposed to coeducational institutions. It is the case that the higher achievers in the common entrance examination gain entry to the single sex schools. Whether the difference in attainment between those attending coeducational and single sex schools is correlated to the sex composition of the schools as opposed to higher academic levels of the student population within the single sex schools is not fully explored.

Notwithstanding the higher drop-out rates of boys from the formal school system, the employment figures show that there are greater levels of unemployment for young women than for young men. Higher female unemployment rates is a trend discernible across the labour force and for the period July-December 1999, for example, 13.5 per cent of the male labour force were unemployed as opposed to 18.2 per cent of the female labour force. Within the age group 15-24 in 1999 some 6340 young men were categorised as unemployed as against 7090 young women in the same age group.

Traditional gender-related patterns of occupational activity still exist within the Saint Lucian labour force even for those in the 15 to 24-age cohort. Male employed youth are to be found in craft (25 per cent), agriculture (20 per cent) and elementary professions (18 per cent). On the other hand, young women predominate in the white collar or in the service sectors of the economy as clerks (27 per cent) or sales and service workers (23 per cent). Significant numbers of young women are also to be found in agriculture (20 per cent) and in the industrial sector as machine operators (16 per cent).

An examination of the occupational structure by sex suggests that women tend to predominate in the lowest paid sectors of the economy. This is supported by income distribution data available from the Labour Force Survey of 1999 conducted by the Central Statistical Office. For the youth between 15-24 who responded to the question, some 49 per cent of all females worked for an income of under EC\$799. The comparable figure for males was 32 per cent. Fifty-four per cent of males worked for monthly incomes of between EC\$800-1999 as opposed to 47 per cent for females.





Essential to explaining and responding to high drop-out rates from the secondary school levels, is an examination of labour and income opportunities and the ways in which these interact with family economic situations and gender factors to push youth out of the education system. There are indications that the more readily available opportunities in the labour market for young men (as craft and agricultural workers) are not dependent on educational certification and may act as disincentives against remaining in school. This push away from education will be felt even more keenly for those whose family and household situations are circumscribed by poverty. Where the push factors are strong and the pull factors are weak because of an unresponsive and insensitive school environment, high drop-out rates may be expected. Why boys feel these push factors more acutely than girls requires explanation.

A more complete understanding of the relationships between the variables of gender and socio-economic variables is necessary. The available statistics also point to the need for an evaluation of the fit between the educational sector and the needs of the labour market.

The expression of social alienation through crime and violence on the part of young men also concerns policy makers. The National Youth Survey conducted in 1999 documents that male youth are the key perpetrators of

crime in Saint Lucia.² In relation to juvenile offenders, that study also showed that the crimes committed included several categories of crimes against property, a fact indicative of socio-economic distress and poverty. Other categories of crime included drug use and drug possession and crimes against the person (wounding and assault).

The Department of Youth and Sports conducted a study of youth habituating selected street blocks to ascertain not only the concerns of young males but also their views on possible responses by government to address their problems. Young men complained of being unmotivated; of lack of access to skills training; of unemployment; and of the ineffectiveness of the Youth and Sports Council in addressing concerns of young males in the country. Other grievances included a perception of discrimination against Rastafarianism, police harassment and the dislocation and abandonment of children as a result of parental migration.

Lack of parental guidance, involvement of young men in groups on street blocks, unemployment and peer pressures³ were seen by the youth who participated in the survey as the significant contributing factors to the participation of their peers in criminal activity and deviant behaviour generally.

Very few of the youth population interviewed had used drugs or alcohol. Ninety-six per cent had never used cocaine and 76.5 per cent had never used marijuana. Far more had consumed alcohol, though only infrequently. In contrast, 51 per cent knew persons close to them who were alcoholics, 30.6 per cent knew persons addicted to other drugs and 19.4 per cent had close friends who were engaged in criminal activity. A further 15.2 per cent of the youth sampled knew of persons who were engaged in prostitution.⁴

These statistics suggest that significant numbers of youth live in environments which expose and, therefore, make them vulnerable to patterns of behaviour which are threatening to emotional stability and personal development.

Clearly normative guidance through appropriate socialisation practices and through role modelling is critical to the avoidance of all forms of potentially negative risk-taking behaviours. This is so in relation to drug use and also in relation to sexual activity. Since the earliest reported cases in 1982, the incidence of HIV/AIDS has escalated in the Caribbean subregion. Table 4 shows that in the entire region, the number of young people afflicted with HIV/AIDS has risen sharply, and particularly so among young women. For

² Department of Youth and Sports, Government of Saint Lucia: National Youth Survey. December 1999.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., page 22-24

Saint Lucia, it is reported in the 1999 National Youth Survey that 92 per cent of all teenagers reported infected with HIV are girls between the ages of 15 to 19.⁵

The survey speculates that either teenage boys are not being detected by the epidemiological system or that teenage girls are probably being infected through sexual activity with older men. The latter would be consistent with findings elsewhere in the Caribbean and throws up very troubling issues of child abuse and of unequal and exploitative transactional sexual relationships between adolescent females and mature men.

