UWI
SCHOOL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

ONE-UWI
POSTGRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 18 - 20 2026

Advancing Knowledge Shaping Futures:

Research, innovation, and impact Across the Caribbean and Beyond

PROGRAMME AND HANDBOOK



Empowering Graduate voices | Fostering interdisciplinary engagement | Celebrating Academic Excellence

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Fourth Annual One-UWI

Postgraduate Student Conference

Advancing Knowledge, Shaping Futures: Research, Innovation, and Impact Across the Caribbean and Beyond

FOUR DAYS. ONE UNIVERSITY.

CONFERENCE / 18–21 NOVEMBER

18

Wednesday / November 2026

Opening and concurrent research sessions

19

Thursday / November 2026

Guest speaker and concurrent research sessions

20

Friday / November 2026

Research sessions and closing ceremony

21

Saturday / November 2026

One-UWI Give Back Day

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About the Conference

Hosted by the School for Graduate Studies and Research, the conference brings postgraduate researchers from across The UWI together to present their findings, exchange ideas across disciplines and discuss what their work means for the Caribbean and beyond.

2026 CONFERENCE THEME

Advancing Knowledge, Shaping Futures:

Research, Innovation, and Impact Across the Caribbean and Beyond

Inside this year's programme and more...



Angelleath James

Mental health after Hurricane Melissa in Westmoreland



Alana S. Mahabir

Household rainwater harvesting in rural Trinidad



Jody Brown

Youth participation in agriculture and food security

18-20 NOVEMBER 2026
Online conference

21 NOVEMBER 2026
One-UWI Give Back Day

The UWI is an

SDG University

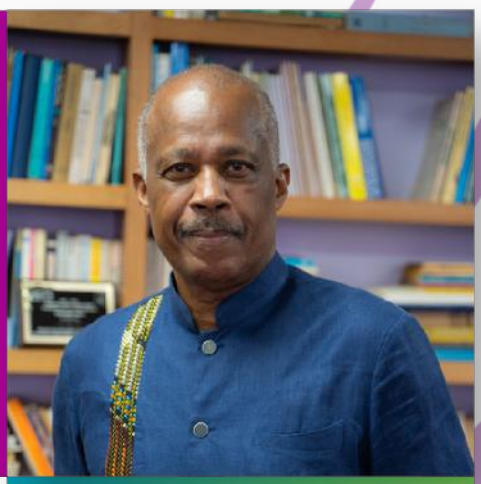


Across the Caribbean, UWI postgraduate researchers study the challenges facing our communities and advance the Sustainable Development Goals.

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- Vice-Chancellor
- Pro Vice-Chancellor & Conference Chair
- Directors, Graduate Studies & Research
- Presidents of Postgraduate Students

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REMARKS
from The UWI

Message from the Vice-Chancellor

Professor Sir Hilary Beckles

Vice-Chancellor, The UWI



> **"Through rigorous inquiry, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovative thinking, our researchers are contributing to transformative advances across diverse fields."**

On behalf of The University of the West Indies, I extend heartfelt greetings on the occasion of the 4th Annual Postgraduate Student Conference, held under the theme, 'Advancing Knowledge, Shaping Futures: Research, Innovation, and Impact Across the Caribbean and Beyond'. It is an honour to be part of this historic gathering in the spirit of our commitment as One-UWI.

It is important to recognize that this conference is an invaluable platform for postgraduate students, researchers, academics, and professionals to showcase and advance their scholarly work, exchange ideas, and engage in meaningful dialogue on issues that shape our societies and influence the future of our region and beyond. As we gather to share knowledge, challenge perspectives and explore innovative solutions, we reaffirm the critical role of research in generating new knowledge geared towards addressing local, regional, and global challenges.

The Caribbean stands at a pivotal moment in its development journey. Through rigorous inquiry, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovative thinking, our researchers are contributing to transformative advances across diverse fields. This conference celebrates those contributions while fostering partnerships and networks that will strengthen research capacity and generate impactful outcomes for our communities.

The Caribbean stands at a pivotal moment in its development journey. Through rigorous inquiry, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovative thinking, our researchers are contributing to transformative advances across diverse fields. This conference celebrates those contributions while fostering partnerships and networks that will strengthen research capacity and generate impactful outcomes for our communities.

I commend the organizers, presenters and participants for their dedication to academic excellence and the pursuit of knowledge. Your commitment to research and innovation reflects the very essence of postgraduate scholarship and serves as an inspiration to current and future generations of researchers.

You are encouraged to take full advantage of the opportunities this conference offers to learn, collaborate, and contribute to discussions that will help shape a more sustainable, resilient, and prosperous future for the Caribbean and beyond.

I look forward to the insightful presentations and rich discussions that will emerge from this gathering.



Message from the Pro Vice-Chancellor

Professor Aldrie Henry-Lee

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Studies and Research), The UWI

> **“The Caribbean must not simply be a subject of research but a producer of knowledge and innovation that influences global discourse.”**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Fourth Annual One-UWI Postgraduate Student Conference and to congratulate our postgraduate presenters.

This conference holds special significance as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the School for Graduate Studies and Research (SGSR) under the theme “30 Years of Excellence in Graduate Studies and Research: Advancing Caribbean and Global Development.” I am delighted by the impressive representation of postgraduate students and disciplines across our five campuses, reflecting the richness and diversity of scholarship at The UWI.

Our conference theme, “Advancing Knowledge, Shaping Futures: Research, Innovation, and Impact Across the Caribbean and Beyond,” reminds us that research must transcend academic boundaries to inform policies, transform lives and advance sustainable development. I encourage our postgraduate researchers to publish their findings, communicate their research beyond academia and ensure that the communities they study benefit from the knowledge generated. I warmly welcome our distinguished keynote speakers, whose diverse perspectives will enrich our discussions.

I encourage students to use this opportunity to exchange ideas, build networks and foster interdisciplinary and inter-campus collaboration. I am especially pleased that our One-UWI Give Back Day will translate our commitment to scholarship into meaningful community engagement.

I extend sincere appreciation to Miss Ava-Loi Forbes and the Conference Secretariat, our Directors of Graduate Studies and Research, postgraduate student representatives, reviewers, session chairs, discussants and moderators for their invaluable contributions.

To our postgraduate students, you represent the next generation of Caribbean scholars, innovators and leaders. Be bold in your inquiries, rigorous in your scholarship and committed to making a difference.

The Caribbean must not simply be a subject of research but a producer of knowledge and innovation that influences global discourse. May your scholarship help shape a more equitable, resilient and sustainable future for our region and beyond.

I wish you a rewarding and inspiring conference!

Message from the Director

Professor Marcia Roye

Director (Graduate Studies and Research),
Mona Campus, The UWI



> **“Ask the questions that unsettle familiar assumptions, expose what we have overlooked and open up new ways of thinking.”**

On behalf of the Directors of Graduate Studies and Research, I warmly welcome you to the Fourth Annual One-UWI Postgraduate Student Conference. As the School for Graduate Studies and Research marks its 30th anniversary, it is a particular pleasure to celebrate the postgraduate students who are shaping the next chapter of research at The University of the West Indies.

Leading this year’s abstract review gave me the privilege of reading your work before many of you had the opportunity to present it. In just 250 words, we asked you to convey what you set out to understand, how you approached the question and why your findings matter. Anyone who has tried to distil years of research into a single paragraph knows the level of discernment that is required. I am grateful to each of you for the care you have shown, and to my fellow reviewers for the time, thought and consideration you devoted to the submissions.

Our theme, *Advancing Knowledge, Shaping Futures: Research, Innovation, and Impact Across the Caribbean and Beyond*, invites us to consider who might use what we discover in our research. A finding about access to health care may help a clinic reach patients who struggle to attend. An insight from one classroom may prompt teachers on other islands to try a different teaching strategy. Part of the promise of a One-UWI conference lies in these connections.

To all our presenters, I encourage you to tell us what surprised you and what you are still working to understand. To our engaged audience listening, ask the questions that unsettle familiar assumptions, expose what we have overlooked and open up new ways of thinking. That exchange may well shape the next stage of someone’s research.

Congratulations to each presenter. I look forward to learning from all of you!

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Directors, Graduate Studies and Research



Professor Dwayne Devonish

Cave Hill Campus



Professor Peter Adams

Five Islands Campus



Dr. Nicole Phillip

Global Campus



Professor Marcia Roye

Mona Campus



Professor Saravanakumar Duraisamy

St. Augustine Campus



Message from the President of Postgraduate Students

Ms. Antionette Ricketts

President, Mona Campus Association of Postgraduate Students, The UWI

> **"May we leave this conference more confident in our voices, more generous with our knowledge, and more willing to help one another carry promising ideas into meaningful action."**

Every research presentation begins long before a conference. It begins with a question that will not leave us, a problem we believe deserves attention, and the decision to keep working even when the answers remain uncertain. As postgraduate students, we know what that commitment demands, and we recognise it in one another.

It is in this spirit that I warmly welcome you to the Fourth Annual One-UWI Postgraduate Student Conference, representing my fellow postgraduate student presidents and our postgraduate communities across Cave Hill, Five Islands, the Global Campus, Mona, and St. Augustine.

This year's theme, "Advancing Knowledge, Shaping Futures: Research, Innovation, and Impact Across the Caribbean and Beyond," speaks directly to our responsibility as emerging scholars. We bring different disciplines, experiences, and perspectives to our work, but we share a desire to produce knowledge that matters—to the people whose experiences inform our questions, to the communities we serve, and to the region we call home.

This conference gives us space to share that work and to grow through exchange. To every presenter, we extend our congratulations. Bringing your research before others takes preparation and courage.

Your contribution deserves to be heard, whether you are presenting early findings, developing a new argument, or sharing the culmination of years of study.

We encourage every participant to ask thoughtful questions, offer constructive feedback, and make connections beyond your own campus and discipline. A conversation here may help resolve a research challenge, introduce a new perspective, or begin a lasting collaboration. Let us also make room for honest conversations about the postgraduate journey and the support we need to succeed.

As the School for Graduate Studies and Research celebrates its 30th anniversary, we thank its leadership, the conference organisers, our supervisors, and all who support postgraduate scholarship. As student representatives, we remain committed to advocating for a postgraduate experience in which students across all five campuses feel heard, supported, and connected.

May we leave this conference more confident in our voices, more generous with our knowledge, and more willing to help one another carry promising ideas into meaningful action.

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Meet the Postgraduate Representatives



Mrs. Mechelle Atwell-Braithwaite

Cave Hill Campus

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Ms. Ellisia Zakers

Five Islands Campus

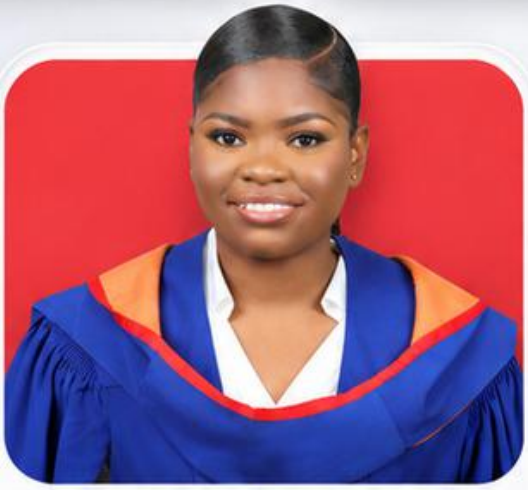
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Ms. Antionette Ricketts

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Conference PROGRAMME

DAY 1

Wednesday, 18 November

Online • All times in Jamaica time (GMT−5)

9:00 AM to 10:15 AM	Opening session and guest speaker • Tinei Malvin Kawadza	
10:15 AM to 10:30 AM	Technical / screen-share transition	
10:30 AM to 11:55 AM	**MAIN ROOM** **Health and Well-being: Psychosocial Recovery and Primary Care**	
11:55 AM to 12:05 PM	Morning Comfort Break	
12:05 PM to 1:30 PM	**ROOM A** **Health Equity Across the Life Course**	**ROOM B** **Climate-Resilient Infrastructure, Water and Energy Futures**
1:30 PM to 2:15 PM	Lunch Break	
2:15 PM to 3:40 PM	**ROOM A** **Biodiversity, Climate Governance and Environmental Futures**	**ROOM B** **Frontiers in Science, Engineering and Responsible Innovation**
3:40 PM to 3:50 PM	Afternoon Comfort Break	
3:50 PM to 5:15 PM	**ROOM A** **Climate-Smart Agriculture and Resilient Food Production**	**ROOM B** **Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Livelihoods**

DAY 1 | WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2026

Opening Ceremony

9:00 am to 10:30 am Jamaica time (GMT-5)

Moderator

Ms. Antionette Ricketts
President, Mona Campus Association of Postgraduate Students

Welcome & Opening Remarks	**Professor Aldrie Henry-Lee** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Studies and Research), The UWI
Remarks	**Professor Marcia Roye** Director (Graduate Studies and Research), Mona Campus **Professor Sir Hilary Beckles** Vice-Chancellor, The UWI
Introduction of Guest Speaker	**Mr. Zephion Lee-Harris** President, St. Augustine Campus Association of Postgraduate Students
Guest Speaker	**Mr. Tinei Malvin Kawadza** *Collaborate Regionally, Compete Globally: Building Connected African and Caribbean Business Ecosystems*
	Q&A
Vote of Thanks	**Ms. Ellisia Zakers** President, Five Islands Campus Association of Postgraduate Students

GUEST SPEAKER

Tinei Malvin Kawadza



Senior Operations Manager
Clinics on Cloud Africa

Tinei Malvin Kawadza is an international business and operations management professional currently serving as Senior Operations Manager at Clinics on Cloud Africa, a digital healthcare.

technology enterprise. His experience spans business development, digital transformation, customer experience, strategic partnerships and cross-border market expansion across African markets.

He holds a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Political Science from the University of Zimbabwe and has a keen academic interest in international business, digital trade, regional economic integration and public policy.

His particular interests include the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the role of Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies in transforming business ecosystems, and opportunities for stronger economic cooperation between Africa and the Caribbean. He advocates for regional collaboration, digital innovation and interconnected business ecosystems as pathways towards sustainable economic development and global competitiveness.

D1-S1A / MAIN ROOM

Health and Well-being: Psychosocial Recovery and Primary Care

10:30 AM–11:55 AM Jamaica time (GMT-5)

Proposed Moderator
Professor Maxine Gossell-Williams

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Kwesi Marshall

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Angelleath James**
Social Vulnerability & Acute Mental Health Outcomes Post Hurricane Melissa in Westmoreland, Jamaica

02 **Jovalrio Swaby**
Assessing Coping Strategies and Barriers to Mental Health Access for Students who attend the University of the West Indies (Mona)

03 **Justine Novelo**
A Policy Analysis of Gender-Responsive Mental Health Service Delivery for Male Students at the University of the West Indies, Mona

04 **Krystyne Hansen**
Challenges, Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems Among Families of Individuals with Alcohol Use Disorder in Trinidad and Tobago: A Qualitative Study

05 **Angelo Curtis**
Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Primary Care Physicians in New Providence, The Bahamas, Regarding Non-Specific Lower Back Pain Management

D1-S1A / PAPER 01

Social Vulnerability & Acute Mental Health Outcomes Post Hurricane Melissa in Westmoreland, Jamaica

Angelleath James • Mona Campus

Authors: Angelleath James, Kimberley Foster, Avi Kenny, Novie Younger, Winston De La Haye, Caitlyn Sams, Jonathan Robinson, Rose Ann Smith and Rupika Delgoda

Introduction: Extreme weather events can generate substantial psychosocial burdens. This study examined the social and environmental determinants of post-disaster mental health outcomes among residents of Westmoreland, Jamaica following the landfall of category 5 hurricane, Melissa. By situating psychological outcomes within broader context of social vulnerability and resilience, the study provides a contextually grounded understanding of post-disaster mental health in Caribbean settings and offers insights for more socially responsive disaster recovery interventions.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional survey of a purposive sample of individuals was conducted among 108 adults, two weeks after Melissa's landfall. An interviewer-administered questionnaire collected demographic information and assessed psychological distress, post-traumatic stress, housing conditions, displacement, economic disruption, social support, and coping mechanisms. The instrument consisted of a mixture of validated measurement scales and custom questions designed for this specific setting. Measures included mental health outcome items from the World Health Organisation's Assessing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs and Resources: Toolkit for Humanitarian Settings, demographic items from the Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey (JHLS III), and health-seeking behaviour items from an ethically approved Ethnomedicine Survey. A mixed-methods analytic strategy was adopted for this study. Quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and qualitative data analysis employed Reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA).

Results: Emotional distress was reported by 76.9% of respondents and was positively associated with property damage, displacement, and financial strain. Displacement was common among residents of plyboard-and-corrugated-zinc-roof dwellings, highlighting the influence of housing vulnerability. Unemployment and loss of income were associated with elevated post-traumatic stress symptoms. Suicidal ideation was reported by 31.5% of participants and was most prevalent among emergency shelter residents. Although stress was the most common emotional response (46.3%), gratitude was reported by 22.2%, indicating concurrent resilience. Family and community support served as important protective factors, with 57.4% identifying social connectedness as their primary coping mechanism. A thematic analysis identified five prevailing experiences: unprecedented psychological terror, home destruction, forced displacement, community solidarity, and unresolved recovery burden; with participants still in the middle of the crisis rather than looking back on it.

Conclusions: Acute post-disaster psychological distress was strongly influenced by social and environmental vulnerabilities. Interventions addressing displacement, economic insecurity, and social isolation may reduce disproportionate psychological harm among high-riskpopulations.

Keywords: Post-disaster; Acute Mental Health; Jamaica; Psychosocial Determinants; Post-traumatic Stress; Post-traumatic Growth; Environmental Impact on Mental Health



About the presenter | angelleath.james@uwi.edu

Angelleath James is a mental health practitioner, educator, academic researcher, and professional development consultant. She works with clients experiencing disruptive behaviours, depression, and anxiety. Her interests for research and clinical practice are drawn from interpersonal dynamics, burnout, Positive Psychology and Caribbean Psychology. Afiliated with The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona campus, she is a PhD candidate whose recent work includes exploring reliance on national products to address mental health concerns, and evaluating community resilience and post-disaster mental health status. In January 2026, she was honoured by the Women In Science Emergency (WISE) Initiative, a partnership between UNESCO and The UWI Faculty of Science and Technology, for her dedicated research efforts following hurricane Melissa.

D1-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Assessing Coping Strategies and Barriers to Mental Health Access for Students who attend the University of the West Indies (Mona)

Jovalrio Swaby • Mona Campus

Authors: Jovalrio Swaby, Dr. Jhodi Bowie Dean

Young adult university students frequently experience mental health challenges that may affect their psychological well-being and academic functioning. This study examined the associations between coping strategies and resilience with depression, anxiety, and stress among undergraduate university students, while also exploring barriers to accessing mental health support. A cross-sectional quantitative survey design was employed over a six-month period at The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica. A sample of 406 undergraduate students aged 18–25 years completed structured online questionnaires administered through Qualtrics. Measures included the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (COPE), Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21), Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), and a researcher-developed demographic questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analyses, and multiple regression analyses in SPSS.

Problem-focused coping demonstrated a weak negative association with depression ($r = -.091$, $p = .034$) but was not significantly associated with anxiety or stress. In contrast, avoidance coping demonstrated moderate positive associations with depression ($r = .489$, $p < .001$), anxiety ($r = .456$, $p < .001$), and stress ($\beta = .395$, $p < .001$), and was the strongest predictor of stress in the regression model. Resilience demonstrated moderate negative associations with depression ($r = -.400$, $p < .001$), anxiety ($r = -.334$, $p < .001$), and stress ($r = -.392$, $p < .001$), and remained a significant predictor of anxiety after coping strategies were considered ($\beta = -.243$, $p < .001$). Students reported greater use of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping than avoidance coping. However, barriers to mental health support included stigma-related concerns, affordability, limited access to support, and lower awareness of community-based mental health resources. These findings highlight the importance of understanding coping patterns and resilience in relation to university students' psychological well-being and suggest the need for mental health support that addresses both individual coping processes and barriers to accessing care.

Keywords: university students; mental health; coping strategies; resilience; depression; anxiety; stress



About the presenter | swabyjovalrio@gmail.com

Jovalrio Swaby is a graduate student pursuing an MSc in Clinical Psychology at The University of the West Indies, Mona. A curious mind with a deep appreciation for the complexities of human behaviour, he is particularly interested in understanding the stories, experiences, and psychological processes that shape who we become.

With interests spanning clinical and forensic psychology, trauma, personality, and mental health, Jovalrio is fascinated by the intersection of science and the human experience. He is an analytical thinker, an avid learner, and someone who believes that behind every behaviour lies a story worth understanding.

Beyond academia, he is involved in teaching, leadership, mentorship, and psychological practice, continually seeking opportunities to grow both personally and professionally. He approaches life with ambition, quiet determination, and an appreciation for the occasional philosophical detour.

He believes that the mind is one of humanity's greatest mysteries, that understanding others begins with curiosity, and that personal growth is a lifelong process.