Certainly the available statistics on youth in the areas of education, employment and health support the call for a more holistic policy and programmatic response to youth and, in particular, to young men. Educational attainment (whether manifested in certification or in the inculcation of life skills) not only determines in large measure future prospects in the labour market, but also the commitment of young people to their society. Experiences of structural inequalities in opportunities (whatever their bases) are often accompanied by latent hostility which finds expression in a range of dysfunctional behaviour, from overt acts of aggression to passivity and non-involvement.

However, it is also important that whilst the challenges are clearly drawn, acknowledgement is made that many youth take advantage of the opportunities flowing from State commitment to education and to community welfare. Most youth seek gainful employment and participate productively in national life through sporting and cultural networks. This should be affirmed not only because it brings perspective to the dimensions of the challenges faced but because it also will point to the areas of successful interventions.

The challenge is to identify and address the specific vulnerabilities of certain sectors of youth and to articulate clear policy goals which are consonant with the problems identified.

Issues arising from the consultations

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat representatives met over a two-day period with teachers, ministry officials, representatives of youth and sports organizations and with a representative of the National Youth Council.

Many issues were identified in the consultations. These included:

(a) A perception that young men did not want to take part in the development process;

⁵ Ibid; page 34

- (b) Lack of interest in completing formal education leading to very high drop-out rates from the school system, particularly for boys;
- (c) Rising levels of involvement of male youth in criminal activity and violence;
- (d) Increased rates of drug abuse especially among boys; and
- (e) Breakdown of social systems and the erosion of support systems.

However, throughout these meetings three dominant themes emerged: the underachievement of boys in the school system; the lack of economic opportunity for young people; and changing patterns of socialisation.

1. Education

There was general agreement that the education system was not responsive to the developmental needs of contemporary Saint Lucia, particularly in the context of the decline of the banana industry and the increased competitiveness of the market as a consequence of the globalisation trends. It was also accepted that economic class differences determined to some extent achievement within the school system. Many students come from families without the economic resources to provide for transportation and adequate levels of nutrition.

Even taking this factor into account, the meetings revealed a widespread concern to understand and address the diminishing participation and achievement of boys within the formal education setting.

Many factors were advanced for the trend of declining male enrolment and increasing levels of drop outs from the school system:

(a) Inadequate or ineffectual educational system

The discussants spoke of a widespread sense among male youth that educational attainment did not translate readily into productive and profitable economic activity. This fed disillusionment and cynicism and contributed to the susceptibility of some youth the culture of drug use and commerce. Deviant and sub-culture involvement was, among certain sections of the youth community, associated with material advancement, which was critical to self-esteem, particularly among boys.

Within the education system the predominant emphasis on academic attainment was not encouraging of all-round personal development and did not

strengthen character or the self-confidence of youth who were not academic achievers. Allied to the inability of the traditional school system to tap into creativities and talents of the range of student population was its unwillingness to encourage individuality. The classroom, therefore, was not as interesting or as stimulating as it could be. In this regard, the school system was at a disadvantage in the competition with more dynamic modes of communication, such as the television, for the attention of young people.

Resource shortcomings in the educational system were also identified as having a negative impact on young men. In particular, it was argued that when many young males dropped out of school after failing the common entrance examination, they had no other place to go while young women had the option of attendance at vocational schools.

(b) Inadequate levels of parental involvement

Several facets of inadequate parental involvement were discussed. It was thought that a significant proportion of parents lacked the capacity to academically supervise their children. Many children came from economically deprived female-headed households, where the adult female was single. The overwhelming responsibility to financially maintain such households forced many mothers into assuming more than one job leaving them with little time, energy or inclination to monitor the activities of their children. Special reference was made to those mothers who were employed in the hotel industry. Long and demanding shifts necessarily reduced the time spent with their children.

The lack of capacity to supervise was also attributed to limited educational attainment on the part of parents, particularly those from rural communities.

It was thought that levels of supervision and control were also gender-determined. Teachers considered that there were differences in the levels of supervision provided by parents to girls as against boys. While girls were more strictly disciplined, supervised and controlled, boys were left to their own devices to a greater extent.

Increasingly, guidance counsellors have been called upon to provide solutions where parents felt unable to cope with the educational and developmental challenges presented by their children. In this regard, there was some discussion that parents may too readily relinquish responsibility for the care and discipline of their children and particularly for the boys.