A student of the mind, an observer of humanity, and a work in progress, as we all are.

D1-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

A Policy Analysis of Gender-Responsive Mental Health Service Delivery for Male Students at the University of the West Indies, Mona

Justine Novelo • Mona Campus

Background: Male students at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona carry a documented mental health burden, yet no gender-responsive mental health policy exists to address their needs. This policy analysis pursued three objectives: to describe the extent to which current institutional frameworks address the gendered mental health needs of male students; to evaluate their alignment with standards for gender-responsive care; and to propose a stakeholder-informed, intersectional policy framework to address the gaps identified.

Methods: The study was conducted in two parts. First, documentary policy analysis was employed to examine three institutional policies: the UWI Health and Wellness Policy, the UWI Gender Policy, and the UWI Mona Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Each was assessed against standards derived from the WHO Gender Responsive Assessment Scale, the WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan, the PAHO Gender Equality Policy, and the University Mental Health Charter to identify gaps between current provision and gender-responsive benchmarks. Second, the findings and draft recommendations were presented to three purposively selected stakeholders through individual consultations: a Service Implementer, a Student Governance Representative, and a male undergraduate Policy Recipient. Stakeholder feedback was analysed using framework analysis.

Results: Documentary analysis showed that none of the three frameworks adequately addressed the gendered mental health needs of male students; male students were absent as a named population, and none of the policies established accountability mechanisms for gender-equitable care. Assessment against gender-responsive standards classified the Health and Wellness Policy as gender-blind and both the Gender Policy and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy as gender-aware, indicating that none met standards for gender-responsive care. Stakeholder feedback was incorporated into seven final recommendations for an intersectional policy framework: securing institutional leadership commitment to drive and resource policy reform; redesigning access pathways to embed support within spaces where male students already feel comfortable; establishing a male student mental health advisory group; formalising Caribbean-specific cultural competency within professional development obligations; strengthening utilisation data for policy accountability; commissioning Caribbean-specific research; and developing a standalone gender-responsive mental health policy.

Conclusions: Current institutional frameworks at UWI Mona do not meet the gender-responsive mental health needs of male students. This analysis contributes locally grounded, Caribbean-specific evidence to a literature dominated by Global North frameworks and positions UWI
Mona as a potential contributor to gender-responsive mental health governance across Caribbean higher education.

Keywords: male students; mental health; help-seeking; Caribbean masculinity; UWI Mona; stigma; gender-responsive policy



About the presenter | jellisaortiz20@gmail.com

Justine J. Novelo is a Belizean social worker and Master of Social Work candidate (Social Work Administration and Community Development) at The University of the West Indies, Mona. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work, summa cum laude, from the University of Belize. She served as a graduate assistant and currently volunteers as a student editor with the Caribbean Journal of Social Work. She has gained practice experience in community development, youth programming, and school-based counselling. Her research interests include gender-responsive policy and mental health in Caribbean higher education.

D1-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

Challenges, Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems Among Families of Individuals with Alcohol Use Disorder in Trinidad and Tobago: A Qualitative Study

Krystyne Hansen • St. Augustine Campus

This study explored the lived experiences of family members of individuals with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) in Trinidad and Tobago. It aimed to identify the challenges experienced, explore the coping mechanisms and assess the effectiveness of available support systems. A family member was defined as an individual related by blood, marriage or adoption who lived in the same household as the individual with AUD, including spouses or partners, children, parents, siblings or extended relatives. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five adult participants who had experience with a family member with AUD for at least one year. Participants were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling. Interviews were analysed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis. Findings revealed three themes: challenges faced by family members, the adoption of coping mechanisms and limitations in access to available support systems. Participants reported emotional and psychological distress, financial strain, caregiving burdens and strained family relationships. Coping mechanisms included silence, emotional withdrawal, avoidance, emotional outbursts, spirituality, therapy, reading and taking things "one day at a time." Although family, peer and institutional support were identified, gaps included limited awareness of counselling and family support programmes and concerns regarding accessibility and effectiveness of formal services. The study recommends that policymakers strengthen family-focused counselling and community-based support programmes, increased awareness of available services through healthcare and community outreach and implement public education to reduce AUD-related stigma. Early prevention programmes for youth and measures addressing alcohol promotion and the normalisation of excessive drinking should also be strengthened. This study contributes to understanding the impact of AUD on family well-being within the Caribbean context and provides insights for strengthening health systems, public health and support services.

Keywords: Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD); family members; challenges; coping mechanisms; support systems.



About the presenter | krystyne.hansen@uwi.edu

Krystyne M. Hansen holds a Master's degree in Sociology from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. Her research focuses on family structures and their evolving dynamics, as well as the social construction of sport, by applying sociological theory to the contemporary lived realities of these social institutions within Trinidad and Tobago. She currently serves as a Clerical Assistant and Statistics Tutor at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. She is also an avid runner, with completing a full marathon as her next personal goal.

D1-S1A / PAPER 05

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Primary Care Physicians in New Providence, The Bahamas, Regarding Non-Specific Lower Back Pain Management

Angelo Curtis • Mona Campus

Authors: Dr. Angelo Curtis, Dr. Francis, Williams, Dr. Valentine Grimes, Dr. Sabriquet Pinder-Butler, Alphanso Blake Jnr

Background: Non-specific lower back pain (NSLBP) is pain without identifiable underlying pathology. Guideline-discordant care may increase disability and strain healthcare resources, yet local evidence is limited.

Objective: To assess primary care physicians' knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding NSLBP management in New Providence, The Bahamas.

Methods: This cross-sectional survey invited 81 public-sector primary care physicians. Participants completed an anonymous, self-administered 69-item questionnaire. Knowledge and practice items reflected recommendations common to 15 clinical practice guidelines reviewed by Oliveira et al.; biopsychosocial attitudes were assessed using the validated Pain Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (PABS). Descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests, t-tests, ANOVA, and multivariable regression analyses were performed.

Results: Sixty-three physicians responded (77%); 76% were female, 73% practiced Family Medicine, 54% had > 10 years in practice, and 64% had postgraduate training. Guideline awareness was 24%, 46% had good knowledge, 51% had a biomedical-dominant attitude, and 8% demonstrated guideline-adherent practice. Postgraduate training was associated with higher knowledge (β=1.73, 95% CI 0.2–3.2; p=0.026), higher knowledge with stronger biopsychosocial attitudes (β=0.48, 95% CI 0.02–0.94; p=0.040), and stronger biopsychosocial attitudes with adherence (OR=1.48, 95% CI 1.05–2.07; p=0.024). Knowledge alone was not independently associated with practice.

Conclusion: Targeted education, accessible guidelines and biopsychosocial training may strengthen evidence-based primary care.

Keywords: knowledge, attitudes, practices, primary care, non-specific lower back pain



About the presenter | angelo.curtis@mymona.uwi.edu

Dr. Angelo Curtis, BSc, MBBS, DM, is a Family Medicine physician practicing in The Bahamas and recently completed the Doctor of Medicine (DM) program in Family Medicine at The University of the West Indies School of Clinical Medicine and Research in Nassau, The Bahamas. His work focuses on improving the quality of primary care by translating research into clinical practice, strengthening physician education, and informing health policy. He is passionate about advancing patient- centered, evidence-based healthcare throughout The Bahamas and the wider Caribbean.

D1-S2A / ROOM A

Health Equity Across the Life Course

12:05 PM–1:30 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator

Professor Peter Adams

Proposed Discussant

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Patrishka Duncombe-Delaney**
Exclusive Breastfeeding: Knowledge and Intention to Practice in Primigravida Women in the Bahamas at the Princess Margaret Hospital

02 **Danyella Smith**
Nurses' Cultural Competence Care and Patient Satisfaction in the Adult Oncology Wards in Trinidad and Tobago

03 **Shereika Hemmings-Allison**
Surrogacy in Jamaica – 'Human Rights in Text and as Lived'

04 **Asha Ratteray**
Molecular response to Imatinib mesylate in patients with Chronic Myeloid Leukaemia in Jamaica: clinicopathologic predictors of molecular response

05 **Amrit Sharma**
Assessing Obstructive Sleep Apnea Risk in Hypertensive Patients: A Cross-Sectional Study at Freeport Health Centre, Trinidad

D1-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 01

Exclusive Breastfeeding: Knowledge and Intention to Practice in Primigravida Women in the Bahamas at the Princess Margaret Hospital

Patrishka Duncombe-Delaney • Global Campus

Authors: Dr. Patrishka Duncombe- Delaney, Dr. Vrunda Sakharkar, Alphanso Blake

This study assessed breastfeeding knowledge, intention, and intended duration among primigravid antenatal clinic attendees in Nassau, Bahamas, against WHO recommendations.A cross-sectional study using quota sampling was conducted at Princess Margaret Hospital and Nassau antenatal clinics. Eligible women were aged ≥18 years and 24–41 weeks' gestation. A self-administered questionnaire assessed sociodemographic characteristics, breastfeeding knowledge, intention, and duration. Knowledge items were adapted from a Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia questionnaire; intention and duration items from Ihudiebube-Splendor et al. The instrument showed internal consistency (Cronbach's α=0.85). Scores ranged from 0–47. Knowledge was classified using a modified Bloom's cut-off: ≥60% adequate and <60% low. Analyses used descriptive statistics, Chi-square, and multivariable logistic and linear regression.
Among 285 participants, 82.1% had low breastfeeding knowledge, median score 42.6%. Despite this, 67.0% intended to exclusively breastfeed, and 54.1% to breastfeed for at least six months. Fewer than half received advice, most commonly from midwives. Lack of advice was significantly associated with lower knowledge scores (β=−6.53, 95% CI −11.45 to −1.61; p=0.010), but not intention (OR 0.80, 95% CI 0.47–1.36; p=0.408). Sociodemographic factors were not associated with intention. Breastfeeding knowledge was low despite high intention, supporting targeted antenatal breastfeeding education to improve knowledge and promote informed infant-feeding decisions.

Breastfeeding is the cornerstone of maternal and child health, with well-established benefits for infant nutrition, immunity, and maternal well-being. Despite global recommendations, breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates in the Bahamas remain suboptimal. Understanding both breastfeeding knowledge and intention among first-time mothers is essential for designing effective and context-specific interventions.

Keywords: Breastfeeding knowledge; Primigravid women; Breastfeeding intention; Exclusive breastfeeding; Bahamas



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Dr. Patrishka G. Duncombe-Delaney is an Obstetrician-Gynaecologist, who is committed to advancing women's health and maternal care in The Bahamas. Her clinical interests include pelvic floor health, breastfeeding, and reproductive health, with an emphasis on patient education and evidence-based care across all stages of a woman's life. Her research explores breastfeeding knowledge and intention among primigravid women, while her previous work examined obesity-related adverse pregnancy outcomes. She serves as Secretary on the Board of the Medical Association of The Bahamas and is active in her church and local community.

D1-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Nurses' Cultural Competence Care and Patient Satisfaction in the Adult Oncology Wards in Trinidad and Tobago

Danyella Smith • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Mrs. Danyella Kashmir Smith, Dr. Virginia Victor, Ph.D. (N), M.Sc. (N), M.A. (Psychol), and PGD (Yoga); RPN, RN, RM.

Background: Cultural competence is essential for delivering patient-centred nursing care in ethnically and religiously diverse populations. In Trinidad and Tobago, empirical evidence on oncology nurses' transcultural self-efficacy and its relationship with patient satisfaction remains limited.

Aim: To assess the cultural competence of registered nurses in adult oncology wards across Trinidad and Tobago's North West and South West Regional Health Authorities (NWRHA, SWRHA), and to examine its relationship with patient satisfaction with culturally oriented care.

Methods: A quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive-correlational design was used, appropriate for examining associations between variables without manipulation. Given the small, specialised nursing workforce, all 33 eligible registered nurses were recruited via purposive total population sampling and completed the self-administered Transcultural Self-Efficacy Tool (TSET; α = 0.947). Adult oncology patients were recruited via stratified random sampling with proportional allocation by RHA, yielding 283 respondents (86.0% response rate) who completed the interviewer-administered Iowa Cultural Understanding Assessment (ICUA; α = 0.915). Sociodemographic data were collected for both groups. As linking individual nurses to patients would have compromised confidentiality, RHA-level mean nurse competence scores were used to examine the competence-satisfaction relationship through correlation and hierarchical linear regression controlling for patient sex, ethnicity, and religion.

Results: Most nurses (72.7%) demonstrated moderate cultural competence (overall M = 552, SD = 70.9), with the affective domain scoring lowest. Patient satisfaction was predominantly medium (61.5%; M = 3.70/5, SD = 0.560) and differed significantly between RHAs ($\chi^2(1) = 4.48$, $p = .034$). The ecological correlation between nurse competence and patient satisfaction was weak and non-significant ($r = 0.279$, $p = .159$), and hierarchical regression controlling for demographic confounders confirmed no significant predictive relationship ($R^2 = 0.130$, $p = .526$).

Conclusion: Oncology nurses in Trinidad and Tobago demonstrate predominantly moderate transcultural self-efficacy, with the affective domain identified as a priority for training. The ecological study design limited causal inference between nurse competence and patient satisfaction; future research using individual-level nurse-patient linkage is recommended.

Keywords: cultural competence; transcultural nursing; oncology; patient satisfaction; Trinidad and Tobago



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Danyella Smith is a Registered Nurse (Nursing Council of Trinidad and Tobago, Registration No. 12800) currently practising at the St James Medical Complex within the North West Regional Health Authority. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of the Southern Caribbean (2019) and has recently completed a Master of Science in Advanced Nursing at The University of the West Indies (awaiting graduation, 2026). Her clinical experience spans ophthalmology, gerontology, accident and emergency, medical–surgical, and adult oncology nursing, and she holds a Certificate of Competency in Ophthalmic Nursing Skills (2026). Her postgraduate research examined nurses' cultural competence care and its relationship with patient satisfaction on the adult oncology wards of Trinidad and Tobago, reflecting her professional interest in culturally responsive, evidence-based and patient-centred nursing practice.

D1-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

Surrogacy in Jamaica – 'Human Rights in Text and as Lived'

Shereika Hemmings-Allison • Mona Campus

Jamaica has developed into a rising destination for surrogacy. There is no legal or regulatory framework in place that validates this practice. The surrogacy industry is growing locally and internationally, and Jamica is obligated to respect the rights of all parties concerned in its practice. The aim of this study is to obtain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of surrogacy in Jamaica and the extent to which the reproductive rights of surrogates are respected, protected and fulfilled.

This study is relevant to the conference theme as assisted reproductive technologies have proven to shape research and innovation in health, thereby impacting the lives of those who use it as an aid to reproduce and form families for the future.

The objectives of the research include (i) ascertaining the international reproductive rights standards on surrogacy; (ii) assessing State measures in ensuring the realization of the reproductive rights of surrogates; (iii) determining the lived experiences of surrogates and the extent to which they are conscious of their reproductive rights; (iv) assessing the extent to which there are gaps in the realization of the reproductive rights of surrogates; and (v) suggesting recommendations for the enhancement of reproductive rights realization of surrogates, where gaps are identified.

This study will unveil human rights 'in law' and 'in reality' by chronicling the lived realities of surrogates and casting light on their reproductive rights consciousness and realizations. The research design is socio-legal and therefore interdisciplinary as it combines legal doctrinal and qualitative approaches to answer the main research question. The research is characterized by integrating two (2) disciplines – law and social sciences, as the main discipline of law is not enough to answer the questions that are framed. The doctrinal part of the study is being done ahead of the qualitative component so that the law is first located and analysed to see how it situates within the lived realities of surrogates.

There is an opportunity for the development of a surrogacy legal framework in Jamaica as a blueprint for other Caribbean countries.

**The research is ongoing. Therefore, there are no findings or conclusions currently.*

Keywords: Jamaica, Surrogacy, Reproductive Rights



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Mrs. Shereika Hemmings-Allison is an Attorney-at-Law by profession, a consummate civil servant and a Mona Law MPhil student. She holds a Master of Laws Degree in Commercial and Corporate Law from the Queen Mary School of London and a Bachelor of Laws Degree from the University of the West Indies (Cave Hill). Her research interest is in the legalities of Assisted Reproductive Technologies, specifically surrogacy, and international human rights norms.

D1-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

Molecular response to Imatinib mesylate in patients with Chronic Myeloid Leukaemia in Jamaica: clinicopathologic predictors of molecular response

Asha Ratteray • Mona Campus

Authors: Dr Dwight Lowe, Dr Magdalene Nwokocha, Professor Gillian Wharfe, Dr. Asha Ratteray

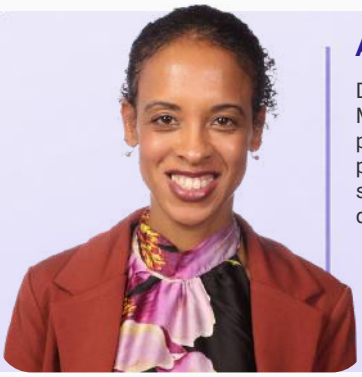
Introduction: Chronic Myeloid Leukemia (CML) is characterized by the BCR::ABL1 fusion gene and is effectively treated with tyrosine kinase inhibitors. Molecular response milestones predict long-term outcomes, but real-world data from low- and middle-income countries remain limited.
Aim: Describe clinical presentation and identify factors influencing molecular response to Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitor (TKI) therapy.

Methods: A retrospective case series included adults with CML who initiated Imatinib between May 2022 and December 2024 at UHWI and KPH. Demographic, clinical, treatment and molecular response data were collected. Associations between clinical variables and treatment outcomes were assessed using the phi coefficient.

Results: N=20. Mean age 50.8 years; Male:Female ratio 1.2:1. Most (65%) presented with symptomatic disease, predominantly splenomegaly (75%). 70% were in chronic-phase, with 72% classified as intermediate/high ELTS risk. Median time to complete hematologic response (CHR), early molecular response (EMR) and molecular response 2 MR2 was 1, 7, and 13 months, respectively. EMR, MR2, and Major molecular response (MMR) rates were 15%, 20%, and 5%. Adherence was suboptimal (60%). Earlier TKI initiation (<90 days) was associated with higher MR2 rates((φ 0.625, p-0.05).

Conclusions: The majority of patients presented with symptomatic disease. CHR was achieved early, while molecular responses were delayed. Late TKI initiation was associated with delayed molecular response.

Keywords: CML, TKI, Molecular



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Dr. Asha Ratteray completed a BSc in Biology with a minor in Psychology at York University, MBBS at UWI Mona and is currently a final year resident in Haematology & Medical Oncology at UHWI. The research presented here was completed in partial fulfilment of her Doctor of Medicine (DM) program. Outside of her professional pursuits, she enjoys spending time with her husband and two young sons, scuba diving, swimming, and travelling. She was born and raised in the beautiful archipelago of Bermuda where she developed a deep appreciation for community, culture, and the natural environment.

D1-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 05

Assessing Obstructive Sleep Apnea Risk in Hypertensive Patients: A Cross-Sectional Study at Freeport Health Centre, Trinidad

Sub-theme: Primary Care, Non-Communicable Diseases and Cardiovascular Risk Reduction

Amrit Sharma • St. Augustine Campus

Background and objective: Locally relevant evidence is needed to guide obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) assessment in hypertension care. This study estimated the proportions of hypertensive adults classified by STOP-BANG and Berlin Questionnaire risk categories and examined factors associated with Berlin high-risk classification.

Methods: An analytical cross-sectional study was conducted at the Freeport Health Centre Chronic Disease Clinic, Trinidad, from October to December 2025. Every third numbered adult attendee with physician-diagnosed hypertension was assessed for eligibility, with duplicate enrolment prevented. The estimated accessible three-month population was 1,114.
STOP-BANG and Berlin questionnaires were administered alongside anthropometric and clinical assessments. Descriptive statistics characterised screening risk; multivariable logistic regression examined associations with Berlin high-risk status.

Results: Among 306 participants, 56.9% were female, 39.2% were aged 60-69 years and 44.4% were obese. STOP-BANG classified 72 (23.5%) as low, 105 (34.3%) as intermediate and 129 (42.2%) as high risk; Berlin classified 128 (41.8%) as high risk. Median neck circumference was 41.1 cm in the Berlin high-risk group versus 36.1 cm in the low-risk group; corresponding median body mass indices were 32.10 versus 27.29 kg/m².
Adjusted associations with Berlin high-risk status were neck circumference (per cm: adjusted odds ratio [aOR] 1.401, 95% CI 1.225-1.604), resistant hypertension (aOR 4.237, 95% CI 1.361-13.184) and age (per year: aOR 0.956, 95% CI 0.924-0.990).

Conclusion: High OSA screening risk was common in this hypertensive clinic population. Larger neck circumference and resistant hypertension were independently associated with Berlin high-risk classification. These findings may inform targeted assessment of patients with these characteristics, with diagnostic confirmation and referral capacity considered before implementation. Interpretation should account for the hypertension component embedded in both questionnaires and the absence of confirmatory sleep testing.