(c) Teacher attitudes

Gender-based differences in teacher-pupil interactions occupied much of the discussion among the teachers, with a general agreement that whether or not teachers were conscious of their attitudes, they, like parents, expected and therefore enforced a more rigorous and more careful approach to school work on the part of girls. This expectation of consistent good conduct also meant that girls might be more severely punished than boys. The corollary to this was that boys who were stereotyped as difficult might not be given the level of attention required to motivate achievement.

Teachers also made other interesting observations about gendered interactions in the classroom. In attempting to investigate his own behaviour towards girls and boys in his class, one teacher's self-analysis revealed that he gave more attention to the girls – by answering their questions and going to their desk to help them - than he did to the boys. When a boy asked a question, the teacher said that he was more prone to ask the male student to figure it out unassisted. It was thought that the male teachers treated male students as if the students were supposed to know everything. On the other hand, female teachers who were inspired by the campaign of gender equality tended to give preferential treatment to the female students.

These observations on teacher/student interactions are consistent with other educational research, which found that school emphasis on obedience, conformity and passive learning (reading and listening) favours and reinforces the behaviour of girls, who conform to the traditional female stereotype (passive, more obedient) rather than boys who conformed to the traditional male stereotype (aggressive, active, and independent). For many boys this created conflict between their gender role and their role as a student, leading, for some, to dissatisfaction, lower achievement and poor self-esteem.

(d) Absence of male role models

Like the study conducted by the Ministry of Education, the discussants explored the impact of a predominantly female teacher body on the motivation levels of boys. It was reported that currently three out of every four teachers were female. There was no consensus, however, that the gender of the teacher impacted on receptivity to learning on the part of boys.

Despite this, some persons considered that where such a large percentage of boys came from female-headed households, it was important for boys to interact with male teachers in order to get a vision of positive, responsible and caring masculinity.

2. Lack of economic opportunities

Employment and economic opportunities for youth are determined by the structure of the economy, which is heavily dependent on the banana and tourism industries. The entry into the labour force for many young people, particularly from the rural areas, has been through the banana industry as unskilled labourers. As such, while the contraction of this industry had negatively affected the Saint Lucian economy, as a whole, for youth it has represented a withdrawal of the first employment opportunity.

While a thriving banana industry was an important component of national economic well-being and a point of employment generation, participation in the industry at early ages was not viewed as unequivocally positive for youth development. Attention was drawn to family demand for the labour input of many school age children during peak harvesting periods as being responsible for periodic interruptions in attendance throughout the school life of many rural students. Paradoxically, what was in the interest of the family was in conflict with the educational needs of many young people in so far as the educational sector had not been able to take account of and respond to the reality of the lives of rural families.

Beyond the fallout of the decline in the banana industry, the discussions also looked at the limitations of the schooling system to prepare young people for more diverse career/job choices, given its continued emphasis on academics. A more expansive technical and vocational training programme was advocated.

3. Socialisation trends

Many reported that notwithstanding the movement for gender equality, a different socialisation pattern continued to exist for boys and girls, with more parental supervision for girls than there was for boys. Additionally, the absence of men as active participants in parenting was discussed in relation to its impact, not only on appropriate role modelling for boys, but also from the point of view of the need to impart in boys a sense of family values and responsibility.

Unsupervised boys were more likely than girls to wander onto community blocks, sites which could encourage negative risk-taking behaviour and deviance. The time of young women, on the other hand, was absorbed in meeting family expectations for the care of younger siblings and the household, endeavours which built life skills, self-esteem and a sense of responsibility.

The discussants agreed that a simplistic correlation between women working outside the home and youth problems should be resisted since women in the Caribbean have always participated in the labour force. On the other

hand fragmentation of kinship and community networks of support for families was discussed. Where parents and, more specifically, mothers were engaged in multiple economic activity to support their children, there was a greater need for support to families. Yet a host of factors, such as migration and participation in the formal labour force, have led to the isolation of households and weakened family ties and, therefore, expectations of assistance. In this context, many children remained unsupervised at the end of the school day awaiting the arrival of their parent(s) from work.

A point highlighted in the discussions was that boys were more interested in excelling in sports than they were in academics since this was a more certain source of peer appreciation and respect. Other issues raised included boys' lack of communication skills, low self-esteem and lack of dispute resolution skills. These issues were seen as being connected to limitations/weakness in socialisation and guidance patterns.

The symbolic meaning of increasing levels of participation in the Rastafarian religion and culture was also addressed. Some considered that this was a form of escape from dominant societal values and social structures. It was generally agreed that this was an area which demanded further study.

Recommendations

A number of specific recommendations were made with respect to education. These included the following:

(a) A revision of the curriculum to make it more flexible to fit the changing global economy and to impart life skills, critical thinking and problem-solving;

(b) The educational system needed to be more technically oriented and should offer greater technical/vocational opportunities to young males;

(c) Teacher training to increase the understanding of the social environments of their students and how their behaviours are influenced by family and social structures;

(d) Greater parental involvement in the academic life of children to lower incidences of drop-out rates and truancy;

(e) The introduction of supporting measures, such as school feeding programmes especially in secondary schools where they did not presently exist; and

(f) Teachers should have a greater interaction with their students; especially the male students who traditionally felt most deprived of attention.

Conclusion

During the discussions a consensus emerged that both boys and girls in Saint Lucia were underperforming and that the education system was not as nurturing of the all-round development of youth as it could be. While there was widespread acknowledgement that boys were experiencing greater levels of educational underachievement, the discussants agreed that to express this as male marginalisation would be inaccurate. Girls have made considerable progress within the formal school sector. However reservations were expressed as to whether this progress had translated into greater economic opportunity for the cross-section of women in Saint Lucia. Illustrative of this is the fact that despite uniformly higher levels of educational attainment, in every age cohort, including 15-24, there are more men in active employment than women.

The participants expressed the view that social alienation among young women may be manifested in other ways, ways which do not immediately and as dramatically impact on society in the same way as criminal activity or drug use among young males. In this context, reference was made to early sexual activity among girls and high levels of teenage pregnancy. In addition, the growing rates of HIV/AIDS among young women were viewed as indicative of a certain female vulnerability.

It was also accepted that underachievement of boys was a complex phenomenon, defying short-term solutions. It was suggested that the concept of social vulnerability might be useful to explore why more young men were susceptible to drug use and other forms of deviant behaviour than young women. What was it about the socio-economic and cultural structures that determined the differential life chances of boys and girls, young men and women?

The underachievement of boys was linked to an interplay of factors which required an integrated social policy response informed by rigorous empirical study. However, the discussions revealed concern that the development of policies for the youth population could be hampered by inadequate data and analysis of the gender and economic factors associated with youth problems.

The Way Forward

Underachievement by boys within the formal school system has been an issue of concern to many Caribbean societies. It does, in fact, appear to be a growing global phenomenon.

In the Caribbean a few investigative studies have been conducted to track and explain the shifts observable in school attendance and certification. While the trends cannot be denied, the meaning of these trends as they relate to consequences for equality of opportunity in the labour market has been challenged. In her study on the education sector, Dr. Barbara Bailey acknowledges that, quantitatively, girls have an advantage over boys in the education systems in the Caribbean. However she asserts that the pattern of curriculum participation is disadvantageous to girls and does not necessarily prepare them for the well-paying jobs in the labour market.

Approaching the issue from another angle, Odette Parry, in an important study entitled “In One Ear and Out the Other: Unmasking Masculinities in the Caribbean Classroom”⁶ explores the educational underachievement of the Caribbean through classroom observation and teachers' accounts of gender interaction. The paper examines the relationship between teacher expectations, Caribbean masculinities and male underachievement in Jamaica, Barbados and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The study reveals that boys associate academic work with an inferior effeminacy and this contributed towards “an ethos in which the academic/non-academic couplet becomes associated with a female/male division”. Parry asserts further that Caribbean masculinity which informs classroom responses is at variance with the requirements of the education system. In the Caribbean, cultural expectations of male behaviour are informed by an extremely hard, macho, masculine identity which is associated with maleness. The enactment of this male gender identity relegates many aspects of education to the female side of the gender identity and consequently educational efforts are devalued. While both boys and girls are image conscious, the image that is important to girls (sophistication, stylishness) is not detrimental to their education.

She further makes the point that the education systems themselves have a precarious relationship with the changing socio-economic and political climates of developing countries.

This work on male underachievement, starting off with the premise that gender relations are at the core of understanding boys' responses to the education system, has also led to critical work on the construction of masculinities. Indeed it has been suggested that the problem of boys' underachievement may serve as “a proxy for a variety of concerns about masculinity”,⁷ and it has been advanced that there are some basic ideas about masculinity which need to be understood in order to understand, in turn, the

⁶ Parry, O.: In One ear and Out the Other: Unmasking Masculinities in the Caribbean Classroom: Sociological Research Online, Vol. 1 No. 2 Website: www.socresonline.org.uk/1/2/2.html

⁷ Spencer, Melissa: Boys and Education: Mapping the Issues Website: www.manukau.ac.nz/SocSci/Conf/spencer.htm

issues in educating boys. In a review of work on common themes of masculinity in literature from Australia, Britain and the United States, West⁸ asserts that the following emerged:

- (a) Masculinity needs to be proved;
- (b) Boys appear to listen avidly for the signs of what society expects of them as they grow towards manhood;
- (c) Many boys feel that it is required to be tough; and
- (d) Boys are kept in place by nets of authority. Those nets were made up primarily of fathers, other men, police, schools, churches and members of the community. Where these nets of authority have been weakened, educational underachievement and deviant behaviour is exacerbated.