Keywords: obstructive sleep apnea; hypertension; STOP-BANG; Berlin Questionnaire; primary care



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Dr. Amrit Sharma is a family physician and DM Family Medicine candidate at The University of the West Indies. He holds an MBBS and an MSc in Public Health. His interests include primary care, chronic disease management, preventive health, and improving healthcare delivery at the community level.

D1-S2B / ROOM B

Climate-Resilient Infrastructure, Water and Energy Futures

12:05 PM–1:30 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Professor Tannecia Stephenson

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Natatlie Dietrich Jones

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Alana S. Mahabir**
Gender-Responsive Governance of Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting for Climate Resilience in Caribbean Small Island Developing States

02 **Katherine Agong**
Understanding Transport Deficiency and its Role in Realising the SDGs in the Caribbean: A perspective from Trinidad

03 **Matthew Williams**
Dynamically Downscaled Assessment of Solar Radiation Modification Impacts on Caribbean Wind Resources and Power Generation

04 **Shalini Jagnarine-Azan**
Evaluating Low-Cost Seismic Isolation for Low-Rise Buildings in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

05 **Shivanie Ramcharitar**
Empowering the Community of Icacos for Climate Change Impacts using a scenario planning Framework

D1-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 01

Gender-Responsive Governance of Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting for Climate Resilience in Caribbean Small Island Developing States

Alana Mahabir • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Alana S. Mahabir, Hazi Azamatulla, Sandra Sookram

Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are increasingly affected by drought, changing rainfall patterns, aging water infrastructure, and uneven access to reliable household water. This study examines how household rainwater harvesting can support water security and climate resilience in rural Trinidad, with lessons for the wider Caribbean. The study aims to understand the practical, social, and governance conditions that influence the use of rainwater harvesting as a safe and dependable supplementary water source. The research asks: what household factors affect rainwater use; what barriers limit wider adoption; and what policy support is needed to make rainwater harvesting more effective and equitable? A mixed-methods approach is used, including household surveys, community-level observations and review of relevant water-management policies. Findings show that rainwater harvesting can improve resilience, but its success depends on affordability, adequate storage, maintenance knowledge, public trust, and clear institutional support. The study concludes that rainwater harvesting should be promoted as part of an integrated Caribbean SIDS resilience strategy, especially for rural and water-stressed communities. It supports SDGs 6, 11, and 13 by linking household water access, sustainable communities, and climate action.

This study advances the discipline of civil and environmental engineering by showing how household rainwater harvesting can be assessed not only as a small-scale water-supply option, but as part of a wider climate-resilient water-management strategy for Caribbean Small Island Developing States. It contributes to water resources engineering by linking household storage, rainfall variability, rural water access, and governance support in a practical framework that can guide planning, policy, and community-level implementation. Implications for Sustainable Development.

The study supports sustainable development by addressing the need for reliable, affordable, and climate-resilient water access in rural and water-stressed communities. Its findings can help inform policies and programmes that reduce vulnerability to drought, strengthen community resilience, and promote more equitable water security across the Caribbean. The research is directly aligned with SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SDG 13: Climate Action.1. Climate change, environment, and sustainability.

Keywords: Rainwater harvesting; Water security; Climate resilience; Caribbean SIDS; Rural communities



About the presenter | alanasizaa@gmail.com

Alana S. Mahabir is the Head of the Water Resources Agency (WRA) at the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) of Trinidad and Tobago, leading national water resources planning, hydrological monitoring, and climate resilience initiatives. She is the national counterpart for Trinidad and Tobago's isotope hydrology programme and is at the forefront of advancing water resources policy and climate change responses to strengthen national water security.

Her doctoral research focus is on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), with particular attention to regional and international policy processes and climate change adaptation.

D1-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 02

Understanding Transport Deficiency and its Role in Realising the SDGs in the Caribbean: A perspective from Trinidad

Katherine Agong • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Katherine Agong, Dr Julia Kotzebue

Transport contributes to SDGs. In the Global South there is a lack of transport services, safety, accessibility, flexibility, and affordability of transport services. Transport Deficiency (TD) is a new concept to explain this. Global North approaches to transport planning have led to unsustainable transport systems. There is a need for a holistic framework, addressing both individual and collective transport in the Global South. The study will develop a comprehensive understanding of the role of informal transport services, particularly private unregistered taxis, in addressing the transport problems. The research question is to what extent does interactions in public transport infrastructure, transport policies and services relate to transport deficiencies in first and last mile transportation in suburban and rural settlements in Trinidad?

Framework development included a literature review, identification of core concepts, systematic literature review and content analysis of the identified core concepts. Framework testing comprised the analysis of secondary and primary data. The primary data was gained from focus groups. The focus groups had participants categorized based on (Scott Baum 2021) as Government Policy Makers and Transportation Officials (Interest), Public Transportation Operators and Informal Paratransit Providers (Cohort), Commuters and Local Community Members (Service user), Experts in Urban Planning and Transport Planning/Highways Professionals/ Academics (Interest). Secondary data was gained via document analysis. Document analysis (Morgan 2022) and focus groups (Silva et al. 2015) were done by video conferencing to allow for comparison and increase validity (Silva 2012; Archibald et al. 2019). The types of documents analysed were national transport policy documents, reports published by the government and peer reviewed literature. This method allows for comparison and increased validity. Qualitative analysis using was done by adopting a multiple case study design which using replication logic (Yin 2014).

With respect to the research question, it was found that there are limitations of policies that promote large investments in transport infrastructure construction, which disregard informal transport and the importance of considering the impact on travel patterns. The TD framework is new and Global South specific. Another important finding is that traditional approaches to transport planning have led to unsustainable systems that fail to meet unique mobility needs and socio-economic conditions. A possible explanation for this might be that research on informal transport omits the Caribbean. The findings also revealed that the TD framework is innovative specifically for the Global South.

Keywords: Transport Deficiency, First and Last Mile Transport, Informal Transport, Sustainable Transport Planning, Paratransit, Trinidad



About the presenter | katherineagong@gmail.com

Katherine Agong is a distinguished and award-winning Transportation Planner and Transportation Engineer renowned for her expertise in addressing complex traffic and transport challenges for both public and private sector organizations. Holding a master's degree in Transport Planning and Engineering from the esteemed Edinburgh Napier University in Scotland, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography from University of the West Indies, Katherine boasts a solid academic foundation.As a Chartered Transport Planning Professional in the United Kingdom and a Fellow of the prestigious Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation, Katherine's professional credentials underscore her commitment to excellence in her field. Additionally, she is a registered Engineer with the Board of Engineering of Trinidad and Tobago and an Incorporated Engineer with the Engineering Council of the United Kingdom. Katherine's leadership extended to her once being the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation's representative on the board of the Transport Planning Society of the UK.

D1-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 03

Dynamically Downscaled Assessment of Solar Radiation Modification Impacts on Caribbean Wind Resources and Power Generation

Matthew Williams • Mona Campus

Authors: Matthew St. Michael Williams, Leonardo A. Clarke

Solar Radiation Modification (SRM) has been proposed as a climate intervention to temporarily offset a portion of greenhouse gas-induced warming by increasing the reflection of incoming solar radiation or enhancing outgoing longwave radiation from the Earth. However, its impacts on renewable energy, particularly wind energy, remain poorly understood at regional scales. This study investigates the effects of SRM on Caribbean wind availability and wind power generation by comparing dynamically downscaled HadGEM2-ES GeoMIP G4 SRM and RCP4.5 climate projections.

An 8-km Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) regional climate model, combined with Quantile Delta Mapping bias correction, was used to improve the representation of wind fields and assess changes in low-wind events and wind power generation at turbine hub height. The results reveal spatially heterogeneous responses, with the eastern Caribbean experiencing fewer low-wind days than the western Caribbean under SRM. The largest changes in wind power generation occur during the May–July (MJJ) and July–August (JA) seasons, ranging from increases of 5–25% to decreases of 5–10%, depending on location. Compared with coarse-resolution Global Climate Model analyses, WRF Simulations produce more moderate changes in wind resources, highlighting the importance of regional climate modeling for assessing the renewable energy implications of SRM in the Caribbean.

This study advances regional climate science and renewable energy research by providing a high-resolution assessment of how Solar Radiation Modification (SRM) may affect Caribbean wind resources and wind power generation. By dynamically downscaling climate simulations, it captures localized changes in wind patterns that are not represented in global climate models, improving understanding of SRM's regional impacts. The findings support climate-informed energy planning and contribute to sustainable development by informing resilient renewable energy strategies, particularly in support of SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Keywords: Geoengineering, Wind Power, Caribbean Climate



About the presenter | matthew.williams04@mymona.uwi.edu

Matthew St. Michael Williams is a researcher in the Climate Studies Group Mona in the Department of Physics at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Kingston, Jamaica. He is currently a PhD candidate at the UWI in Applied Physics were his research scope entails assessing the possible impacts of Solar Radiation Modification(SRM) on renewable energy power generation in the Caribbean and dynamical downscaling of the region. He holds a BSc in Energy and Environmental Physics (First Class honours) from the UWI and is certified with the IOP (Institute of Physics) publishing trusted reviewer status. He is a Co-author on 6 journal articles thus far spanning the areas of SRM, climate modelling, renewable energy and electronic signal processing.

D1-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 04

Evaluating Low-Cost Seismic Isolation for Low-Rise Buildings in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Shalini Jagnarine-Azan • Mona Campus

Authors: Shalini Jagnarine-Azan, Dr. Leighton Ellis, Dr. Luigi Di Sarno

This study reviews whether low-cost seismic isolation technologies can provide practical earthquake protection for low-rise buildings in resource-constrained SIDS, where conventional systems may be costly or difficult to obtain. Rather than selecting a particular technology or material in advance, the study seeks to identify suitable solutions through a structured assessment of published low-cost isolator prototypes. This research advances innovation, and impact by proposing sustainable technologies aligned with Caribbean development priorities.

Objectives:
(1) identify low-cost isolation concepts with demonstrated potential to reduce earthquake loads;
(2) compare suitable concepts based on environmental impact, cost and local application feasibility;
(3) identify promising options for further development and testing in Jamaica.

Methodology:
Published low-cost isolator prototypes are systematically reviewed, and their materials, geometry, construction and reported seismic isolation performance is recorded in a structured database. Because testing methods vary considerably between studies, seismic performance is first used to screen for concepts that demonstrate effective isolation behaviour. Eligible prototypes are then compared using more consistent measures, including calculated embodied carbon, estimated cost, and viability for local manufacture and construction.

Findings:
Preliminary findings show considerable variation in prototype materials, designs, testing methods, and reported performance, thereby limiting direct comparison based on seismic results alone. The developing assessment provides a common basis for comparing viable alternatives beyond seismic performance.

Conclusion & implications:
The research will identify promising low-cost isolation solutions for further development, with Jamaica as a case study for Caribbean SIDS.

This study advances seismic-isolation research beyond technical performance by incorporating environmental, economic and local implementation considerations.

Keywords: low-cost, sustainability, base isolation



About the presenter |

Shalini Jagnarine-Azan is a Chartered Structural Engineer with over 17 years of professional experience across the Caribbean. She holds a Master's degree in Structural Engineering from Imperial College London and is currently pursuing a PhD through the King's Commonwealth Fellowship Programme, researching low-cost seismic isolation systems for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
She is Vice President for the Americas (2024–2026) and a Board Trustee of the Institution of Structural Engineers, having previously served on Council and as a Trustee. In recognition of her international humanitarian contributions, she was awarded the IStructE Keith Eaton International Award in 2022.
Shalini spent more than a decade working with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) as a Disaster Risk Reduction Specialist and Structural Engineer. Her work included the development of resilient healthcare facilities, post-disaster damage assessments, emergency response, and recovery planning following hurricanes, earthquakes, flooding, and volcanic events across the Caribbean. She has led or supported resilience initiatives in Jamaica, Dominica, Haiti, The Bahamas, and several Eastern Caribbean states, and is a co-author of several PAHO technical publications on disaster-resilient infrastructure and healthcare facilities.

D1-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 05

Empowering the Community of Icacos for Climate Change Impacts using a scenario planning Framework

Shivanie Ramcharitar • St. Augustine Campus

Communities are at the frontline of the impacts of climate change. The community of Icacos has been heavily impacted by sea level rise and coastal erosion. The adaptation response has been low-cost, short-term, and based on local experiences. Trinidad and Tobago's planning legislation, the Planning and Facilitation of Development Act, has actively considered people in the planning process. However, many communities have challenges to build capacity, participate meaningfully, and they may lack knowledge about climate change. Scenario planning is a common tool for communities to engage in the planning process. Workshops can be done in communities to encourage collaboration among stakeholders, but some may not understand and feel left out of the process. The process may be unstructured and does not include a systemic educational component. The framework presented here addresses this gap by empowering community members in the planning process. This is achieved by providing them with climate change education in the scenario planning process. The collaboration of stakeholders can occur using this Scenario Planning Climate Change Education framework. The presentation will discuss the implementation of the framework via workshops, which resulted in 18 developed scenarios for planning for the future of Icacos, Trinidad.

Keywords: Community, Scenario Planning, Climate Change Education, Adaptation Planning



About the presenter | shivanie.ramcharitar@my.uwi.edu

Shivanie Ramcharitar has a MSc in Urban and Regional Planning and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education University of the West Indies. Her research centres on climate change adaptation, scenario planning and transformative learning. She has developed teaching, learning and assessment materials in secondary schools and educated learners in Geography, Environmental Science and Tourism over the past decade.

D1-S3A / ROOM A

Biodiversity, Climate Governance and Environmental Futures

2:15 PM–3:40 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Dr. Celia Davidson-Francis

Proposed Discussant
Dr. David Smith

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Khalid Fleary**
Assessment of the Growth Potential of Nursery Grown Acropora cervicornis and Acropora palmata within the Port Royal Barrier Reef.

02 **Kofi McMillan**
Harnessing the Online Space: Social Media Usage in Barbados' Climate Change Foreign Policy Agenda.

03 **Renoir Auguste**
Calling behaviour responses to environmental temperature diverge in two congeneric frog species with contrasting ranges

04 **Julianna Davis**
Grounding Energy Justice in Postcolonial Political Economy: A Caribbean Framework for Renewable Energy Policy Evaluation

05 **Denzel Lamotte**
Leveraging National Land Valuation Infrastructure for Blue Carbon MRV: A Proposed Administrative Framework for Scalable Conservation in Trinidad and Tobago.

D1-S3A / ROOM A / PAPER 01

Assessment of the Growth Potential of Nursery Grown Acropora cervicornis and Acropora palmata within the Port Royal Barrier Reef.

Khalid Fleary • Mona Campus

Authors: Khalid Fleary, Dr. Hugh Small and Chauntelle Green

Coral reefs are among the most ecologically valuable marine ecosystems, yet they continue to experience significant degradation due to climate change, coral bleaching, disease outbreak, coastal development and overfishing. In Jamaica, the decline of the ecologically important reef building Acropora cervicornis and Acropora palmata has significantly reduced their natural recovery potential and reduced the structural resilience of coral reef systems.

This study aims to evaluate the growth and survivorship performance of nursery grown A. cervicornis and A. palmata fragments within the Port Royal Barrier Reef system, while assessing the impacts of fragment collection on donor colony health. A field-based experimental approach utilizing a floating mid-water coral nursery was employed, where coral fragments sourced from multiple coral colonies were monitored for growth and survivorship using standardized protocols.

Preliminary findings indicate a significantly higher monthly survivorship in A. cervicornis compared to A. palmata during the first 10 months of monitoring. A.cervicornis recorded a survivorship of 98.7% while A.palmata recorded a survivorship of 81.9%. Survivorship was assessed as the percentage of living corals per species, per generation on the nursery.

Keywords: Coral restoration; Acropora cervicornis; Acropora palmata; Climate Change



About the presenter | khalidacfleary@gmail.com

Khalid Fleary holds a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology with a minor in International Relations, an academic combination through which he hopes to inform environmental governance and regional policy frameworks. Driven by a deep passion for environmental conservation, Khalid's postgraduate research focuses on coral reef restoration, with particular interest in developing localized standards and practical guidelines for coral rehabilitation initiatives. His work seeks to ensure that restoration efforts are not only scientifically sound but contextually relevant to the ecological and socio-political realities of small island developing states.

D1-S3A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Harnessing the Online Space: Social Media Usage in Barbados' Climate Change Foreign Policy Agenda.

Kofi McMillan • St. Augustine Campus

This paper investigated, through an explanatory-sequential mixed-methods research design involving quantitative (social media monitoring analysis) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) sources of data, the role of social media platforms, namely, X and Facebook, in advancing the climate change foreign policy agenda of Barbados.

In terms of the sampling methodology, the research applied an initial purposeful/judgemental sampling to identify 5-7 key informants such as senior government officers, communication practitioners, regional climate experts, as well as environmental journalists and multimedia professionals. Given the specialized and contextual nature of social media use in climate change promotion, the chosen sample was deemed sufficient to yield in-depth, contextually relevant insights while avoiding redundancy in perspectives. Likewise, due to temporal and physical limitations in accessing the interviewees, this sample size was deemed suitable and manageable, as it allowed for a nuanced and multifaceted understanding of Barbados' social media usage in its climate change promotion efforts within a constrained timeframe. These individuals were ideal as they possessed appropriate knowledge and expertise of Barbados' climate change foreign policy agenda and were willing to participate in virtual semi-structured interviews through Zoom. This purposeful sample was subsequently complemented by a snowball sampling methodology which expanded the sampling framework of key informants as the initial participants suggested other worthwhile participants and provided the relevant contact information to reach them. This widened the sampling frame, brought diverse perspectives into the study, and mitigated the challenges associated with participant access and availability.

Furthermore, soft power strategies through digital diplomacy have often been conceptualized as meaningful and effective measures through which small island developing states, like Barbados, can comprehensively combat their limitations and become noteworthy actors, especially in the context of foreign policy promotion and eventual success. Against this background, this paper examines the extent to which Barbados uses social media to garner awareness of the saliency of climate change as a foreign policy priority, in addition to understanding the effectiveness of such initiatives. The research questions principally assessed the evolution of social media usage in Barbados' diplomatic practice, examined the advantages and disadvantages of social media usage by Barbados as well as highlighted how Barbados can boost its efforts at climate advocacy through social media. Based on the analysis and discussion of findings, this paper then concludes with recommendations for a greater adoption of social media in promoting the climate change foreign policy agenda of Barbados, and by extension CARICOM small island developing states.

In terms of relevance to the conference theme, this investigation advances knowledge at the intersection of international relations, communication, and climate change and develops a tailored understanding of the extent of the innovation and ingenuity shown by a small island developing state (SIDS, such as Barbados in propelling their interests and objectives, both regionally and internationally.

Keywords: Foreign Policy, Social Media, Climate Change, Diplomacy, Barbados.



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Kofi McMillan possesses a Master of Science (With Distinction) in International Relations from the Institute of International Relations, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish with a minor in Communication Studies, graduating with First Class Honours and where he was awarded Prize for Caribbean Studies Research Project for his undergraduate thesis entitled "The role of metacognitive strategy awareness in advanced vocabulary acquisition. A case of Undergraduate Spanish and French Students at the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus"

Kofi has extensive practical research experience as a Research Assistant at the Elma Francois Institute for Research and Debate, Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies, and through research consultancies with the Anatol Institute for Research and Social Sciences (TAIRASS). His work has contributed to national and international projects for organizations including UNICEF, the Ministry of Labour of Trinidad and Tobago, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). He has also published opinion pieces in The Guardian on Caribbean labour issues and contemporary international affairs. His academic research focuses on digital diplomacy, climate change advocacy, and the foreign policy of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), with particular emphasis on the role of social media in advancing climate diplomacy. Kofi has presented his research at international academic conferences, including the XIX Conferencia Internacional de Estudios Caribeños at the University of Havana, Cuba, where he examined Caribbean geopolitics and China's evolving role as a development partner. His additional research interests include the Diplomatic Practice of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean Region, as well as the prospects for Caribbean Development against the backdrop of an increasingly volatile and complex regional and international landscape.

D1-S3A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Calling behaviour responses to environmental temperature diverge in two congeneric frog species with contrasting ranges

Renoir Auguste • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Renoir J. Auguste, Martha M. Munoz, Amy E. Deacon, Mark F. Hulme

Global warming is leading to increased air temperatures and tropical island fauna are particularly vulnerable to these changes. In anurans, vocalisation is an integral part of reproductive behaviour. This study investigated the effects of environmental temperature on calling behaviour in populations of two island endemic frogs with contrasting ranges: one with a narrow geographical and elevational range: Pristimantis charlottevillensis, and the other with a wider range: P. urichi. We used passive acoustic monitoring to sample ten sites over two years. From these recordings, we extracted call rate and call duration and used Generalised Linear Mixed Models to evaluate whether air temperature affected these call properties in populations of both species. We found that air temperature significantly impacts call rate but not call duration in P. urichi, whereas we found no significant effect of temperatures on call rate or call duration in P. charlottevillensis. Our results demonstrate that species restricted to narrow ranges may constrain behavioural plasticity to temperature, which supports the Climate Variability Hypothesis. These findings reveal that even closely related species may exhibit idiosyncratic behavioural responses to environmental temperatures and emphasise the need to consider future temperature changes in conservation planning for this hyper-diverse genus containing many red-listed species.

Although there has been a growing body of work assessing the effects of temperature on anuran calling behaviour, there have been few studies carried out on tropical islands. This is a major gap in the literature, and amphibian conservation research from tropical islands in general is lacking. With rising temperatures predicted to especially impact small islands, and because islands tend to have limited options for species distribution shifts, a greater understanding of how anuran calling behaviour may be impacted by temperature is especially needed in these habitats. This study aims to explore how environmental temperature may affect calling behaviour in populations of two closely related insular Pristimantis species with geographical and elevational ranges of different magnitudes. By investigating these traits in populations of two congeneric frog species, occurring at multiple sites with varying air temperature, we can better understand if and how anuran calling behaviour is impacted by this abiotic variable and consider the potential implications for the conservation of these and similar species.

Keywords: Climate variability hypothesis, Island endemics, Passive acoustics, Thermal plasticity, Tropical amphibians



About the presenter | renguste@gmail.com

Renoir Auguste is a wildlife biologist with 10+ years of experience in the Caribbean. He has a proven track record in biodiversity conservation, environmental science, and project leadership. He is an expert in herpetological field assessments with a focus on sustainable management strategies in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). His extensive research experience includes over 40 peer reviewed published articles and collaborations with local and international scientists. Renoir is currently a final year PhD candidate in the Department of Life Sciences at The University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus. His thesis investigates the application of passive acoustic monitoring to inform amphibian behaviour, ecology, conservation and management.

D1-S3A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

Grounding Energy Justice in Postcolonial Political Economy: A Caribbean Framework for Renewable Energy Policy Evaluation

Julianna Davis • St. Augustine Campus

Energy justice scholarship has emerged as a powerful lens for evaluating energy transitions, yet its dominant frameworks remain rooted in Global North assumptions, undertheorising the structural legacies of colonialism, dependency, and external control shaping energy systems in postcolonial developing countries. This paper argues that existing frameworks, including Sovacool et al.'s (2017) eight-principles model, require theoretical adaptation to capture energy justice dimensions in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Drawing on Caribbean postcolonial political economy, particularly Beckford's plantation economy model, Best and Polanyi Levitt's hinterland-metropole relations, and Girvan's dependency frameworks, the paper develops a regionally grounded theoretical framework for energy justice in Caribbean SIDS. Without such grounding, energy justice analysis risks reproducing epistemic hierarchies by applying universalist standards to contexts shaped by extraction, constrained sovereignty, and persistent external dependency.

The paper demonstrates how Caribbean intellectual traditions illuminate dimensions of injustice that mainstream frameworks obscure, including green extractivism, elite capture, and the substitution of fossil fuel dependency with new technological and financial dependencies.

The paper contributes to emerging energy justice debates in the Global South, advancing a theoretically grounded, regionally situated framework for renewable energy policy evaluation in postcolonial SIDS contexts.

Keywords: energy justice, postcolonial political economy, renewable energy policy, Small Island Developing States, Caribbean



About the presenter |

Julianna V. Davis, MSc, PGDip, BSc (Hons). Ms. Julianna Davis is a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute of International Relations at the University of the West Indies (UWI) St. Augustine Campus in Trinidad and Tobago. Her research examines renewable energy policy in Caribbean Small Island Developing States through a postcolonial political economy and energy justice lens. Her broader research interests include global energy and climate governance and North-South development cooperation.

D1-S3A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

Leveraging National Land Valuation Infrastructure for Blue Carbon MRV: A Proposed Administrative Framework for Scalable Conservation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Denzel Lamotte • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Angelleath James, Kimberley Foster, Avi Kenny, Novie Younger, Winston De La Haye, Caitlyn Sams, Jonathan Robinson, Rose Ann Smith and Rupika Delgoda

Mangrove ecosystems provide critical blue carbon sequestration and coastal protection services but remain undervalued due to the high transaction costs and institutional complexity of conventional Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) systems. This study aims to develop a scalable Administrative MRV (A-MRV) framework that leverages Trinidad and Tobago's national land valuation infrastructure to support blue carbon conservation.

The research is relevant to the Energy, Climate and Sustainability theme by proposing an innovation that integrates governance, data systems and climate finance within a Global South context. The study addresses how existing administrative systems can be repurposed to deliver cost-effective, standardized MRV at a national scale.

A three-stage Triggered Assessment workflow is applied: automated spatial filtering of eligible sites, landowner self-declaration and simplified ecological verification within municipal site-visit cycles. Mangrove condition is classified using a five-point ecological scale as a proxy for carbon sequestration potential.

Findings indicate that administrative MRV can reduce reliance on continuous international auditing while maintaining consistency and scalability. The framework demonstrates potential to support fiscal incentives, including conservation rebates and performance-linked credits.

This approach offers a practical pathway to institutionalize MRV domestically and expand equitable access to blue carbon benefits.

This study advances environmental governance and climate policy by introducing a scalable Administrative MRV framework that integrates ecological assessment into existing national systems. It demonstrates how land valuation infrastructure can be repurposed to support standardized, cost-effective monitoring of blue carbon ecosystems. The approach has direct implications for sustainable development by improving access to climate finance, supporting conservation incentives, and enabling more inclusive participation in blue carbon initiatives within small island developing states.

Keywords: Administrative MRV, Land Valuation, Fiscal Incentives, Mangrove Stratification, Carbon Forward



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Denzel Lamotte is an MSc candidate in Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. His research focuses on blue carbon systems, environmental governance and the development of scalable Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) frameworks. He is particularly interested in integrating ecological data into national administrative systems to support climate finance and conservation incentives. His work explores practical, systems-level approaches to advancing sustainable development within Caribbean and small island developing states.

D1-S3B / ROOM B

Frontiers in Science, Engineering and Responsible Innovation

2:15 PM–3:40 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Dr. Claudine Allen

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Paul Gaynor

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Bhanumattee Ramdhanie**
The Extraction of Cellulose from Bambusa vulgaris (Bamboo) Biowaste for the Synthesis of Useful Products for Environmental Purposes

02 **Karlus Redway**
Exploring the ERS Approximation for Schwarzschild Black Hole Quasinormal Modes

03 **Lisandra Seecharan**
Who Comes First? Examining Engineers' Duty of Care and Ethical Adversities in the Construction Industry of Small Island Developing States

04 **Javon Laing**
Performance Evaluation of Machine Learning Classifiers on Literal, Idiomatic, Sarcastic, and Mixed-Language Sentiments

05 **Kavya Kukkuwada Shivakumaraswami**
Development of electric field assisted spray deposition technique for fabrication of advanced solar cells

D1-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 01

The Extraction of Cellulose from Bambusa vulgaris (Bamboo) Biowaste for the Synthesis of Useful Products for Environmental Purposes

Bhanumattee Ramdhanie • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Bhanumattee Ramdhanie, Dhurjati Prasad Chakrabarti, Faisal Mohammed, Khadir Manwah, Sharad Maharaj

Cellulose is a naturally occurring polymer found in lignocellulosic biomass. The overall characteristics of cellulose, makes it an ideal compound to be explored as a solution, to satisfy the demand for biodegradable and environmentally friendly solutions to issues such as pollution. This research aims to investigate extracting cellulose from waste Bambusa vulgaris (bamboo) biomass by using the physical extraction techniques: autoclave, pressure vessel, and supercritical fluid extraction (SFE). The recovery of cellulose from waste bamboo biomass at reduced reagent concentrations was also explored. The autoclave operates at 121˚C and 15 psi which aids extraction of cellulose. SFE was used to subject the sample to pressure and temperature changes to fracture the biomass structure. SFE was done using the conditions 300 bar and 60 ˚C for 2 hours. A pressure vessel was used to securely contain higher than atmospheric pressure. The biowaste was exposed to a range of 30 psi to 90 psi, a sodium hydroxide concentration ranging from 1.5% to 20% and between 70°C and 90°C. The effects of the autoclave, pressure vessel and SFE on the biowaste was explored over a sodium hydroxide concentration of 1.5% to 20%. The pressure vessel method of extraction was the most appropriate of all the methods explored. The optimized compromise was determined by applying an efficiency score that prioritizes yield while minimizing concentration, without penalizing pressure. The optimized compromise was determined as a concentration of 13.83 wt.%, a pressure of 90 psi and a predicted yield of 23.24 % at 70 ˚C.

Cellulose is a naturally occurring polymer found in lignocellulosic biomass. The overall characteristics of cellulose makes it an ideal compound to be explored as a solution, to satisfy the demand for biodegradable and environmentally-friendly solutions to issues such as pollution. This research aims to investigate extracting cellulose from waste Bambusa vulgaris (bamboo) biomass by using the physical extraction techniques: autoclave, pressure vessel, and supercritical fluid extraction (SFE). The recovery of cellulose from waste bamboo biomass at reduced reagent concentrations was also explored. The autoclave operates at 121˚C and 15 psi which aids extraction of cellulose. SFE was used to subject the sample to pressure and temperature changes to fracture the biomass structure. SFE was done using the conditions 300 bar and 60 ˚C for 2 hours. A pressure vessel was used to securely contain higher than atmospheric pressure. The biowaste was exposed to a range of 30 psi to 90 psi, a sodium hydroxide concentration ranging from 1.5% to 20% and between 70°C and 90°C. The most appropriate method was the pressure vessel method. The optimized compromise was determined as a concentration of 13.83 wt.%, a pressure of 90 psi and a predicted yield of 23.24 % at 70 ˚C.

Keywords: biowaste, cellulose, autoclave, pressure vessel, supercritical fluid extraction



About the presenter | bhanumattee.ramdhanie@uwi.edu

Ms. Bhanumattee Ramdhanie is a Doctor of Philosophy in Chemical Engineering candidate who is currently a research assistant at the Chemical Engineering Department at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine. Ms. Ramdhanie has over 10 years of laboratory experience, specifically in Analytical Chemistry. She has a Bachelor of Science, Majoring in Chemistry and Minor in Analytical Chemistry from the same University. She also holds a Master of Science in Occupational Environmental Safety and Health from the same University and in the final stages of a Master of Science in Data Analytics from the University of East London.She has worked on many research projects including corrosion inhibition, waste to bio-resource research, bioremediation and environmental biomonitoring.

D1-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 02

Exploring the ERS Approximation for Schwarzschild Black Hole Quasinormal Modes

Karlus Redway • Mona Campus

Authors: Karlus Redway; Mahesha Narayana; Venkateswara Rao Penugonda

Black holes respond to disturbances with characteristic damped oscillations known as quasinormal modes (QNMs), whose complex frequencies encode the ringdown of spacetime itself. Reliable calculation of these frequencies is therefore essential for interpreting black hole spectra and for connecting theoretical models with gravitational-wave observations. This work explores the Eleuch-Rostovtsev-Scully (ERS) approximation as a possible semi-analytic method for computing QNMs of the Schwarzschild black hole. As the simplest black hole geometry, Schwarzschild provides a natural benchmark for testing new approaches. The radial perturbation problem of the Schwarzschild black hole is written as a Schrödinger-like equation with an effective potential barrier, subject to QNM boundary conditions: waves are purely ingoing at the event horizon and purely outgoing at spatial infinity. The ERS method, originally developed as an analytic approximation for Schrödinger-type systems, recasts the problem in Riccati form and introduces corrections beyond the usual Wentzel-Kramers-Brillouin (WKB) approximation. This study examines how that framework must be adapted to the open, complex-frequency structure of the QNM problem, with particular attention to its performance relative to established WKB-based semi-analytic approaches. By assessing the reliability of these semi-analytic methods, the work aims to strengthen the theoretical foundations of black hole spectroscopy.

This study advances gravitational physics by assessing the reliability of a semi-analytic method for calculating black hole quasinormal modes. By comparing the ERS approximation with established WKB-based approaches, the work contributes to stronger theoretical foundations for black hole spectroscopy and the interpretation of gravitational-wave signals.

Keywords: Black holes; quasinormal modes; Schwarzschild spacetime; ERS approximation; semi-analytic methods



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Karlus Redway is a PhD candidate in Physics at The University of the West Indies, Mona, working in gravitational physics and black hole perturbation theory. His research investigates quasinormal modes with emphasis on the reliability and interpretation of semi-analytic methods for black hole spectra. He has co-authored two publications on Schwarzschild and Schwarzschild-like black hole perturbations, including exact scalar quasinormal frequencies and noncommutative geometry inspired models. His current work examines new approximation methods aimed at strengthening the theoretical foundations of black hole spectroscopy.

D1-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 03

Who Comes First? Examining Engineers' Duty of Care and Ethical Adversities in the Construction Industry of Small Island Developing States

Lisandra Seecharan • St. Augustine Campus

Professional engineering societies establish codes of ethics to guide engineers' duty of care to three main stakeholders: society, the profession, and the client. Despite these frameworks, construction remains one of the world's most ethically challenged industries. This study investigates duty of care and its relationship to ethical adversities in the construction industry of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). A Delphi survey with expert practitioners informed the development of a closed-ended questionnaire, yielding 156 valid responses from professional engineers. Data was analysed using the Kruskal–Wallis non-parametric test, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Findings revealed a significant prioritization of the client (60% first priority), followed by the profession (32% second priority), with society ranked last (24%). SEM results identified client-driven influences, particularly bribery and nepotism, as the strongest root causes of duty-of-care breaches. These findings reveal a critical misalignment between prescribed ethical obligations and professional practice. This study is very telling in academia and practice as it highlights the top root causes that contribute to ethical shortfalls within the construction industry and confirms that engineering professionals prioritize the client firstly, then profession and lastly the society.

This research investigates the critical root causes and adverse effects of ethical shortfalls within the construction industry of Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Although the construction industry is a key driver of economic growth and sustainable development, it is widely recognised as one of the most ethically challenged industries worldwide. The study explores the relationship between professionalism, ethics, and duty of care, highlighting engineers' responsibilities to three key stakeholders: society, clients, and the profession. The findings identify the most critical root causes of ethical shortfalls and their consequences, including cost overruns, poor-quality construction, and compromised delivery of essential infrastructure such as hospitals, roads, and housing developments. The research is highly relevant to engineering as it provides evidence-based insights that can inform policies, professional guidelines, and institutional measures to address unethical practices and improve project outcomes. Importantly, the results from over 100 engineers across the Caribbean revealed that engineers tend to prioritise clients first and society (the public and the environment) last in their decision-making processes. These findings highlight a significant challenge to sustainable development, as engineering decisions especially in construction have far-reaching social, environmental, and economic implications. By raising awareness of these decision-making patterns and encouraging engineers to critically reflect on their duty of care, the research promotes a more balanced approach that better safeguards societal and environmental interests. The findings can also be used by professional bodies, policymakers, and organisations to develop targeted interventions that strengthen ethical practice, enhance public trust, and support the delivery of resilient and sustainable infrastructure throughout the Caribbean.

Keywords: Duty of care, ethics, engineering, sustainability



About the presenter | lisandra.seecharan@my.uwi.edu

Lisandra Seecharan is a Civil Engineer and Master of Philosophy (MPhil) researcher at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine and Project Engineer. She has authored and co-authored several peer-reviewed publications exploring resilience, sustainability, and innovation within the construction industry, with particular emphasis on the challenges faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Her research interests encompass sustainable housing, climate change adaptation of the built environment, engineering ethics, mental health in construction, artificial intelligence in construction, and sustainable construction practices. She also serves as Secretary of the Caribbean Regional Group of the Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE), where she contributes to advancing the structural engineering profession across the region and works toward Chartership. Through her academic and professional activities, she is committed to promoting resilient infrastructure, ethical engineering practice, and the adoption of emerging technologies to support a more sustainable built environment.

D1-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 04

Performance Evaluation of Machine Learning Classifiers on Literal, Idiomatic, Sarcastic, and Mixed-Language Sentiments

Javon Laing • Mona Campus

Sentiment analysis models often struggle in linguistically diverse environments where figurative language, dialectal variation, and code-switching influence meaning. This study evaluates the performance of five machine learning classifiers: Support Vector Machine (SVM), Logistic Regression, Naive Bayes, K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), and Decision Trees — across literal, idiomatic, sarcastic, Creole, and mixed-language sentiment categories. Ultimately, the study aims to advance the creation of a sentiment analysis model that can accurately analyse more diverse linguistics datasets, seamlessly aligning with the conference theme of science, engineering and innovation. Formative research was conducted to determine which machine learning models perform best for specific sentiment types and why. Using a manually constructed and balanced dataset, TF-IDF feature extraction was applied and models were evaluated using accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. Results showed that no single classifier consistently outperformed others across all categories. SVM achieved the highest overall accuracy (52%), while Naive Bayes performed best on literal sentiment, Logistic Regression on Creole expressions, SVM on idiomatic sentiment, and KNN on sarcasm and mixed-language sentiments. The findings indicate that sentiment classification performance is highly dependent on linguistic context. Consequently, adaptive, sentiment-aware, and hybrid modeling approaches are recommended for improving sentiment analysis in varied linguistics contexts.

Keywords: Sentiment Analysis, Machine Learning, Linguistics



About the presenter | javonlaing3@gmail.com

Javon L. Laing is a 22-year-old postgraduate student at the University of the West Indies, Mona, currently pursuing a Master of Science degree in Computer Science. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and has developed a strong foundation in technology, data analysis, and problem-solving. Passionate about leveraging innovation to address real-world challenges, Javon is particularly interested in designing and implementing data-driven solutions that support sustainable growth and advance regional development across the Caribbean. Through his academic and professional pursuits, he remains committed to using technology as a catalyst for positive change.

D1-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 05

Development of electric field assisted spray deposition technique for fabrication of advanced solar cells

Kavya Kukkuwada Shivakumaraswami • To verify Campus

Authors: Kavya Shivakumaraswami, Dinesh Pathak, Davinder Pal Sharma, Vinod Kumar*

Solar energy is an important source of clean and renewable energy, and the development of efficient, cost-effective solar-cell technologies is essential for sustainable energy generation. Various fabrication techniques have been developed for depositing functional thin-films used in advanced solar-cells. Among these, spray deposition is a simple and easy method for depositing thin films on suitable substrates. It can reduce material costs and manufacturing complexity while enabling flexible and versatile solar-cell designs.

This article describes the development of a spray deposition system at the University of the West Indies, St.Augustine Solar-Laboratory, Physics Department. Perovskite, organic, and tandem solar cells are among the advanced solar-cell technologies that will be manufactured and optimized using this method. To produce consistent, superior thin films, process parameters including spray time, substrate temperature, solution concentration, and spray distance can be methodically changed. Additionally, the impact of an applied electric field on the films' optical, electrical, morphological, and structural characteristics will be examined. Developing an appropriate method for manufacturing high-performance solar-cell devices is the primary goal. The Solar-Laboratory's solar simulator will be used to assess their performance. In keeping with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the study is anticipated to assist regional solar-cell manufacturing and sustainable energy research.

Keywords: Spray Deposition, Solar Cells, Renewable Energy, Sustainable Development, Thin films



About the presenter | kavya93swamy@gmail.com

Kavya Kukkuwada Shivakumaraswami is a dedicated and detail-oriented Ph.D. scholar in Physics, with strong academic grounding in areas like quantum mechanics, astrophysics, nuclear physics, and condensed matter physics. My expertise in research methodologies, data analysis, and scientific simulations, combined with skills in radiation physics and safety, position me well for advanced research. I have a passion for pushing the boundaries of knowledge in physics and am committed to innovative problem-solving, collaboration, and academic excellence. Eager to contribute to cutting-edge research through a PhD program.

D1-S4A / ROOM A

Climate-Smart Agriculture and Resilient Food Production

3:50 PM–5:15 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator

Proposed Discussant

Professor Saravanakumar Duraisamy

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Arianna Jahoor**
Preliminary Assessment of the Effects of Malabar Spinach (Basella alba L.) as a Dietary Supplement on Growth and Carcass Characteristics of Broiler Rabbits (Oryctolagus cuniculus) in Trinidad.

02 **Eden John**
Present and Future Perspectives on Hydroponically Sprouted Grains as a Sustainable Livestock Feed Resource: Wheat (Triticum) and Malted Sorghum (Sorghum bicolor).

03 **John Rajah**
Integrated Disease Management of Stem-End Rot and Anthracnose Diseases in Soursop

04 **Ranate Odwin**
Farmers' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices towards the Utilisation, Integration, and Agronomic Benefits of Vinasse as a Fertiliser for the Production of Vegetable Crops in Barbados

05 **Tricia Jones**
Sustainable Rabbit Production: Common Tree Fodder as an Alternative to Conventional Feedstuff in the Caribbean

D1-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 01

Preliminary Assessment of the Effects of Malabar Spinach (Basella alba L.) as a Dietary Supplement on Growth and Carcass Characteristics of Broiler Rabbits (Oryctolagus cuniculus) in Trinidad.