He suggests in the Australian context that changing the culture of masculinity in the school may open up some possibilities for changing boys' behaviour and performance.

The work done in Saint Lucia on educational issues in relation to boys makes a number of similar conclusions and recommendations. Many of the recommendations address behavioural modification not only of male students, but also of teachers and parents to make them more sensitive to the differential needs of boys. The reports also place great emphasis on educational reform.

Whilst there is no doubt that reform to the curriculum and to pedagogical approaches may be essential, an understanding of the socio-economic and gendered parameters of the problem needs to be deepened. In investigating the problem of educational underachievement of both boys and girls a number of questions have been suggested which bear repeating. These are:

- (a) Is educational underachievement an educational, economic or social problem or is it all of these?
- (b) Who is it a problem for, and why? and
- (c) What is the relevance of the economic, social and educational context in which this problem has emerged?⁹

⁸ Peter West: Boys' underachievement in school: Some persistent problems and some current research. In *Issues in Educational Research*, 9(1), 1999, 33-54. Website: www.education.curtin.edu.au/iier/iier9/west.

⁹ Spencer, Melissa: Boys and Education: Mapping the Issues Website: www.manukau.ac.nz/SocSci/Conf.spencer.htm

Youth in Saint Lucia are differentiated by a web of intersecting stratifications and situations, including socio-economic class, colour, language, gender, geographic location and family composition. The task is to understand the ways in which these variables interact to allow for or to impede achievement and personal development.

Recommendations

All participants agreed that while the two days of discussions was a useful starting point for the development of an integrated policy approach, a wider process of consultation would ensure meaningful participation of all stakeholders in the definition of the problems and articulation of the solutions.

The participants also suggested that any interventions in policy formulation should have a number of supporting components, including:

(a) The production of an analytical report on youths in Saint Lucia to strengthen the information base on the differential experience and needs of boys and young men and girls and young women, not only in education but also in the labour force and the family; and

(b) The development of guidelines for the elaboration of integrated and cross-sectoral policy framework and programmes for youth in Saint Lucia.

Programme components

Research

The participants urged the development of a research agenda which would focus on the following:

(a) The performance of single sex schools as opposed to coeducational schools;

(b) The effect of the sex of the teacher on student performance and attitudes;

(c) An analysis of the stage of the educational process at which boys start to drop out of school and an examination of why girls remain in school in spite of the fact that they have the same constraints as boys;

(d) Changing family forms and relations and the effect on youth development; and

(e) The culture of youth.

In addition, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat would suggest the need for a situational assessment of out-of-school youth, boys and girls. Such an analysis should also seek to identify the life goals of young persons, their attitudes and perceptions of authority and their measurements of success and failure. Some measurement of the extent of social integration should be included so as to explore feelings of inclusion and exclusion.

In light of the immediacy of the problem, the methodology selected to conduct the research would be critical. It is recommended that a highly participatory research methodology be adopted.

Consultation

Youth participation in policy formulation is important for ensuring access and benefit, the ability to influence and equitable outcomes. It is also a process through which young people gain some measure of control over their own environment. Following upon the participatory research methodology, an integrated youth policy should be the result of a highly consultative process in which youth have access to policy makers and can make an input into the development of both compensatory and transformatory policies.

Beyond ensuring the fullest participation of youth, the consultative process should ensure maximum collaboration among the widest cross-section of civil society organizations, including youth and sports groups, church-based organizations and developmental non-governmental organizations.

The consultation process should also impart skills in goal/target setting, monitoring and evaluation. It should seek to arrive at a social contract within communities and between the governmental institutions and the youth and their communities for achieving the goals established.

Policy and programme development

Notwithstanding some emphasis on the education sector, already the studies conducted in Saint Lucia on youth show the need for an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to youth development. There are some readily apparent issues which need to be addressed. These include:

- Education
- Employment
- Poverty
- Drug abuse
- Juvenile delinquency
- Effective participation of youth in the life of their communities and in decision-making.

Effective policy interventions should have long-term objectives, even while responding to immediate needs. The success of interventions will be determined by a clear identification of the sectors of youth for whom special efforts have to be made.

The Caribbean societies have it within their capacity to build a rich social capital due to the small, informal nature of the societies and a culture of extended families and associations. Certainly, many aspects of globalisation (as these affect cultural patterns and norms and economic activity) have had negative impacts on the social and economic structures of the subregion, reducing its resilience. If social capital refers to the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively, then networks need to be developed or strengthened through sustained action which draws youth into the defining solutions to the challenges of their development.

STATISTICAL PROFILE OF YOUTH IN SAINT LUCIA

Table 1
Youth population of Saint Lucia as a percentage of total population

Year	Youth	Youth Population (15-24 years)	Youth as a percentage of total population
1996	30591	147062	20.8
1997	31183	149666	20.8
1998	31520	151952	20.7
1999	31771	153703	20.7

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office.