Arianna Jahoor • St. Augustine Campus

Basella alba was evaluated for its effectiveness as a supplemental feed ingredient in broiler rabbit diets. The objective of this research was to assess the influence of this underutilized, invasive, medicinal plant species on the growth and carcass productive traits in broiler rabbits, under a preliminary inclusion percentage.

A feeding trial was conducted over 5 weeks using 20 New Zealand x Californian cross breed rabbits. Animals were randomly separated by weight and sex into two groups of 10. The control group (T0) was offered standard rabbit ration pellets, while the treatment group (T1) was offered supplemented rabbit ration pellets with 1% plant meal. Growth and carcass traits were evaluated between the groups. Parametric and non-parametric data was statistically analysed using One-Way ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis tests. Four mortalities occurred from T0 and one from T1. Parasitology analysis confirmed coccidia present among both groups. Necropsy results confirmed mortality in T0 to coccidiosis, and T1 to heat stress. Deceased animals were excluded from the statistical analysis.

Growth performance parameters of the treatment groups were not significantly different. However kidney weight (T0=14.00 g, T1=10.89 g, p-value 0.009) and muscle crude fat percentage (T0: 2.93, T1: 1.64, p-value 0.004) were significantly different. Mortalities stimulated interest in the nutraceutical protective benefits of malabar spinach.
Malabar spinach can be supplemented into rabbit diets at an inclusion rate of 1%, while maintaining an equivalent growth performance to standard rabbit ration.

Keywords: Malabar Spinach (Basella alba L.), Poi Bhaji, alternative feedstuff, pelletized feed, growth performance, invasive plant species, sustainable livestock feeding.



About the presenter | angelleath.james@uwi.edu

Arianna Jahoor (B.Sc. Agriculture, 2025) is a postgraduate student (MPhil in Livestock Science) who has one published review paper in a peer review journal, has completed one successful undergraduate project that is currently under review to be published and has presented in two conferences.

D1-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Present and Future Perspectives on Hydroponically Sprouted Grains as a Sustainable Livestock Feed Resource: Wheat (Triticum) and Malted Sorghum (Sorghum bicolor).

Eden John • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Eden John, Dr. Kegan Jones

Hydroponically sprouted grains such as wheat and malted sorghum represent a sustainable alternative to conventional forage. Integrating these grains into livestock diets can improve productivity while contributing to resilient and environmentally responsible food systems. This study investigated the nutritional composition, digestibility, and feed efficiency of hydroponically sprouted wheat and malted sorghum as innovative fodder options for ruminant livestock facing climate-related challenges. The PRISMA 2020 guidelines were followed, with literature reporting nutrient digestibility, rumen ecology, and feed efficiency outcomes. Findings revealed that hydroponic wheat sprouts increased crude protein by 25–40%, enhanced mineral bio-availability, and improved enzyme activity, while reducing starch and anti-nutritional factors. Feeding trials reported higher dry matter intake, improved volatile fatty acid profiles, and increased milk yield efficiency. Malted sorghum sprouts enhanced nitrogen metabolism, stabilized rumen pH, and improved reproductive performance in small ruminants. Processing methods such as soaking and fermentation further reduced tannins and boosted phytochemical content, while dairy cow trials demonstrated improved nitrogen partitioning and milk protein yield. Conclusions emphasize that hydroponic wheat and malted sorghum are not only viable alternatives to conventional forage but also strategic tools for advancing sustainable livestock systems, strengthening food security, and embedding resilience into climate-smart agriculture.

With this study as a foundation, I intend to expand into evaluating locally available grains and legumes in Trinidad and Tobago as hydroponically sprouted fodder for both ruminants and non-ruminants. This direction advances livestock science by integrating indigenous feed resources into systematic nutritional assessments, while reducing dependence on imported concentrates.

Keywords: hydroponic fodder, wheat sprouts, malted sorghum, nutrient digestibility, sustainable livestock



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Eden N. John is a MPhil candidate in Livestock Science at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, where they manage the Wildlife Unit at the University Field Station. Their research focuses on sustainable feeding strategies for neotropical mammals, particularly the agouti (Dasyprocta leporina), and evaluates agricultural by-products as low-cost feed alternatives. Eden has published multiple peer-reviewed studies on agouti nutrition, comparative profiles of neotropical mammals, and the nutritional value of wildlife meat and organs. Current work explores hydroponically sprouted grains such as maize, barley, wheat and sorghum as sustainable fodder for ruminants, with future directions aimed at utilizing local grains and legumes in Trinidad and Tobago.

D1-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

Integrated Disease Management of Stem-End Rot and Anthracnose Diseases in Soursop

John Rajah • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: John Rajah, Saravanakumar Duraisamy and Augustus Thomas

Stem-end rot and anthracnose are major fungal diseases that affect soursop production in Trinidad with losses exceeding 60% under favourable conditions when unmanaged. The pathogens Colletotrichum and Lasiodiplodia species contribute to significant pre and postharvest losses. A recent study of a Trincity orchard identified two distinct disease symptomologies. Anthracnose was characterised by dark sunken lesions with raised postulates and pink mucilage while stem-end rot exhibited light brown discolouration that progressed to fruit necrosis, mumification and fruit drop. Pathogens were identified based on host symptomology and microscopic analysis of fungal reproductive structures. Disease incidence was highest in fruits infested with scale insects and seed borer wasps, suggesting these pests facilitate pathogen infection. An integrated disease management strategy was implemented, consisting of sanitation through pruning, a single application of imidacloprid and copper sulfate pentahydrate, then weekly applications of 0.2% neem (Azadirachta indica) and bay leaf (Pimenta racemosa) extracts with Biophyt 1.0 containing Bacillus amyloliquefaciens. This approach substantially reduced both pest populations and disease incidence of anthracnose and stem-end rot while improving fruit yield. These findings demonstrate that integrating cultural, chemical, botanical, and biological control measures provides an effective and sustainable management strategy for anthracnose and stem-end rot in soursop production systems.

Integrating cultural, chemical, botanical, and biological control measures provides an effective and sustainable management strategy for anthracnose and stem-end rot in soursop production systems and provides another crop protection avenue for their control rather than relying solely on the fungicide applications that can prove to become costly with long term use.

Keywords: Food Security, Anthracnose, Stem end rot, Soursop



About the presenter | john.rajah@my.uwi.edu

My name is John Rajah, a research student at the Department of Food Production, Faculty of Food and Agriculture, University of the West Indies. I am enrolled in the MSc. Tropical Crop Protection with research interests in fungal plant pathogens, alternative control methods and biotechnological approaches.

D1-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

Farmers' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices towards the Utilisation, Integration, and Agronomic Benefits of Vinasse as a Fertiliser for the Production of Vegetable Crops in Barbados

Ranate Odwin • St. Augustine Campus

As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) Barbados is at the mercy of more well-established countries where agricultural imports are concerned; and this has placed the island in a precarious position. This research examines farmers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding vinasse usage and integration for agronomic practices in Barbados. A structured questionnaire was applicable to a sample of 235 farmers throughout districts in Barbados, and 205 participants responded in total. Most of the respondents in this survey were males (n=1) as compared to females (n=39). Research outcomes indicated that there was a generalized lack of knowledge among farmers and 100% of them never applied vinasse to vegetable crops planted in Barbados. Also, a key response (22.93%) indicated that farmers thought vinasse was a good alternative to existing fertilizers sold. Participants reported (60.98%) that they never heard of the term vinasse. Most farmers (77.07%) had an unfamiliar viewpoint regarding the safe usage of vinasse in vegetable production. The personal preference of fertilizer for farmers (85%) in Barbados was reported as chicken manure. The findings reported significant relationships between farmers' having access to vinasse and applying it in agronomic practices ($p<.001$).

Vinasse can be seen as an alternative fertilizer source for farmers in Barbados, as it is a local; readily available; and affordable waste product created via the rum distillation processes on the island. The rationale of this research is to encourage farmers, whilst highlighting the utilization of vinasse as a fertilizer; in terms of its nutrient content, soil amendment benefits, and cost-effectiveness for the production of vegetable crops in Barbados.

Keywords: Agronomic Benefits; Barbados; Farmers; Vegetable Crops; Vinasse



About the presenter |

From a tender age, I have loved and had boundless enthusiasm where agriculture is concerned. This has charged my desire and driven me to pursue agriculture scholastically. I have been an Educator for the past 24 years, teaching agriculture has allowed me to contribute to the development of the youth; who will inevitably push the agricultural sector forward. Throughout my teaching career at secondary and tertiary level institutions, I have worked tirelessly to encourage young persons of all ages and stages; to pursue agriculture at the Technical and Bachelors level as they are great opportunities in the industry. At present I am an Instructor at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology, within the Agriculture Division. My areas of concentration are Farming as a Business; Farm Operations; Horticulture; Landscape Maintenance; Nursery Management; Plant Science; Root Crop Production; Tree Crop Production; and Vegetable Production. Additionally, I have previously worked with A Ganar as an Agricultural Techniques Program Trainer.My qualifications include: Caribbean Vocational Qualification Assessor Certificate Level 4, Post Graduate Diploma in Education, B.Sc. General Agriculture (Plants & Animals), Associate Degree in Applied Science in Agriculture. I am presently pursuing my M.Sc. in Agri-Food Safety and Quality Assurance at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus.

D1-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 05

Sustainable Rabbit Production: Common Tree Fodder as an Alternative to Conventional Feedstuff in the Caribbean

Tricia Jones • St. Augustine Campus

The rising demand and resulting competition for ingredients used historically in the preparation of rabbit feeds, have posed a challenge to sustainable production. This study was conducted to evaluate the effects of incorporating the leaf extract of Trichanthera (Trichanthera gigantea) a locally available, non-traditional feed additive, on growth performance, carcass traits, blood biochemistry and haematological indices of growing rabbits. A total of 38 weaned rabbits were assigned randomly into four treatment groups supplemented with 0 (control, C), 5.00 (T1), 2.50 (T2) and 1.25 (T3) g Trichanthera extract/L water for the eight-week trial. Results revealed the addition of 5g Trichanthera extract significantly increased the urea concentration and significantly lowered the basos value, though both values remained well within the standard reference ranges for healthy rabbits. However, feeding different concentrations of Trichanthera extract did not show significant differences in the total body and daily weight gains, total feed intake, feed conversion ratio and carcass characteristics. These findings suggest that the incorporation of Trichanthera extract up to 5g/L in rabbit diets is safe and well-tolerated, posing no harmful effects to rabbit health and could help reduce production costs, thereby supporting sustainable rabbit production, to enhance regional food security.

Keywords: rabbits; Trichanthera; performance; carcass traits; clinical pathology



About the presenter | triciansjones@gmail.com

Tricia Jones is a post-graduate student, pursuing an MSc in Tropical Animal Science and Production at the UWI St. Augustine Campus.Her research focuses on optimizing rabbit diets using locally available tropical forages, such as Trichanthera, to improve health and productivity, which can support sustained production to meet the needs of developing countries.

D1-S4B / ROOM B

Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Livelihoods

3:50 PM–5:15 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Professor Marcia Roye

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Ronald Roopnarine

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Jody Brown**
Youth Engagement in Agriculture as a Pathway to Food Security and Economic Empowerment

02 **Meera Mahase-Forgenie**
Assessing the Landscape of Nutrition Research in Caribbean Small Island Developing States: A Systematic Scoping Review

03 **Valmiki Singh**
Postharvest Management of Anthracnose in Papaya Utilizing Non-Chemical Approaches

04 **Venercia Herelle**
Evaluation of native Bacillus amyloliquefaciens lipopeptide extract against Phytophthora capsici in Pepper

05 **Xavier Joseph**
Optimising Breadfruit (Artocarpus altilis) Nutrition through Lessons from the Artocarpus Genus and Other Commercially Important Fruit Tree Crops in the Caribbean: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

D1-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 01

Youth Engagement in Agriculture as a Pathway to Food Security and Economic Empowerment

Jody Brown • Mona Campus

The sustainability of agriculture in the Caribbean is increasingly challenged by an ageing farming population, declining youth participation, climate vulnerability, and persistent concerns about food security. With fewer young people entering agriculture, the region faces growing risks to generational renewal, local food production, and long-term agricultural sustainability. At the same time, youth unemployment and underemployment create an opportunity to reposition agriculture as a viable pathway for entrepreneurship, livelihood development, and economic empowerment.

This study examined how youth engagement in agriculture can strengthen food security while creating sustainable economic opportunities across the Caribbean. A mixed-methods approach was used to capture perspectives from different age groups and national contexts. Twenty participants were interviewed, providing qualitative insights into experiences, perceptions, opportunities, and challenges associated with youth participation in agriculture. In addition, 30 respondents from various Caribbean countries completed an online questionnaire. Quantitative responses were analysed descriptively, while interview data and open-ended questionnaire responses were examined thematically.

Findings indicate that youth participation in agriculture extends beyond traditional farming to include agro-processing, value-added product development, agribusiness, marketing, food entrepreneurship, technology integration, and climate-smart practices. Participants also identified barriers such as limited access to land, finance, training, technology, markets, mentorship, and institutional support. The findings further suggest that presenting agriculture as innovative, technology-driven, and economically viable can strengthen youth interest and participation.

The study concludes that meaningful youth engagement in agriculture can contribute to food security, employment creation, entrepreneurship, economic empowerment, and the sustainability of Caribbean agriculture. Greater investment in youth-centred agricultural education, financing, mentorship, innovation, and cross-sector partnerships is therefore essential to develop a new generation of producers, agripreneurs, innovators, and agricultural value-chain participants.

Keywords: Youth engagement, agriculture, food security, economic empowerment, agripreneurship, Caribbean, sustainable livelihoods



About the presenter | jodybrown27@yahoo.com

Jody Brown is an accomplished educator, researcher, author, and advocate for youth empowerment. He serves as a Lecturer and Programme Coordinator in the Department of Human Ecology and Hospitality Services at The Mico University College, Jamaica. A recipient of the prestigious 2022 LASCO/MoEY/JTC Teacher of the Year Award, he holds a Master's degree in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Leadership in Workforce Development.

Beyond academia, Brown is passionate about boys' education, mentorship, and holistic development. He has spearheaded and hosted Boys' Symposiums for primary school boys across the parishes of St. Thomas, Portland, and St. Mary. These initiatives provide platforms for mentorship, motivation, character development, and academic empowerment, inspiring young boys to embrace positive values, develop confidence, and realize their full potential.

His scholarly interests encompass TVET modernization, STEM integration, food security, entrepreneurship, and Caribbean indigenous crops. His research explores the nutritional and economic potential of underutilized regional staples, including dasheen and breadfruit.

As the founder of Devanjo's Kitchen, Brown bridges academic knowledge with entrepreneurship and culinary innovation while promoting Jamaica's rich culinary heritage.

His professional journey reflects an enduring commitment to educational transformation, workforce readiness, community development, and youth empowerment.

D1-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 02

Assessing the Landscape of Nutrition Research in Caribbean Small Island Developing States: A Systematic Scoping Review

Meera Mahase-Forgenie • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Meera Mahase-Forgenie, Philip J McBride, Catherine R Brown, Emily Haynes, Karyn Morrissey, Madhuvanti M Murphy, Arlette Saint Ville, Cornelia Guell

Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face persistent challenges related to food insecurity, malnutrition, and diet-related non-communicable diseases. However, concerns remain regarding the availability, accessibility, and geographical representativeness of nutrition research to inform policy. This systematic scoping review examined how food and nutrition research is distributed across Caribbean SIDS, the methodologies and tools employed, and patterns of data accessibility, authorship, and research funding. Following PRISMA-ScR guidelines, peer-reviewed studies published between September 2007 and December 2022 were identified through six health and social science databases. Eligible studies examined human food and nutrition outcomes, including dietary intake, food security, and nutritional status, across 29 Caribbean SIDS. Descriptive statistics and social network analysis were used to examine research coverage, methodological approaches, institutional affiliations, and funding relationships. Of 6,376 records identified, 337 studies met the inclusion criteria. Research output increased over time but remained concentrated in Puerto Rico, Haiti, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic, leaving smaller SIDS under-represented. Although 126 nutritional tools and indices were identified, access to primary research data remained limited. Research leadership and funding were predominantly associated with institutions outside the Caribbean, particularly in the United States and Europe. These findings highlight persistent geographical and institutional inequalities in the regional nutrition evidence base and underscore the need for stronger Caribbean-led research capacity, improved data-sharing mechanisms, and coordinated investment to support equitable, evidence-informed nutrition policymaking.

Keywords: equity, research distribution, Social Network Analysis, tools, data accessibility, LMIC



About the presenter | meera.mahase@my.uwi.edu

Meera Mahase-Forgenie is a PhD candidate in Geography at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. Her research focuses on food security policy in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), sustainable rural development and food sovereignty. She combines rigorous empirical methods and policy analysis to address the complex challenges faced by remote agricultural and fishing communities. Meera is particularly experienced in Social Network Analysis (SNA), using tools like UCINET to map and assess institutional and community relationships influencing food and nutrition systems across the Caribbean. Her work engages with national and regional stakeholders to explore how networks of producers, markets, institutions, and communities can be leveraged for resilient and sustainable food systems. Passionate about bridging research and policy, Meera advocates for evidence-based strategies that strengthen local food systems and empower rural livelihoods. She aims to promote policies that foster food sovereignty and support sustainable and resilient rural futures for Caribbean SIDS.

D1-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 03

Postharvest Management of Anthracnose in Papaya Utilizing Non-Chemical Approaches

Valmiki Singh • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Valmiki Singh, Saravanakumar Duraisamy and Augustus Thomas

Papaya is an economically important tropical fruit valued for its nutritional benefits. However, its production and profitability are constrained by anthracnose, a major fungal disease caused by Colletotrichum gloeosporioides resulting in both pre and postharvest losses. Disease incidence has been reported at 90 to 100% in most production fields, with postharvest losses estimated at 40 to 60% among retailers supplying the fresh fruit market. Conventional management of anthracnose relies heavily on the applications of synthetic fungicides. However, their continued effectiveness is increasingly challenged by the development of fungicide resistance and concerns regarding chemical residues on human health. As such, non-chemical alternatives have attracted much attention for sustainable disease management. Our study explores the use of Bacillus amyloliquefaciens PRIN1 for the management of anthracnose in papaya. Lab studies showed PRIN1 has strong antimicrobial activity against many fungal pathogens. Our studies have shown that PRIN1 applied as a liquid dip, followed by mycelial-plug inoculation, reduced mean lesion size and disease incidence by 90.3% and 85.2% respectively relative to the pathogen control. Sequential injection of PRIN1 two hours prior to pathogen inoculation also reduced lesion development by 40.7%, although all fruits eventually developed lesions. The current output strongly supports the potential for Bacillus amyloliquefaciens PRIN1 in postharvest management of anthracnose disease in papaya.

This study advances the field of plant pathology by evaluating the efficacy of non-chemical approaches for the postharvest management of papaya anthracnose. The findings are expected contribute to sustainable disease management strategies while generating region-specific evidence for the use of Bacillus amyloliquefaciens and neem-based products against Colletotrichum gloeosporioides. By reducing reliance on synthetic fungicides, the research supports environmentally responsible agriculture, improved food safety and reduced postharvest losses.

Keywords: Food Security, Papaya, Anthracnose, Bacillus amyloliquefaciens



About the presenter | valimiki.Singh@my.uwi.edu

Valmiki Singh is a MSc. candidate in Tropical Crop Protection at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus. His research focuses on sustainable postharvest disease management of tropical fruits and vegetables through the use of non-chemical approaches, with particular emphasis on Bacillus amyloliquefaciens and neem-based products. He is also an Agricultural Extension Officer with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Trinidad and Tobago, where he contributes to farmer support, and crop production initiatives. His research interests include plant pathology, agronomy, climate change and sustainable agriculture.

D1-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 04

Evaluation of native Bacillus amyloliquefaciens lipopeptide extract against Phytophthora capsici in Pepper

Venercia Herelle • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Venercia Herelle, Saravanakumar Duraisamy and Augustus Thomas

Pepper (Capsicum annuum L.) is one of the most economically important hosts of Phytophthora capsici, with associated crop losses of up to 40% in Trinidad and Tobago despite routine pesticide application. Management of the pathogen remains challenging. This study explores the use of B. amyloliquefaciens to manage the disease as B. amyloliquefaciens have demonstrated the ability to restrict mycelial growth in dual plate cultures.

Crude bacterial free lipopeptides (cLPs) extracted using ethyl acetate was assessed using the disc diffusion and the broth dilution assay. The antagonistic activity of the extracts displayed in the plate studies against P. capsici strongly suggest its role in pathogen suppression. Broth dilution assays showed reduced zoospore germination and germ tube length by up to 83% and 84% respectively. Building on these findings, glasshouse experiments will evaluate the efficacy of cLPs treatments in suppressing P. capsici. The indirect effect of the lipopeptide will be assessed through induce systemic resistance (ISR) through the expression of selected pathogenesis-related (PR) genes; PR1, PR2, PR3, and PR5. The findings are expected to improve the understanding of the dual mechanisms of pathogen suppression by indigenous B. amyloliquefaciens and contribute to sustainable management strategies for P. capsici in pepper production systems.