Table 2
Population of young males as a percentage of total population

Year	Population of males and females in Saint Lucia			Percentage of young males in population as a % of total youth population
	Male	Female	Total	
1996	15233	15358	147062	10.4
1997	15549	15634	149666	10.4
1998	15734	15786	151952	10.3
1999	15869	15902	153703	10.3

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office

HEALTH STATISTICS

Figure 1

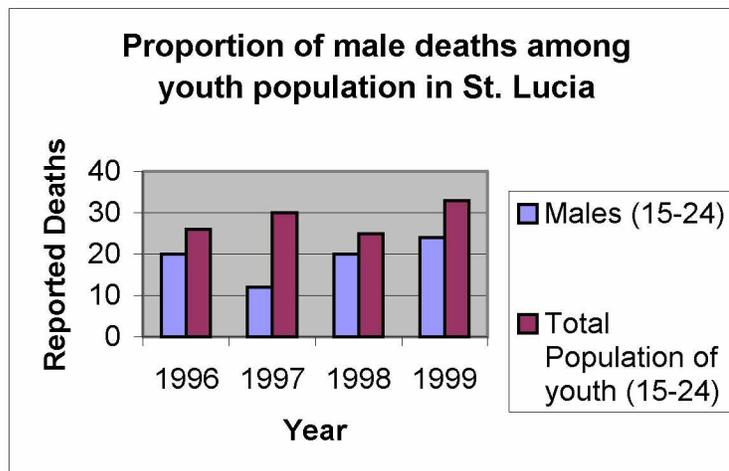


Table 3
Reported cases of AIDS in youths aged (15-24) in
CAREC member countries

Year	Male	Female	Total Population	Males as a percentage of Total Population
1983	1	0	1	100.0
1984	6	0	6	100.0
1985	11	6	17	64.7
1986	20	7	27	74.1
1987	33	13	46	71.7
1988	34	30	64	53.1
1989	46	18	64	71.9
1990	52	35	87	59.8
1991	47	47	94	50.0
1992	63	35	98	64.3
1993	47	43	90	52.2
1994	56	57	113	49.6
1995	81	68	149	54.4
1996	59	188	247	23.9

Source: CAREC data

Table 4
Deaths among young males as a percentage of total youths (15-24).

Year	Males	Females	Total Youth Population	Percentage of total youth population
1996	20	6	26	77
1997	12	18	30	40
1998	20	5	25	80
1999	24	9	33	73

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office

Table 5
Distribution of deaths among males and females in Saint Lucia as a percentage of the total population

Age Groups	1996				1997				1998				1999			
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
			%	No.												
Under 1	58.2	41.8	100	55	43.3	56.7	100	60	54.2	45.8	100	48	61.0	39.0	100	41
1-14	48.0	52.0	100	25	44.8	55.2	100	29	65.4	34.6	100	26	44.0	56.0	100	25
15-24	76.9	23.1	100	26	40.0	60.0	100	30	80.0	20.0	100	25	72.7	27.3	100	33
25-34	68.1	31.9	100	47	39.5	60.5	100	43	71.7	28.3	100	46	71.1	28.9	100	45
35-44	45.2	54.8	100	42	34.6	65.4	100	52	54.3	45.7	100	70	60.0	40.0	100	55
45-54	57.3	42.7	100	75	39.4	60.6	100	71	67.8	32.2	100	90	50.7	49.3	100	75
55-64	50.0	50.0	100	94	41.3	58.7	100	109	56.8	43.2	100	111	60.0	40.0	100	125
65+	48.9	51.1	100	570	49.6	50.4	100	573	50.0	50.0	100	552	48.0	52.0	100	554
Total	51.8	48.2	100	934	45.8	54.2	100	967	55.2	44.8	100	968	52.9	47.1	100	953

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistical Office

Table 6
Situation of first sexual encounter

Situation	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Marital responsibility	9	1.9	14	2.8	23	2.4
Common-law relationship	31	6.4	63	12.8	94	9.6
Visiting relationship	133	27.7	128	25.9	261	26.8
Rape- family member	0	0.0	4	0.8	4	0.4
Rape - stranger	0	0.0	5	1.0	5	0.5
Gang responsibility	1	0.2	1	0.2	2	0.2
One night stand	91	18.9	20	4.0	111	11.4
Experimentation/Curiosity	91	18.9	63	12.8	154	15.8
Other	11	2.3	17	3.4	28	2.9
Not Stated	114	23.7	180	36.4	294	30.2
Total	481	100.0	494	100.0	975	100.0

Source: National Youth Survey, department of Youth and Sports, Government of Saint Lucia