Keywords: Bacillus amyloliquefaciens, lipopeptides, Phytophthora capsici, induced systemic resistance



About the presenter | venercia.herelle@gmail.com

My name is Venercia Herelle, and I am an Agricultural Officer with the Ministry of Agriculture, Saint Lucia, and a Master of Science candidate in Tropical Crop Protection at The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine. I hold a Bachelor of Science (First-Class Honours) in Agriculture from UWI and a Master of Science in International Public Health from Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom. My professional experience spans plant pathology, agricultural diagnostics, crop protection, and public health laboratory systems, enabling me to contribute to national plant health surveillance, laboratory quality management, and applied agricultural research. I have also participated in regional pesticide management initiatives and agricultural research projects that promote sustainable agricultural development.I am the recipient of several academic awards, including the UWI Faculty Prize and Principal's Prize. My current research focuses on the biological control of Phytophthora capsici in pepper using indigenous Bacillus amyloliquefaciens lipopeptides. My broader research interests include plant pathology, biological control, integrated disease management, agricultural diagnostics, and sustainable crop protection.

D1-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 05

Optimising Breadfruit (Artocarpus altilis) Nutrition through Lessons from the Artocarpus Genus and Other Commercially Important Fruit Tree Crops in the Caribbean: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Xavier Joseph • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Xavier A. Joseph, Oral O. Daley

Breadfruit (Artocarpus altilis), introduced into the Caribbean in the late 18th century, is an underutilised and neglected crop species, that holds significant potential for alleviating food and nutritional insecurity. Its adaptation to tropical climates, ability to thrive in marginal land, high productivity, robust nutritional composition and carbon sequestration capabilities for sustainable agriculture under a changing climate make it an important candidate for expanded cultivation. However, commercial production remains low due to a lack of agronomic information, especially regarding nutrition management. This study aims to systematically review the available literature on nutrient management of breadfruit and examine evidence from related Artocarpus species and commercially important tropical fruit tree crops, including jackfruit, avocado, citrus, guava and mango. The evidence will be synthesized to identify principles that could inform nutrient management strategies for breadfruit and answer the question "Would fertilisation management impact the growth and yield of breadfruit?" The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. Only four publications addressing breadfruit fertilisation were identified, none of which were peer-reviewed journal articles, highlighting a substantial gap in published empirical research on nutrient management in this crop. In contrast, numerous studies on related species consistently demonstrated significant improvements in vegetative growth, flowering, fruit set, yield and fruit quality following balanced nutrient application, particularly where nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium were optimised alongside secondary and micronutrients. Although direct evidence for breadfruit remains limited, these findings provide a strong scientific foundation for developing nutrient management strategies and designing future fertiliser trials. Addressing this knowledge gap is essential for improving breadfruit productivity, supporting sustainable intensification, and strengthening food security and climate resilience across the Caribbean.

Keywords: Crop nutrition, nutrient management, sustainable production, underutilized crops, yield



About the presenter | xavier.joseph@my.uwi.edu

My name is Xavier Joseph and I am currently an MPhil candidate in Crop Science at the Faculty of Food and Agriculture, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. My research focuses on improving the cultivation and management of breadfruit (Artocarpus altilis), with particular emphasis on plant nutrition, sustainable agronomic practices, and climate-resilient production systems. I am an advocate for research on underutilised tropical crops to strengthen food and nutrition security and promote sustainable agricultural development throughout the Caribbean.

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Conference PROGRAMME

DAY 2

Thursday, 19 November

Online • All times in Jamaica time (GMT–5)

9:00 AM to 10:15 AM	Opening session and guest speaker • Shahenda Refaat	
10:15 AM to 10:30 AM	Technical / screen-share transition	
10:30 AM to 11:55 AM	ROOM A **Trade, Regional Integration and Small-State Development**	ROOM B **Financial Markets, Inflation and Macroeconomic Resilience**
11:55 AM to 12:05 PM	Morning Comfort Break	
12:05 PM to 1:30 PM	ROOM A **Enterprise, Consumer Behaviour and the Future of Work**	ROOM B **Institutions, Diplomacy and Regional Governance**
1:30 PM to 2:15 PM	Lunch Break	
2:15 PM to 3:40 PM	ROOM A **Gender, Justice, Security and Institutional Accountability**	ROOM B **Digital Transformation, AI and Institutional Change**
3:40 PM to 3:50 PM	Afternoon Comfort Break	
3:50 PM to 5:15 PM	ROOM A **Education, Leadership and Workforce Futures**	ROOM B **Inclusive Institutions, Human Development and Social Reintegration**

DAY 2 | THURSDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2026

Opening Ceremony

9:00 am to 10:30 am Jamaica time (GMT-5)

Moderator

Mr. Satesh Sookhai
PhD Candidate
The UWI, St. Augustine Campus

Welcome & Opening Remarks	**Professor Aldrie Henry-Lee** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Studies and Research), The UWI
Introduction of Guest Speaker	**Mr. Cashave Shaw** President, Global Campus Association of Postgraduate Students
Guest Speaker	**Ms. Shahenda Refaat** *Building a Career of Impact: Navigating Challenges, Seizing Opportunities, and Defining Your Professional Path*
	Q&A
Vote of Thanks	**Ms. Antionette Ricketts** President, Mona Campus Association of Postgraduate Students

GUEST SPEAKER

Shahenda Refaat

Operations Manager
Luya International FZE



Shahenda Refaat is from Alexandria, Egypt, a UAE-based operations executive, leadership strategist, and dedicated community advocate. With over a decade of hands-on experience driving business performance in fast-paced international industries—including logistics and global maritime markets—she specializes in building robust workflows and managing cross-functional teams that deliver bottom-line results. She currently leads organizational strategy and daily business execution as the Operations Manager for Lulya International FZE.

Believing that impactful leadership requires an evolutionary mindset, Shahenda paired her corporate execution skills with advanced global business strategy, completing her Executive MBA in Strategic Leadership from the Valar Institute, Quantic School of Business and technology - USA.

Beyond her corporate achievements, Shahenda is deeply committed to social impact, humanitarian work, and civic engagement as an active member of the worldwide Lions Club network. By balancing the precision of everyday corporate operations with a lifelong mission for service, she empowers future professionals to step out of their comfort zones, take continuous ownership of their paths, and architect sustainable careers that leave a lasting mark on their industries and communities.

D2-S1A / ROOM A

Trade, Regional Integration and Small-State Development

10:30 AM–11:55 AM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Dr. Allison Fung

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Keron Niles

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Isaiah Mc Intosh**
A Dynamic Model of Consecutive Migrant Waves and Balance of Payments Constrained Growth

02 **Mark Roopchan**
Investigation of the importance of Trade Agreements on the Trinidad and Tobago Economy: A Panel Data Study

03 **Laron Alleyne**
Shadows of Uncertainty: Unravelling the Influence of Economic Policy Uncertainty on Tourism-tax Elasticities: The Perspective of Small Island Developing States

04 **Nevado Lewis**
External Food Price Shocks and Monetary Policy Constraints in a Small Open Economy: Evidence from Jamaica

D2-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 01

A Dynamic Model of Consecutive Migrant Waves and Balance of Payments Constrained Growth

Isaiah McIntosh • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Isaiah J. Mc Intosh, Roger Hosein

This paper develops a dynamic model of the impact of successive migrant waves on the externally constrained growth rate of a small open economy without internal capacity for endogenous innovation. Incoming migrant waves alongside movements in the international innovative frontier act as simultaneous exogenous shocks, shifting equilibrium through consumer and firm optimisation within the common foreign exchange constraint. Firms respond to the shock vector by maximising profit according to a task-based CES production function subject to externally financed credit constraints. Selection into firm survival, exporting, and capital imports in a given period endogenously determined by fixed cost structure. Pro-trade effects of a migrant wave in the presence of anti-exporter reallocation of labour are endogenously explained through exporting sector heterogeneity with respect to automative technology adoption and wave-induced internal compositional shifting. Non-tradeable sector labour expansion alongside contractions in sectoral output and output per worker is explained by partial monopsonistic non-tradeable sector price setting in the market for migrant labour. Conditional on the post-wave equilibrium a modified sectoral Thirlwall law growth rate is derived. The analytic model is then simulated to assess the effect of successive migration waves on the sustainable growth path of the economy.

Keywords: Migration; Trade; Balance-of-Payments Constrained Growth, Heterogenous Firms



About the presenter | isaiah.mcintosh@my.uwi.edu

Isaiah McIntosh – graduated from The University of the West Indies, St Augustine (2023) with a degree in Economics (First Class Honours). Currently, he is a 3rd year MPhil student and Teaching Assistant at The University of the West Indies St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. He is a member of the Trade Economics Unit within the Department of Economics with specific interest in pure theory of international trade and structural transformation in developing states. He is a recipient of the De La Rue Currency Scholarship (2024/2025) awarded by the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago in partnership with the De La Rue Currency of the United Kingdom.

D2-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Investigation of the importance of Trade Agreements on the Trinidad and Tobago Economy: A Panel Data Study

Mark Roopchan • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Mark Roopchan, Roger Hosein & George Saridakis

Purpose
This study examines the relationship between Trinidad and Tobago's trade agreements with selected Latin American and Caribbean countries and its export performance, within the broader context of the foreign exchange constraints.

Design/methodology/approach
In order to achieve this goal, this paper employs an augmented gravity model to examine Trinidad and Tobago's exports to selected Latin American and Caribbean countries over the period 1995-2024 with exports differentiated into quality tiers. The analysis employs PPML estimation, fixed effects, and robustness tests are employed to assess the estimated relationships.

Findings
The baseline PPML results indicate a positive relationship between trade agreements and exports at the aggregate level and across the three quality tiers. However, this relationship becomes sensitive to the inclusion of partner and year fixed effects and small cluster inference. Consequently, the results should be interpreted as conditional associations rather than causal effects.

Originality/value
This study contributes to the literature on trade policy by examining the relationship between trade agreements and exports at both the aggregate and quality tier levels. The findings provide insights for policy markers considering trade agreements as part of a broader export development strategy.

Keywords: Migration; Trade; Balance-of-Payments Constrained Growth, Heterogenous Firms



About the presenter | markrroopchan@gmail.com

Mark Roopchan is an MPhil Economics candidate at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, where his research focuses primarily on international trade, regional economic integration, and trade policy. His current research examines the implications of preferential trade agreements and export competitiveness for Trinidad and Tobago, with the long-term objective of contributing to evidence-based trade policy within the Caribbean region. Upon completion of his M.Phil., he intends to pursue doctoral studies in Economics.Mark is also employed as a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Economics at the University of the West Indies. In this role, he supports undergraduate teaching across several economics courses, prepares instructional materials, and engages closely with students, particularly in the area of international trade. His academic interests include international trade, trade competitiveness, regional integration, and applied econometrics.

D2-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

Shadows of Uncertainty: Unravelling the Influence of Economic Policy Uncertainty on Tourism-tax Elasticities: The Perspective of Small Island Developing States

Laron Alleyne • Cave Hill Campus

Government policies can significantly influence tourism competitiveness through their effects on destination costs and visitor decision-making. This study examines the responsiveness of tourism demand to tourism tax changes in a small open tourism-dependent economy, while accounting for economic uncertainty in source markets. Using a panel of 128 source countries and Poisson Pseudo-Maximum Likelihood (PPML) estimation, the analysis investigates heterogeneous demand responses to taxation. The study also assesses the extent to which economic policy uncertainty influences travel decisions. The results indicate that higher tourism taxes and greater uncertainty significantly reduce tourism demand. An increased ecological footprint at the destination, reflecting deteriorating environmental quality, is also associated with lower visitor arrivals. In contrast, higher tourist income, a common language, and shared religious affiliation positively influence tourism demand. Distance and tourism prices exert significant negative effects. The findings further reveal that tourism demand becomes particularly sensitive to global uncertainty when tourism taxes are elevated, amplifying adverse effects on travel flows. These results highlight the importance of balancing revenue generation with destination competitiveness. Policymakers should carefully consider prevailing economic conditions and uncertainty in source markets when designing tourism tax policies to support sustainable tourism development and long-term sector resilience.

Keywords: Tourism Demand, Economic Uncertainty, Taxes



About the presenter | laron.alleyne@mycavehill.uwi.edu

Laron Alleyne is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, with research focusing on sustainable tourism development, tourism competitiveness, and the economic implications of tourism growth in small island economies. publications have examined topics including tourism demand, climate change, labour markets, and economic development in the Caribbean. His current research explored the intersection of tourism policy, sustainability, uncertainty, and economic resilience, with particular emphasis on evidence-based approaches to supporting long-term development in tourism-dependent economies.

D2-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

External Food Price Shocks and Monetary Policy Constraints in a Small Open Economy: Evidence from Jamaica

Nevado Lewis • Mona Campus

This study examines whether external food price shocks limit the effectiveness of monetary policy in Jamaica. Given the large weight of food in the Consumer Price Index, inflation outcomes are highly sensitive to global commodity prices and exchange rate movements. Using quarterly data from 2000Q2–2024Q4 and the Local Projection framework of Jordà (2005), the study separately analyses food and non-food inflation to assess differences in transmission mechanisms.

The results show that food inflation is largely unresponsive to domestic monetary policy and is driven primarily by external and supply-side factors. Exchange rate movements emerge as the most important transmission channel, while global food prices have positive but statistically weak effects. In contrast, non-food inflation exhibits a modest and short-lived response to domestic economic activity, with results that are not robust across specifications. The findings also suggest that observed policy-rate effects mainly reflect endogenous policy responses rather than a stable causal transmission mechanism. Overall, the study concludes that a substantial share of inflation in Jamaica lies beyond the direct influence of conventional monetary policy, implying that interest-rate adjustments alone may be insufficient to achieve rapid disinflation. Complementary exchange-rate and structural policies are therefore important for strengthening economic resilience in small open economies.

Keywords: Jamaica, Food Inflation, Monetary Policy, Small Open Economy, Exchange Rate Pass-Through



About the presenter | Nevado_Lewis@yahoo.com

Nevado S. Lewis is a Policy Analyst in the Social Planning and Research Division at the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), where he specializes in poverty measurement and socio-economic analysis. He holds a BSc in Mathematics of Finance and is completing an MSc in Economics at The University of the West Indies, Mona. His research interests include economic development, inflation dynamics, exchange rate pass-through, tourism, agricultural prices, and the effects of external food price shocks on small open economies, with a particular focus on Jamaica.

D2-S1B / ROOM B

Financial Markets, Inflation and Macroeconomic Resilience

10:30 AM–11:55 AM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Dr. Karen Murdock

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Indianna Minto-Coy

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Aaisha Jackman**
Comparative Analysis of Statistical and Data Mining Techniques for Detecting Herding in the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Market: Post-Event Study and Real-Time Detection Approaches.

02 **Jan'ive Small**
Inflation and Stock Market Performance in BRICS Economies: The Roles of Exchange Rate Dynamics and Global Financial Integration

03 **Justin Rampersad**
Determinants of Foreign Exchange Reserve Dynamics in Trinidad and Tobago: An ARDL Bounds Testing Approach, 1994-2024

04 **Nevado Lewis**
Exchange Rate Pass-Through to Inflation in Jamaica: Asymmetry and Regime Dependence, 2000–2024

05 **Rajesh Lakhan**
Estimating the Impact of COVID-19 on the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange: A Three-Period Interrupted Time Series Analysis

D2-S1B / ROOM B / PAPER 01

Comparative Analysis of Statistical and Data Mining Techniques for Detecting Herding in the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Market: Post-Event Study and Real-Time Detection Approaches.

Aaisha Jackman • St. Augustine Campus

Herding behavior, where investors imitate the actions of others rather than rely on independent judgment, is a critical phenomenon in behavioral finance that disrupts market efficiency and amplifies volatility. This study focuses on the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange (TTSE), a frontier market characterized by low liquidity, limited transparency, and an underdeveloped investment culture—conditions that heighten herding tendencies. Literature highlights herding's role in speculative bubbles and systemic risk, with historical crises such as the Dotcom Bubble and the Global Financial Crisis underscoring its impact. Traditional detection methods, including CSSD and CSAD, provide retrospective insights but fail to capture nonlinear dynamics or enable real-time monitoring. Emerging machine learning techniques—such as Stochastic Gradient Descent, Bayesian Neural Networks, and Support Vector Regression—offer adaptive, data-driven approaches for improved detection accuracy. This research compares classical econometric models with modern machine learning methods to identify herding patterns in TTSE, assess their predictive performance using rolling window cross-validation, and examine herding prevalence across market regimes and periods, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings aim to inform regulatory strategies, enhance market stability, and contribute to behavioral finance literature by bridging traditional and advanced approaches to herding detection.

This is relevant to my discipline, as herding behavior can be statistically analyze and in some cases predicted by modelling. In terms of sustainable development, the study supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth and SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions by promoting more efficient, transparent, and stable financial markets.

Keywords: Herding Behavior, Behavioral Finance, Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange (TTSE), Frontier Markets



About the presenter | aaisha.jackman23@gmail.com

Aaisha Jackman is a Reinsurance Analyst and researcher with a strong interest in behavioural finance, statistics, financial markets, and machine learning applications in risk analysis. She pursued a master's degree in Statistics at the University of the West Indies, which has provided her with a solid foundation in quantitative analysis, statistical modelling, and data-driven decision-making.Her research focuses on investor herding behaviour in frontier markets, particularly the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange (TTSE), where she investigates the effectiveness of advanced machine learning techniques alongside traditional econometric methods for detecting and monitoring market inefficiencies. Her work seeks to bridge the gap between conventional financial analysis and modern predictive analytics, contributing to the growing field of behavioural finance.Aaisha's research also examines market behaviour during periods of uncertainty, including the COVID-19 pandemic, with the aim of providing practical insights for regulators, investors, and risk professionals. Combining her professional experience in the reinsurance industry with her academic expertise, she is interested in financial risk management, artificial intelligence in finance, market surveillance, and the development of more resilient and sustainable financial markets.

D2-S1B / ROOM B / PAPER 02

Inflation and Stock Market Performance in BRICS Economies: The Roles of Exchange Rate Dynamics and Global Financial Integration

Jan'ive Small • Cave Hill Campus

This study examines the relationship between inflation and stock market performance across the BRICS economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) using a monthly panel dataset from August 2000 to January 2025. The motivation for this research stems from persistent theoretical ambiguities and mixed empirical findings regarding macroeconomic and financial linkages in emerging economies. The central question is whether inflation retains explanatory power for equity returns once exchange rate dynamics and global financial conditions are explicitly incorporated into the analysis.

To address this question, the study employs a fixed-effects regression with robust standard errors to account for unobserved country-specific characteristics. The statistical significance of inflation, after controlling for unobserved country heterogeneity, challenges conventional asset pricing frameworks. However, currency depreciation emerges as a significant domestic determinant of consistently lower returns, while global financial conditions exert positive parallel forces on BRICS markets. Consequently, the pricing power of domestic inflation may be overstated, as external financial transmission mechanisms effectively eclipse it.

Preliminary results suggest that monetary authorities should complement inflation-targeting frameworks with exchange rate management, while financial regulators should deploy macroprudential measures to address capital flow volatility. Additionally, international investors must prioritize global dynamics and currency risks over domestic price levels when making portfolio choices.

Keywords: Migration: Inflation, BRICS Economies, Stock Market Returns, Global Financial Integration, Exchange Rate Dynamics



About the presenter | janivesmall@gmail.com

Jan'ive CS Small is an MPhil candidate in Finance at the University of the West Indies, specializing in international finance. Her research examines the intersection of domestic macroeconomic indicators and global financial shocks in emerging markets. She is currently preparing to upgrade her research to the PhD track, with the long-term goal of pursuing a career in academia as a university lecturer.

D2-S1B / ROOM B / PAPER 03

Determinants of Foreign Exchange Reserve Dynamics in Trinidad and Tobago: An ARDL Bounds Testing Approach, 1994-2024

Justin Rampersad • St. Augustine Campus

This study identifies the long-run determinants of foreign reserve accumulation in Trinidad and Tobago, a commodity-dependent small open economy. Reserve adequacy is central to exchange-rate stability under the managed float, yet the drivers of reserve dynamics in such economies remain under-examined. The work addresses the economics and development sub-theme by clarifying how external and domestic forces govern a core macroeconomic buffer. The central question asks which variables determine reserves in the long run, and whether oil prices act directly or through indirect channels. Using annual data from 1994 to 2024, the study applies an ARDL bounds testing framework, modelling reserves as a function of oil prices, the fiscal balance, the real effective exchange rate, and real GDP. Bounds tests confirm cointegration at the one percent level. Real GDP and the real exchange rate are the dominant long-run determinants, while oil prices and the fiscal balance carry expected signs but are statistically insignificant, consistent with oil operating indirectly. The error correction term confirms stable adjustment toward equilibrium. Reserve management is shaped more by output and competitiveness than by direct commodity price transmission. This has implications for how commodity exporters frame reserve adequacy, sterilisation policy, and reserve-target calibration in revenue-volatile economies.

Keywords: foreign reserves, ARDL, cointegration, commodity exporters, Trinidad and Tobago



About the presenter | justin.rampersad2@my.uwi.edu

Justin Rampersad is an MSc Financial Economics candidate at The UWI, St. Augustine, where he also completed a BSc in Economics with First Class Honours. His research applies time-series econometrics to macroeconomic policy questions in commodity-exporting economies, focusing on foreign reserves, fiscal sustainability, and sovereign wealth funds. He holds the De La Rue Scholarship and will undertake a placement at the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago. His broader interests span central banking, fiscal policy, and the economics of energy transition.

D2-S1B / ROOM B / PAPER 04

Exchange Rate Pass-Through to Inflation in Jamaica: Asymmetry and Regime Dependence, 2000–2024

Nevado Lewis • Mona Campus

As a small open economy that relies heavily on imports, Jamaica is particularly exposed to exchange rate movements and external price shocks, making an understanding of their transmission to domestic inflation important for monetary policy. This study examines the extent and nature of exchange rate pass-through (ERPT) to inflation in Jamaica over the period 2000Q1–2024Q4, specifically determining whether pass-through is asymmetric between depreciations and appreciations and whether this has changed under inflation targeting. Using a Nonlinear Autoregressive Distributed Lag framework, exchange rate movements are decomposed into cumulative depreciations and appreciations to assess their short- and long-run effects on inflation. The results indicate that ERPT is primarily a short-run phenomenon. Depreciations exert statistically significant lagged effects on inflation, while appreciations have no significant impact. However, formal Wald tests fail to reject symmetry, suggesting that pass-through is better characterized as dynamic and horizon-dependent rather than strongly asymmetric. Global oil prices emerge as the dominant driver of inflation, underscoring the importance of external commodity price shocks in a small open economy. Subsample analysis suggests that pass-through weakened following Jamaica's adoption of inflation targeting in 2017, consistent with enhanced policy credibility and better-anchored inflation expectations. The findings indicate that inflation dynamics in Jamaica are driven more by external cost shocks than by persistent exchange rate effects. This highlights both the importance and limitations of domestic monetary policy in managing inflation in a small, import-dependent economy.

Keywords: Exchange rate pass-through; inflation dynamics; asymmetric adjustment; inflation targeting



About the presenter | nevadolewis@yahoo.com

Nevado S. Lewis is a Policy Analyst in the Social Planning and Research Division at the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), where he specializes in poverty measurement and socio-economic analysis. He holds a BSc in Mathematics of Finance and is completing an MSc in Economics at The University of the West Indies, Mona. His research interests include economic development, inflation dynamics, exchange rate pass-through, tourism, agricultural prices, and the effects of external food price shocks on small open economies, with a particular focus on Jamaica.

D2-S1B / ROOM B / PAPER 05

Estimating the Impact of COVID-19 on the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange: A Three-Period Interrupted Time Series Analysis

Rajesh Lakhan • St. Augustine Campus

Authors: Mr. Rajesh Lakhan, Ms. Rebekah Soonachan, Dr. Isaac Dialsingh

The COVID-19 pandemic created major economic disruptions across the Caribbean, raising important questions about financial market resilience in small island developing economies. This study examines the impact of COVID-19 on the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange and aligns with the Economics, Entrepreneurship, and Development sub-theme by analysing market behaviour in a Caribbean economy. The objective is to compare ordinary share performance across three periods: pre-COVID, during-COVID, and post-COVID emergency periods. Using ordinary shares data from 2011 to 2026, a preliminary equal-weighted market index was constructed from daily security-level closing prices, and daily log price returns were calculated. Preliminary results show mean daily log returns of 0.000110 before COVID, −0.0000 during COVID, and −0.000672 after the COVID emergency period. The constructed index increased by 27.90% pre-COVID, declined by 4.42% during COVID, and declined by 36.67% post-COVID. This study advances applied statistics and financial economics by applying interrupted time series analysis to Caribbean market data, with implications for investment planning, market monitoring, and economic resilience.

This study advances applied statistics and financial economics by demonstrating how interrupted time series methods can be used to examine market behaviour across distinct COVID-19 phases in a Caribbean small island developing economy. The findings also have implications for sustainable development by supporting evidence-based market monitoring, investment planning, and economic resilience strategies in the face of future public health or macroeconomic shocks.

Keywords: COVID-19; Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange; Interrupted time series; Financial market resilience; Caribbean financial markets



About the presenter | rajeshlakhan08@gmail.com

Rajesh Lakhan is a PhD student in Statistics at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, with research interests in causal analysis, applied statistics, and financial market behaviour. He holds a Master's degree in Mathematics, a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Mathematics, and a postgraduate certificate in University Teaching and Learning. His academic and professional work spans teaching, statistical research, student development, and educational outreach. His current research focuses on applying causal and statistical methods to real-world Caribbean data.

D2-S2A / ROOM A

Enterprise, Consumer Behaviour and the Future of Work

12:05 PM–1:30 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator

Professor Dwayne Devonish

Proposed Discussant

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Letisha Lawrence**
Examining the Effects of Scarcity Promotions on M-commerce Impulse Buying Intention: A Mediated-Moderated Model

02 **Satesh Sookhai**
When Rewards Miss the Mark: Evidence of Compensation Misalignment in Small Businesses in Trinidad

03 **Sherri-Lyn Legall**
Fixed-Term Employment and Job Attitudes in Trinidad and Tobago: A Social Feminist and Psychological Contract Perspective

04 **Jeanelle Baron**
SIDS Corporate Boards, and SDG Awareness and Engagement: The Caribbean Context

D2-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 01

Examining the Effects of Scarcity Promotions on M-commerce Impulse Buying Intention: A Mediated-Moderated Model

Letisha Lawrence • St. Augustine Campus

This study investigated how scarcity promotions influenced mobile commerce (m-commerce) impulse buying intention (IBI) within the Trinidad and Tobago context. Guided by the Stimulus- Organism Response (S-O-R) framework, the research examined how stimuli (time-limited and quantity-limited deals) enabled emotional response (perceived arousal), triggering outcome (IBI). A 2x2 experimental design was formulated and exposed to 400 mobile shoppers. This design enabled the manipulation of promotional webpages combining scarcity type (time-limited and quantity-limited) and product type (hedonic vs utilitarian). Participants then completed a structured questionnaire which measured promotion response, perceived arousal, product perception and impulse buying intention. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling was employed to analyse the data.

The findings demonstrated that neither scarcity promotion type directly heightens IBI, differing from prior literature. However, perceived arousal partially mediated quantity-limited promotions and IBI, inferring that emotional activation conditionally shapes impulsiveness. Product type did not significantly moderate perceived arousal and IBC. Whilst utilitarian emerged as a stronger direct predictor of IBI than hedonic.Additionally, the influence of scarcity promotions in m-commerce relied on emotional and contextual factors rather than direct persuasion It validated aspects of the S-O-R framework in mobile marketplace and provided empirical insights into consumer behaviour within a Caribbean developing economy.

This research contributes to social sciences by expanding understanding of digital consumer behaviour in mobile commerce within the developing Caribbean economy of Trinidad and Tobago. It explored how scarcity promotions influence impulse buying intention through emotional responses, offering insight into digital marketing, consumer decision-making, entrepreneurship.The findings can support more intentional promotional strategies for practitioners, helping businesses bolster sales while considering ethical and sustainable consumer engagement.

Keywords: Letisha Lawrence; scarcity; perceived arousal; impulse buying intention; mobile commerce, hedonic; utilitarian; Stimulus-Organism Response



About the presenter | letisha.lawrence@my.uwi.edu

Letisha Lawrence is an educator, entrepreneur, and marketing researcher awarded an MSc in Management Studies with distinction from The University of the West Indies. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature with Education. Her research on scarcity promotions and mobile commerce impulse buying intention reflects her broader interest in consumer behaviour, digital commerce, and Caribbean entrepreneurship. Drawing from her academic training and practical experience building ventures since 2018, her work contributes context-specific insight into how businesses can better understand and engage consumers in evolving digital markets.

D2-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

When Rewards Miss the Mark: Evidence of Compensation Misalignment in Small Businesses in Trinidad

Satesh Sookhai • St. Augustine Campus

This study examines how small businesses can better align compensation benefits with employee preferences to support workforce motivation and retention in the small island state of Trinidad. This alignment matters because small businesses operate with limited financial resources, and offering benefits employees do not value may reduce the effectiveness of already constrained compensation budgets. Based on a structured survey of 120 employees across various sectors, the study comparesemployee preferences for ten monetaryand non-monetary benefits with their reported availability in the workplace. The results reveal consistent under-provision of the most valued benefits, particularly salary increases, time-off rewards, and sponsored holidays. Interpreted through Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, thesefindings suggest that small businesses' compensation practices often misalign with employee expectations, including for potentially low-cost, high-impact benefits. The study therefore advocates for targeted, transparent, and context-sensitive compensation strategies. It offers a data-driven roadmap for small-business leaders to allocate limited resources more effectively while developing reward packages that better reflect workforce expectations.

Keywords: Small businesses, Rewards, Compensation benefits



About the presenter | satesh.sookhai@my.uwi.edu

Satesh Sookhai is a PhD candidate in Business Administration at The University of the West Indies (UWI), specializing in entrepreneurship, small business management, and employee motivation within SMEs. His research explores innovative approaches to rewards management, generative AI adoption, and entrepreneurial development in small island economies. An award-winning postgraduate researcher, Satesh has presented and reviewed research at international conferences, including the Academy of International Business (AIB), and has contributed to scholarly publications on entrepreneurship, AI, and business sustainability. He also serves as a Research Storyteller for the Journal of Business Venturing Insights (JBVI), where he helps translate academic research into engaging and accessible narratives for wider audiences. Beyond academia, he is actively involved in mentorship, academic outreach, and professional storytelling, helping bridge the gap between research, industry, and the wider Caribbean community. Known for his dynamic leadership, global collaborations, and passion for impactful research, Satesh continues to position himself as an emerging voice in Caribbean entrepreneurship and management scholarship.

D2-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

Fixed-Term Employment and Job Attitudes in Trinidad and Tobago: A Social Feminist and Psychological Contract Perspective

Sherri-Lyn Legall • St. Augustine Campus

Employment relationships form the bedrock of economic systems, yet global and regional labour markets have experienced a profound shift away from permanent employment toward non-standard, precarious arrangements. In Trinidad and Tobago, fixed-term contract employment has expanded significantly over the past decades, becoming an institutionalised fixture across both public and private sectors. This study investigates the intersection of fixed-term contract employment and employee job attitudes—specifically focusing on job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and perceived organisational support. Moving beyond a universal, unencumbered view of the worker, the research integrates Psychological Contract Theory and Caribbean Socialist-Feminist Theory. This dual framework examines how unwritten employer obligations, serial contract renewals, and gendered social reproduction burdens (such as unpaid care responsibilities) shape workers' psychological evaluations and responses. By bridging organisational psychology with Caribbean feminist political economy, this study advances the academic literature on employment relations and organisational behaviour, showing how macro-level labour precarity and gendered power dynamics structurally condition micro-level job attitudes. Furthermore, the findings carry critical implications for sustainable development—particularly aligning with global objectives surrounding sustainable economic growth, productive employment, and gender equality—by providing the empirical insights necessary to foster equitable labour practices and workforce resilience in small island developing states.

Keywords: fixed-term employment, job attitudes, gender, psychological contract, feminist theory



About the presenter | sherrilyn.legall@my.uwi.edu

Sherri-Lyn M. Legall is eldest of three children, born to two educators, Dr. Clyde Legall and Miriam Legall. She always had a keen interest in learning and notably from secondary school, was always within the top performing students of her class. She went on to do Advanced Studies at UWI Sixth Form School, then travelled abroad to pursue and complete her BBA in Managerial Sciences at Georgia State University in Atlanta, USA. She later graduated with an MBA, with distinction from Andrews University, Michigan, USA. She recently earned her professional certification in Human Resource Management from the International Society of Human Resource Management and is currently pursuing doctoral studies at the University of the West Indies. She began her career in teaching at St. Joseph's Convent, St. Joseph then went on to teach for a few years at UWI Sixth Form School, now UWI Pre University Centre. Ms. Legall then went on to become a full time faculty member at the University of the Southern Caribbean from September 2010 and within four years became the Chairperson of the Faculty of Business. She currently serves as the Interim Dean of the Faculty of Business at the University of the Southern Caribbean. She continues to maintain her drive for personal excellence and excellence in educating and empowerment. She has been the recipient of several awards over the years including 'Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges' during her college years, and Faculty of the Year in 2015. When she is not teaching, she can be found conducting training seminars, providing consulting services, assisting youth groups, and also giving piano instruction. She also enjoys playing the piano, playing the flute, traveling and shopping. A devout Christian, she believes her purpose is to educate and empower others wherever possible.

D2-S2A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

SIDS Corporate Boards, and SDG Awareness and Engagement: The Caribbean Context

Jéanelle K. Baron • Cave Hill Campus

Authors: Ms. Jéanelle K Baron, Professor Dwayne Devonish

Globally, company boards are increasingly expected to influence organizational commitment to the SDG and communicate their engagement with them. This study seeks to examine the influence of Boards of Directors on SDG awareness and engagement among PLCs in SIDS of the English-speaking Caribbean through their corporate disclosure.

The study adopts a quantitative research design utilizing textual and content analysis of annual reports published between 2022-2024. Sustainable Development Goal Disclosure is measured using four indicators: SDGD_Mention, SDGD_Frequency, SDGD_Number and SDGD_Quality Descriptive statistics and trend analysis are employed to evaluate changes in SDG engagement over time, while panel data analysis and multiple regression analysis are used to examine the influence of board characteristics on SDGD. The ANOVA test is utilized to measure differences in SDG engagement across countries and industry sectors.

Preliminary findings reveal males dominate chairmanship of boards, relatively high levels of gender diversity, varying board sizes and qualifications, and low levels of CEO-Duality and board sustainability committees. The results further indicate increasing levels of SDG awareness and engagement over time, with significant variations across countries and industries.
This study would provide original empirical evidence from Caribbean SIDS by highlighting the characteristics that SDG commitment, integration and reporting within Caribbean firms.

This study would provide original empirical evidence from Caribbean SIDS, a region that remains underrepresented in SDG research. The findings can offer practical implications for policymakers, regulators, stock exchanges, and corporate leadership by highlighting the characteristics that strengthen board-level commitment to SDG integration and reporting within Caribbean firms.

Keywords: Board of Directors, Sustainable Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals Disclosure, Sustainable Development Goals Awareness, Sustainable Development Goals Engagement



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Jéanelle Baron is a doctoral student in the Department of Management Studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus. She holds a BSc in Accounting from UWI, St. Augustine, and an MSc in International Finance from the Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business in Trinidad. With approximately thirteen years of experience in the education sector, she has contributed to student development, institutional advancement, and academic and business administration. Her academic and professional interests include organizational development, leadership, and sustainable progress within the Caribbean context.

D2-S2B / ROOM B

Institutions, Diplomacy and Regional Governance

3:50 PM–5:15 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator

Dr. Arlene Bailey

Proposed Discussant

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Christopher Thomas**
The Curious Case of the Archipelago of St. Andrew, Old Province and St. Catherine: A Revolutionary Undertaking of 21st Century Para-diplomacy

02 **Ezra-Marie Bennett**
Caribbean Responses to U.S. Foreign Policy under a Second Trump Administration: Small-State Diplomacy in an Era of Renewed "America First

03 **Nikeyma Henry-Gardiner**
Governance, Forensic Accounting and External Political Influence in Citizenship by Investment Programmes: A Comparative Study of the OECS and Selected International Jurisdictions

04 **Nordia Lyons**
Ageing in Jamaica: An Evaluation of Policy Response and Implementation Gaps

D2-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 01

The Curious Case of the Archipelago of St. Andrew, Old Providence and St. Catherine: A Revolutionary Undertaking of 21st Century Para-diplomacy.

Christopher Thomas • St. Augustine Campus

This study contributes to Caribbean regional studies by examining the often-overlooked Archipelago of St. Andrew, Old Providence, and St. Catherine islands as a case for understanding how subnational island territories navigate cultural identity, national affiliation, and regional belonging. It aligns with the conference as it advances knowledge on a regionally under-researched topic, which can impact small island territories across the world. The study also provides insights for public policy, governance, and diplomacy by analysing how local actors use para-diplomatic strategies to engage with foreign governments, regional organizations, and international institutions. This research study is grounded in a theoretical synthesis of Para-diplomacy and Small States theory, which together offer a critical lens through which to understand the evolving international agency of sub-state territories like the Archipelago of St. Andrew, Old Providence, and St. Catherine. It has been found that the interests of sub-state territories are not often represented at the central government level, which negatively impacts multiple sectors across society. As such, public diplomacy becomes a powerful tool through which non-state actors can effectively advocate for their voices to be heard, promoting 'soft power' and 'nation brand' for actors by way of a more horizontal and relationship-building approach.

The study is very relevant because many Caribbean states are small territories, and there is much to be investigated as it pertains to the different ways in which communities can come together to achieve common goals and defend common interest, for the betterment of their peoples and their futures.

Keywords: public diplomacy, para-diplomacy, small states, soft power



About the presenter | cjthomas.eoc@gmail.com

Christopher Thomas (26) is a Trinbagonian polyglot and International Relations Student, currently enrolled in the MSc in International Relations Programme at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and French, and a Post-Graduate Diploma in International Relations. He has worked for the past six (6) years in the fields of education and diplomacy, and is an aspiring career-diplomat.

D2-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 02

Caribbean Responses to U.S. Foreign Policy under a Second Trump Administration: Small-State Diplomacy in an Era of Renewed "America First

Ezra-Marie Bennett • St. Augustine Campus

This study examines the implications of a second Trump administration for United States foreign policy toward the Caribbean and the strategic responses of Caribbean small states. Situated within the conference theme of navigating uncertainty and transformation, the research explores how renewed "America First" policies influence Caribbean diplomacy, regional cooperation, and external relations. The study asks: How has U.S. foreign policy toward the Caribbean evolved under a second Trump administration, and how are Caribbean states adapting to emerging geopolitical pressures? Employing a qualitative multiple-case study design, the research combines documentary analysis, critical discourse analysis, process tracing, and elite semi-structured interviews. Comparative case studies of Trinidad and Tobago and St. Vincent and the Grenadines are used to examine variations in foreign policy responses. Preliminary findings suggest that intensified U.S. emphasis on border security, migration management, energy security, and strategic competition with China has increased external pressures on Caribbean states.

In response, Caribbean governments have adopted pragmatic strategies including diplomatic hedging, issue-based cooperation, and strengthened regional coordination through CARICOM. The study concludes that Caribbean states retain meaningful agency despite structural asymmetries and are actively recalibrating their foreign policies to preserve sovereignty and strategic autonomy.

This study advances the discipline of International Relations by contributing to the growing body of scholarship on small-state foreign policy, Caribbean international relations, and the impact of great-power competition on vulnerable regions. While considerable attention has been devoted to United States foreign policy and the foreign policies of major powers, relatively limited research has examined how Caribbean states respond to shifts in U.S. strategic priorities, particularly under the resurgence of the "America First" doctrine. By analysing Caribbean responses to a second Trump administration, the study provides new empirical evidence on how small states exercise agency, navigate asymmetrical power relationships, and employ diplomatic strategies such as hedging, balancing, and regional cooperation.

Keywords: International Relations, Governance, Foreign Policy, U.S., Caribbean



About the presenter |

Ezra-Marie Bennett is a Research Project Manager and international relations researcher based in Trinidad and Tobago. She holds a Master of Science in International Relations from the Institute of International Relations (IIR), The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, and is currently pursuing an MPhil in International Relations. Her research interests include Caribbean foreign policy, United States–Caribbean relations, small-state diplomacy, migration, and regional governance. She has managed and contributed to several regional research projects across CARICOM, including initiatives supported by international development organizations. Her current research examines Caribbean responses to United States foreign policy under a second Trump administration and the implications for regional diplomacy and strategic autonomy.

D2-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 03

Governance, Forensic Accounting and External Political Influence in Citizenship by Investment Programmes: A Comparative Study of the OECS and Selected International Jurisdictions

Nikeyma Henry-Gardiner • Five Islands Campus

Citizenship by Investment Programmes (CIPs) provide significant revenue to several Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) economies but face growing scrutiny concerning financial integrity, governance, and international legitimacy. While existing debates emphasise money laundering, corruption, due diligence, and security risks, they often overlook how domestic governance arrangements interact with external political pressures to shape programme outcomes. European Union policy responses, including scrutiny of investment migration and evolving legal challenges, raise questions about whether international treatment reflects financial integrity concerns alone or broader political and institutional dynamics.