Table 7
Age of respondents at first sexual intercourse

Age	Male		Female		Total	
	No.		No.		No.	
8	12		2		14	
9	2		0		2	
10	16		1		17	
11	8		5		13	
12	27		5		32	
13	26		9		35	
14	40		15		55	
15	48		33		81	
16	60		51		111	
17	33		37		70	
18	36		61		97	
19	16		31		47	
20	12		17		29	
21	2		10		12	
22	0		4		4	
23	2		4		6	
24	1		5		6	
25	2		0		2	
26	1		4		5	

Source: National Youth Survey, Department of Youth and Sports, Government of Saint Lucia

A. CRIME/JUSTICE STATISTICS

Table 8
Reported crime statistics in Saint Lucia

	1996		1997		1998		1999		2000	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Rape & Indecent Assault	105	1.1	153	1.5	103	1.1	122	1.4	99	1.1
Murder & Manslaughter	9	0.1	12	0.1	14	0.1	14	0.2	22	0.3
Grievous Harm	1425	14.8	1481	14.6	1327	13.8	1304	14.5	1389	16.0
Assaults	2247	23.3	2249	22.1	2140	22.3	1960	21.8	1330	15.4
Thefts & other stealing	3102	32.1	3325	32.7	2796	29.1	2628	29.3	2756	31.8
Robbery & Extortion	207	2.1	255	2.5	265	2.8	288	3.2	291	3.4
Burglary	2100	21.8	2251	22.1	2424	25.3	2145	23.9	2110	24.4
Dangerous Drugs	454	4.7	443	4.4	526	5.5	518	5.8	663	7.7
Total	9649	100	10169	100	9595	100	8979	100	8660	100

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office

Table 9
Persons committed to prison in Saint Lucia

Year	Male		Female		Total		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1988	2165	93.0	162	7.0	2327	100	
1989	2619	95.6	120	4.4	2739	100	
1990	3809	96.4	140	3.6	3949	100	
1991	3453	96.5	125	3.5	3578	100	
1992	2991	95.6	137	4.4	3128	100	
1993	6540	98.0	134	2.0	6674	100	
1994	7067	97.1	209	2.9	7276	100	
1995	11994	98.7	154	1.3	12148	100	
1996	No data available for these years						
1997							
1998	2681	97.3	74	2.7	2755	100	
1999	6412	99.3	46	0.7	6458	100	
2000	7426	99.6	26	0.4	7452	100	

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office

Table 10
Persons committed to penal custody or sentenced to death in Saint Lucia

Year	Males		Females		Total Population	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1987	511	97.0	16	3.0	527	100
1988	530	97.2	15	2.8	545	100
1989	585	95.9	25	4.1	610	100
1990	489	97.0	15	3.0	504	100
1991	457	96.0	19	4.0	476	100
1992	698	96.8	23	3.2	721	100
1993	723	96.0	30	4.0	753	100
1994	769	95.5	36	4.5	805	100
1995	670	95.4	32	4.6	702	100
1996	715	96.1	29	3.9	744	100
1997	535	94.2	33	5.8	568	100
1998	467	94.7	26	5.3	493	100
1999	446	95.7	20	4.3	466	100
2000	496	97.4	13	2.6	509	100

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office

B. EDUCATION STATISTICS

Table 11
Percentage distribution of youth (15-24) in
Saint Lucia by educational level

Educational Level	Male		Females	
	No	% of total male population	No	% of total female population
None/Nursery	169	1.2	104	0.7
Primary	8065	59.0	6011	42.8
Secondary	4647	34.0	6629	47.2
Tertiary & Other	761	5.6	1226	8.7

Source: Caricom's Regional Monograph, 1990 Population Census

Table 12
Highest examination passed by males 15-24 in Saint Lucia

	Males	% of Pop
None	7899	30.8
School Leaving	3076	12.0
CXC Basic	0	0
GCE O'Level	1502	5.9
A'Level	196	0.8
Diploma	72	0.3
Degree	12	0.05
Other	12	0.05

Source: Caricom's Regional Monograph, 1990 Population Census

Table 13
Total leavers at the primary school level in Saint Lucia - 1995/96 to 1998/99

Year	Enrolment			Dropouts			Male dropouts as a percentage of total dropouts		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1995/96	31372	16243	15129	257	187	70	100	72.8	27.2
1996/97	31548	16387	15161	261	194	67	100	74.3	25.7
1997/98	31437	16445	14892	146	113	33	100	77.4	22.6
1998/99	29631	15399	14232	289	193	96	100	66.8	33.2

Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office

Table 14
School population by gender 1996-1999

YEAR	PRIMARY						SECONDARY					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1996/1997	15606	25.8	15340	25.8	30946	25.8	4954	26.4	6281	25.6	11235	25.9
1997/1998	14427	23.9	15207	25.6	29634	24.7	3984	21.3	6500	26.5	10484	24.2
1998/1999	15423	25.5	14833	25.0	30256	25.3	5406	28.9	6441	26.2	11847	27.4
1999/2000	14991	24.8	13984	23.6	28975	24.2	4390	23.4	5339	21.7	9729	22.5
Total	60447	100	59364	100	119811	100	18734	100	24561	100	43295	100

Source: Saint Lucia Ministry of Education

Table 15
Total number of students entering secondary school from
10 selected primary schools for the period 1996-1999

Year	Number of Males		Number of Females		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1996	416	21.3	472	22.1	888	21.7
1997	465	23.8	516	24.2	981	24.0
1998	520	26.6	551	25.8	1071	26.2
1999	552	28.3	597	27.9	1149	28.1
Total	1953	100.0	2136	100.0	4089	100.0

Saint Lucia Ministry of Education

E: LABOUR/UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Table 16
Labour force characteristics of males 15-24 years old

Year	As a per cent of total labour force	As a per cent of total unemployed	As a per cent of male labour force	As a per cent of male unemployed
1993	15	51.7	28	54
1994	14	56.2	27	59.8
1995	15	56.0	27	62.4
1996	14	55.0	26	58.5
1997	14	46.4	26	45.9
1998	14	50.0	26	54.2
1999	13	54.0	25	58.0

Source: ILO Caribbean Labour Statistics

Table 17
Male unemployment for 1997-1999 (Saint Lucia)

Age group	1997	1998	1999
15-19	2980	3590	3160
20-24	3250	4080	3180
25-34	2870	3130	2040
Total	9100	10800	8380

Source: National Youth Survey, Department of Youth and Sports (Saint Lucia)

Table 18
Female unemployment for 1997-1999 (Saint Lucia)

Age group	1997	1998	1999
15-19	3250	4210	3510
20-24	3900	3650	3580
25-34	4870	4990	3550
Total	12020	12850	10640

Source: National Youth Survey, Department of Youth and Sports (Saint Lucia)

Table 19
Unemployment rates by sex (Saint Lucia)

Period	1997		1998		1999	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Male	16.1	19.3	18.0	18.0	18.5	13.5
Female	22.2	25.3	24.4	27.5	22.5	18.2

Source: Source: National Youth Survey, Department of Youth and Sports (Saint Lucia)

Table 20**Labour force characteristics of youth 15-24 years old by occupation and sex**

Occupation	Males			Female		
	No.	Percentage of male labour force	Percentage of total labour force	No	Percentage of female labour force	Percentage of total Labour force
Defence Force	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senior Officials/Manager/Legislator	97	1.2	0.7	110	2.0	0.8
Professionals	335	4.1	2.5	140	2.6	1.0
Technicians/Associates	468	5.8	3.5	670	12.4	5.0
Clerk	405	5.0	3.0	1498	27.8	11.1
Service & Sales Workers	915	11.3	6.8	1367	25.4	10.1
Agri./Forest/Fishing Worker	1592	19.6	11.8	1100	20.4	8.1
Craft Related Worker	1990	24.5	14.7	497	9.2 3	3.7
Plant and Machine Operator	499	6.1	3.7	870	16.2	6.4
Elementary Occupation	1433	17.7	10.6	694	12.9	5.1

Source: Population and Housing Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean 1990/1991. Regional Monograph on Youth

Table 21
Percentage distribution of the relationship between education, occupation and gender for male youths aged 15-24 in Saint Lucia

Occupation	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary/Other
Defence Force	-	-	-
Senior Officials/ Manager/ Legislator	0.5	0.4	0.1
Professionals	0.3	0.9	0.8
Technicians/ Associates	1.3	3.3	1.1
Clerk	0.9	3.6	0.7
Service & Sales Workers	6.3	4.7	0.3
Agri/ Forest/ Fishing Worker	16.9	2.4	0.1
Craft Related Worker	24.4	6.2	0.9
Plant and Machine Operator	4.3	1.7	0.1
Elementary Occupation	15.3	2.1	0.1

Source: Population and Housing Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean 1990/1991. Regional Monograph on Youth

Table 22
Income distribution of youths 15-24 year old

Gross Income	Total Male		Total Female		Total	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Under 200	2.1	76	1.0	36	1.6	112
201-399	4.3	153	9.7	345	7.0	498
400-799	26.9	953	38.7	1379	32.8	2332
800-1199	29.4	1041	22.5	803	25.9	1844
1200-1999	24.7	874	22.9	815	23.8	1689
2000-3999	8.2	290	4.3	152	6.2	442
4000-5999	3.2	112	1.0	36	2.1	148
Over 6000	1.2	41	0.0		0.6	41
Total	100.0	3540	100.0	3566	100.0	7106

Source: Labour Force Survey, Saint Lucia (1999)

Footnote: These figures speak to only those who have responded. There was a non-response rate of 42.1% for males and 32.2 per cent for females.

Sources

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