This study investigates the relationship between governance, forensic accounting, and external political influence in CIPs across Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, and St Lucia, with comparative reference to Malta, Cyprus, and Vanuatu. Grounded in Institutional Theory and Legitimacy Theory, and supported by Agency Theory and Fraud Triangle Theory, it adopts a pragmatist mixed-methods design integrating documentary analysis, descriptive indicators, and semi-structured stakeholder interviews. The research compares domestic accountability and financial-integrity safeguards with external responses, particularly those of the European Union, to distinguish governance vulnerabilities from political influence. It seeks to develop an integrated analytical framework to inform proportionate oversight, policy reform, and programme sustainability in financially highly vulnerable small states.

Keywords: Citizenship by Investment Programmes; Forensic Accounting; Governance; External Political Influence; International Legitimacy



About the presenter | nikeyma.henrygardiner@my.fiveislands.edu.ag

Nikeyma Henry-Gardiner is a doctoral researcher in the School of Business and Management at The University of the West Indies, Five Islands Campus. She is an accounting, auditing, and compliance professional with extensive experience in financial management, corporate governance, regulatory compliance, and higher education.

She currently serves as an Internal Auditor with the Board of Education, while on secondment to the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS), where she holds the position of Bursar. She continues to perform duties in both capacities. Additionally, she serves as a Compliance Officer in the corporate services sector and a part-time Lecturer at The University of the West Indies.

Her doctoral research examines governance, forensic accounting, and external political influence in Citizenship by Investment Programmes, focusing on the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and selected international jurisdictions. Her research interests include financial crime prevention, institutional accountability, regulatory governance, and the sustainability of small-state economies.

Through her academic and professional work, she seeks to contribute to stronger financial integrity frameworks, evidence-based policymaking, and improved governance practices across the Caribbean.

D2-S2B / ROOM B / PAPER 04

Ageing in Jamaica: An Evaluation of Policy Response and Implementation Gaps

Nordia Lyons • Mona Campus

Population ageing is an emerging social policy issue, particularly in middle-income countries experiencing demographic transition alongside constrained fiscal and institutional capacity. In Jamaica, the proportion of persons aged 60 years and older continues to increase, placing growing pressure on social protection systems, healthcare services, family support networks, and community-based care structures. In response, the Government of Jamaica has articulated several policy commitments aimed at promoting the welfare, dignity, inclusion, and participation of older adults. However, evidence suggests that persistent gaps remain between policy intentions and the lived realities of older adults. This study examines the implementation of ageing policy in Jamaica through a critical analysis of global frameworks, regional trends, national policy evolution, and the interaction between law, policy, institutional capacity, and service delivery. Drawing on Brinkerhoff and Crosby's implementation framework, ecological systems theory, and rights-based approaches, the study interrogates why well-articulated ageing policies often fail to translate into effective and enforceable outcomes.

The analysis is supported by document-based policy review and stakeholder engagement, which together highlight structural, legal, institutional, and governance-related gaps affecting older adults in Jamaica. By situating Jamaica within global and Caribbean ageing-policy contexts, the study identifies key challenges related to fragmented legal protection, weak inter-agency coordination, limited monitoring and evaluation, inadequate community-based support, and insufficient institutional capacity. The findings revealed that although Jamaica has established important policy commitments for older adults, significant gaps remain between policy intentions and implementation. Key challenges included fragmented legal protection, limited institutional capacity, weak coordination and referral systems, and inadequate monitoring and accountability. Older adults also continue to face gaps in community-based services, social protection, caregiver support, and opportunities to age safely within their homes and communities. The findings further highlighted workforce limitations and the need to move beyond a welfare-based view of ageing towards one that recognizes older adults' rights, dignity, participation, and continued contribution to society. Overall, the study found that improving ageing outcomes in Jamaica requires a more coordinated and integrated approach across policy, institutions, families, communities, and service-delivery systems.

Keywords: ageing policy; older adults; social protection; policy implementation; law policy alignment; institutional capacity; elder protection; monitoring and evaluation; Jamaica; social work practice.



About the presenter | nordialyons09@yahoo.com

Nordia Lyons is a medical social worker with experience in psychosocial assessment, case management, discharge planning, advocacy, and support for vulnerable populations within the healthcare system. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work and is currently pursuing graduate studies in Social Administration and Development. Her professional and academic interests include ageing policy, social protection, healthcare access, community development, and rights-based practice. Guided by a commitment to dignity, inclusion, and service, Nordia is passionate about strengthening systems that improve the well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

D2-S3A / ROOM A

Gender, Justice, Security and Institutional Accountability

2:15 PM–3:40 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator

Dr. Sue Ann Barratt

Proposed Discussant

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Aisha Browne-Andrews**
Breaking Barriers in Leadership: The Impact of the 'Concrete Ceiling' and Gender Stereotypes of Female Leaders of Colour in Trinidad

02 **Ceresa Springer-Bennett**
Gendered Debt: Rethinking Justice, Development, and Reparations in Barbados

03 **Curtis Wallace**
“Keeping Watch By Day and Night”: The Jamaica Constabulary Force, Surveillance and Social Control in Jamaica, 1867-1962.

04 **Maria Jaikaransingh**
Cutting Through the Noise: A Qualitative Inquiry into Women’s Perceptions and Lived Experience of Career Trajectories Within the Trinidad And Tobago Military

05 **Shaunette Flemming**
Jungle Justice as an Informal Safety Mechanism in Inner-City Communities: Community Perceptions, Legitimacy, and Human Rights Implications

D2-S3A / ROOM A / PAPER 01

Breaking Barriers in Leadership: The Impact of the 'Concrete Ceiling' and Gender Stereotypes of Female Leaders of Colour in Trinidad

Aisha Browne-Andrews • St. Augustine Campus

Globally, women represent 40% of the workforce yet hold only 31% of leadership roles and 5% of CEO positions. In Trinidad and Tobago, this disparity manifests as an educational economic paradox. Despite women consistently outperforming men in tertiary education attainment, they hold only 28.6% of parliamentary seats and remain severely underrepresented in corporate executive suites. Given this background, this study investigates the structural barriers and lived experiences that shape the leadership trajectories of women of colour in Trinidad, viewed through the intersecting lenses of ethnicity, gender, and institutional accountability. Grounded in an intersectional framework, it examines how these identities intersect to create the "concrete ceiling", an entrenched barrier to leadership advancement. The central question examines how women of colour navigate this rigid structure in their professional lives. To answer it, a qualitative, interpretivist-constructivist, and transcendental phenomenological design was used, involving 20 semi-structured interviews with female leaders across diverse sectors.

Thematic analysis revealed opaque institutional practices, shifting standards of merit, symbolic inclusion, and restricted access to decision-making power. Participants employed agentic navigation, including code-switching and strategic visibility, to negotiate exclusionary organizational cultures. The study concludes that leadership emergence is co-constituted by personal agency and structural opportunity, yet remains constrained by organizational norms. Advancing substantive equality requires transparent promotion criteria, sponsorship programmes, and institutional reforms to dismantle systemic inequities.

Keywords: Female Leaders of Colour; "Concrete Ceiling"; Gender Stereotypes; Organisational Culture; Intersectionality



About the presenter | baptiste.ayanna@my.uwi.edu

Aisha Browne-Andrews is a Master of Science in Management Studies candidate at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, and an educator with 28 years of experience in Trinidad and Tobago.

A lifelong learner, her research examines the "concrete ceiling" and the intersecting barriers that impede the career advancement of female leaders of colour in the Caribbean.

Through her research, she seeks to advance gender equity, inclusive management practices, and equitable opportunities for leadership advancement across the Caribbean region.

D2-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Gendered Debt: Rethinking Justice, Development, and Reparations in Barbados

Ceresa Springer-Barnett • Cave Hill Campus

This paper examines criminal justice responses to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Barbados through a feminist decolonial-Foucauldian framework. While contemporary debates on development, debt, and reparations frequently centre on macro-economic relations between the Global North and South, far less attention has been paid to how colonial political economy structured institutions governing gendered violence. Through the use of qualitative research, including semi structured interviews with key stakeholders in the criminal justice system as well as survivor advocates and NGOs, this paper investigates how contemporary justice responses to SGBV are entangled with colonial legal architectures that were designed to regulate the sexed and racialised bodies if the enslaved that regulated labour, sexuality, and social order in plantation societies. The date shows that institutional inheritances produce persistent justice deficits, including procedural delays, survivor attrition, and limited accountability for gendered harms. There is also a disjuncture between legal recognition of gendered, where gendered assumptions about credibility, sexuality, intimate relationships, and appropriate victimhood continue to shape institutional responses.

Situating SGBV within the broader colonial economic triad of trade, finance, and extractivism, the paper demonstrates how gendered violence represents a hidden social cost of development regimes in the Caribbean. At the same time, feminist advocacy movements across the region represent forms of anticolonial dissent that challenge these institutional continuities. By linking gendered violence to debates on development and reparations, the paper adds to calls for a reconceptualisation of justice reform as part of broader reparatory transformations of colonial governance structures.

Keywords: Gender, Debt, Reparations, Justice



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Ceresa L. Springer-Barnett is a PhD candidate in Gender and Development Studies at the Institute for Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit, The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. Her research, Engendering Justice: Interrogating Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Barbados, examines how law, policy, and institutional practices shape responses to sexual and gender-based violence in postcolonial Caribbean contexts. Grounded in feminist, decolonial, and Foucauldian frameworks, her work emphasizes how culture influences policy and legislation, including statutory interpretation and judicial reasoning. She serves as a Research Assistant/ Editorial Assistant IGDS: NBU and as Part-Time Lecturer in the Faculty Social Sciences, contributing to teaching marginalization and inequality. Ceresa is also the Regional Coordinator for the 9th International Conference on Gender and Sexuality. Her scholarship advances a Caribbean feminist social criminology, integrating socio-legal and feminist discourse analysis to examine power, gender, and justice.

D2-S3A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

"Keeping Watch By Day and Night": The Jamaica Constabulary Force, Surveillance and Social Control in Jamaica, 1867-1962.

Curtis Wallace • Mona Campus

Police surveillance was a key tool of socio-political control in colonial states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This was the case in Jamaica, where colonial authorities relied on the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) to monitor colonial subjects seen as threats to the colonial order. Despite this, the JCF's use of surveillance, particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, remains underexplored. Guided by David Scott's theory of colonial governmentality and drawing on, among others, documents from the Colonial Office, this paper examines the impact of the JCF's surveillance on the maintenance of the colonial order in Jamaica between 1867 and 1962. It examines how the colonial state conceptualised surveillance, analyses the surveillance strategies and technologies used by the JCF, describes the populations it targeted, and assesses the impact this had on the lives of the surveilled and the security of the colonial state. It suggests that police surveillance was the primary means by which the colonial state exercised control over the Jamaican population between 1867 and 1962. The history of colonial police surveillance, rooted in systems of racial and class profiling, provides insights into contemporary surveillance practices and related strategies of social control in Jamaica.

This work expands historical knowledge and contemporary understanding of security services in Jamaica and the wider Anglophone Caribbean. This knowledge is important for the development of more accountable justice institutions and promoting more peaceful and inclusive societies, in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 16.

Keywords: Colonial Police, Jamaica Constabulary Force, Surveillance, Social Control



About the presenter | cowallace2006@yahoo.com

Curtis Wallace is an educator and historian currently pursuing doctoral research in the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of the West Indies, Mona. His work examines the history of crime and security services in Jamaica and the wider Anglophone Caribbean, with a particular focus on policing, governance, and the role of the Jamaica Constabulary Force in shaping colonial and postcolonial state power.

He has presented his research at regional and international forums, including the British Academy Research Network and the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. Recent papers have explored women in the Jamaica Constabulary Force, colonial militarisation, and cultural representations of crime. His peer-reviewed publications include "The Crown's Colonial Enforcers: The Stories of Two West Indian Policemen" in The Journal of Caribbean History (2022) and a contribution to Historical Research (2022) on archival practices in global history.

Alongside his research, Wallace lectures in History and Social Studies at teacher-training institutions such as St. Joseph's Teachers' College and The Mico University College. He is committed to curriculum design, teacher training, and assessment practices that bridge historical scholarship with classroom application.

Beyond academia, he has served in leadership roles, including President of the Jamaican His,torical Society, Programmes Manager of the Jamaican Association for Debating and Empowerment, and Board Chairman of Pinnock's Basic School. His work reflects a dedication to heritage engagement, civic education, and the empowerment of future educators.

D2-S1A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

Cutting Through the Noise: A Qualitative Inquiry into Women's Perceptions and Lived Experience of Career Trajectories Within the Trinidad And Tobago Military

Maria Jaikaransingh • St. Augustine Campus

This study investigated the intricate interplay between gendered perceptions, social norms, institutional practices, and motivations that affected women's participation and career paths in Trinidad and Tobago's military. Using an Intersectional Theoretical Framework, it analysed how factors such as gender, education, military training, prevailing military culture, and organisational policies influenced women's aspirations, self-efficacy, and career advancement. The data was collected through purposive sampling of eight female military members recruited via a veterans' social media platform. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using Zoom, audio-recorded with participant consent, and lasted approximately 90 minutes. The transcripts underwent thematic analysis and were stored securely on a password-protected server, accessible only to the Primary Investigator (PI) and supervisor. Strict ethical guidelines ensured participant confidentiality and anonymity. Critical reflexivity was maintained through a research journal to minimise bias. Findings revealed that while women recognised available opportunities, their career advancement faced significant obstacles from structural biases and gender stereotypes. Participants struggled to balance professional and personal responsibilities while encountering gender-based discrimination. The study emphasises the critical need for gender-sensitive policies, inclusive recruitment, fair promotion processes, and mentorship to foster a culture of inclusion in the Trinidad and Tobago military, ultimately enhancing equity and career progression.

This study advances the disciplines of gender studies, military studies, and organisational culture, particularly in a Caribbean context. It provides "valuable context-specific insights into women's experiences in a Caribbean military setting", thus enriching understanding of how "gendered perceptions, social norms, institutional practices, and motivations" shape women's military participation and career progression. Employing an Intersectional Theoretical Framework deepens the analysis of how diverse factors collectively affect women's leadership aspirations and self-efficacy, thereby contributing new theoretical and empirical knowledge to these fields. The implications for sustainable development are substantial, primarily aligning with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): (a) SDG 5: Gender Equality: The study directly addresses gender equality by highlighting "deep-rooted structural biases, entrenched gender stereotypes, and organisational challenges" that impede women's career advancement. Its call for "gender-sensitive policies, inclusive recruitment, fair promotion procedures, mentorship and organisational reforms" directly supports the creation of equitable opportunities for women in the military, a key institution in society. (b) SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities: By exposing experiences of "gender-based discrimination" and advocating for reforms to ensure fairness, the study contributes to reducing inequalities within a critical sector. (c) SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: Promoting an inclusive culture and transparent practices within the Trinidad and Tobago military strengthens institutional integrity and effectiveness, fostering a more just and equitable environment essential for peace and sustainable governance.

Keywords: Women's Military Careers, Career Progression, Intersectionality



About the presenter | mjaikaransingh@gmail.com

Ms Maria Jaikaransingh is a distinguished professional whose career spans over twenty-seven years of exemplary service within the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, Coast Guard. Retiring at the rank of Fleet Chief Petty Officer on February 28, 2026, her tenure is marked by significant leadership and pioneering contributions. Ms Jaikaransingh holds the honour of being a member of the 38th Intake of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, recognised as the inaugural cohort of women enlisted in the TTCG, thereby establishing a foundational legacy for gender integration within the Force.

Throughout her extensive military career, Ms. Jaikaransingh demonstrated exceptional proficiency and versatility across a myriad of critical departments, including Operations, Medical, Professional and Recruit Training, Executive Administration, and Welfare. Her multifaceted expertise culminated in a pivotal role within the Welfare portfolio, where she dedicated over five years to the Defence Force Family Support Team. Complementing this hands-on experience, she was a key contributor to the technical writing team responsible for conceptualising and developing the Military Community Support System (MCSS) Policy, a testament to her commitment to strategic community welfare initiatives.

Academically, Ms Jaikaransingh holds a Bachelor of Science in Sociology with a Minor in Gender and Development and a Postgraduate Diploma in Gender and Development, both of which provide a critical lens for understanding social structures and inequalities. Her commitment to social welfare is further evidenced by her recently completed Master of Science in Child and Youth Studies from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. Additionally, her strategic and organisational acumen is underpinned by a Master's in Business Administration from the Lord Ashcroft International Business School at Anglia Ruskin University.

Ms Jaikaransingh's unique blend of military experience, policy development, and advanced academic qualifications positions her as an insightful voice on organisational development, social support systems, and gender dynamics within uniformed services.

D2-S3A / ROOM B / PAPER 05

Jungle Justice as an Informal Safety Mechanism in Inner-City Communities: Community Perceptions, Legitimacy, and Human Rights Implications

Shaunette Flemming • Mona Campus

Jungle justice, or vigilante justice, has remained a persistent informal community-led safety response in contexts where formal justice systems are perceived as ineffective, inaccessible, or lacking legitimacy. Across English-speaking countries in the Caribbean and Africa, persistent crime, institutional mistrust, and structural inequalities have contributed to reliance on informal justice practices. However, limited qualitative synthesis exists on community perceptions, effectiveness, human rights, and institutional trust related to jungle justice.

This qualitative systematic review examines the historical, social, and governance factors driving jungle justice in inner-city communities while evaluating its perceived effectiveness against formal legal systems. Furthermore, it analyzes the resulting implications for human rights, institutional trust, and policy development.

The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses guidelines. Qualitative and mixed-methods studies from English-speaking Caribbean and African countries were identified and selected using the Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, and Research type framework, critically appraised using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme Qualitative and Mixed Methods Checklist, and synthesized through narrative thematic analysis informed by Procedural Justice Theory.

The review examines socio-political and historical drivers of jungle justice, perceptions of its effectiveness, and implications for human rights and institutional trust. Findings aim to inform social work practice and policy through community engagement, advocacy, and rights-based interventions that strengthen community–justice partnerships, improve access to justice, and support violence prevention.

Keywords: Jungle justice; informal justice; community safety; procedural justice; human rights



About the presenter | flemmingshaunette@gmail.com

Shaunette Flemming is a dedicated Social Worker, expert in Community Development. Skilledin effective community engagement, stakeholder collaboration, programme coordination, capacity building, and advocacy. She is passionate about empowering individuals and communities by strengthening local leadership and facilitating collaborative solutions to community-prioritized concerns. Currently pursuing a Master of Social Work at the University of the West Indies, she holds a Bachelor of Social Work from Northern Caribbean University. Her workpromotes inclusive, strengths-based approaches that foster resilience, sustainable development, social justice, and meaningful community participation in Jamaica.

D2-S3B / ROOM B

Digital Transformation, AI and Institutional Change

2:15 PM–3:40 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator	Proposed Discussant
Dr. Sean T.	Dr. Ilenius Ildephonce

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Britany Forsythe**
Viability of Online Streaming in Jamaica: The Adaptability of Consumers the Changing Media Market.

02 **David Soutar**
Digitalization and Communication in the Jamaican Public Sector: A Case Study of the C5 Immigration/Customs Declaration Form.

03 **Davion Leslie**
“Negotiating with my conscience”: Tertiary students’ experience using AI in policy-restricted settings.

04 **Cynanie Sawyers-Haylett**
A Mixed-methods Study Unearthing an Institutional Effectiveness Framework for Jamaican Higher Education Institutions.

05 **Robyn Joseph Nathaniel**
Survival Mode Activated: Stakeholder Perspectives on the Sustainability and Viability of Small Public Tertiary Institutions in selected Eastern Caribbean

D2-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 01

Viability of Online Streaming in Jamaica: The Adaptability of Consumers the Changing Media Market.

Britany Forsythe • Mona Campus

The rapid expansion of digital streaming platforms has transformed global media consumption, yet empirical evidence and scholarship on streaming adoption within Caribbean small-island states remains limited. This study addresses that gap by examining the viability of online streaming in Jamaica through an assessment of consumer adoption, motivations, and adaptability within an evolving media landscape. Ethical approval was obtained from the Mona Campus Research Ethics Committee. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was then conducted among 381 Jamaican respondents, and the data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings reveal that streaming adoption is strongest among younger, highly educated Jamaicans, with education demonstrating a statistically significant relationship with streaming behaviour, while gender and geographic location showed no significant relationship. Entertainment, convenience, relaxation, social interaction, and content diversity emerged as the primary adoption drivers. Although barriers such as internet reliability, affordability, device accessibility, and digital literacy persist, consumers demonstrated remarkable adaptability through shared subscriptions, digital payment methods, and flexible viewing behaviours.

By generating locally grounded evidence, the study contributes to shaping the future of digital media innovation and strengthening the Caribbean's digital creative economy in an increasingly platform-driven global landscape. The findings also offer practical implications for broadcasters and policymakers.

This study advances Media and Communication and Digital Media scholarship by providing Caribbean-specific evidence on streaming adoption and consumer behaviour in an underexplored context. It contributes to sustainable development by informing digital infrastructure, digital inclusion, and innovation within the region's creative economy, aligning with SDGs 8, 9, and 10. In doing so, the research supports the conference theme by advancing knowledge that informs policy, industry innovation, and the future of digital transformation in the Caribbean.

Keywords: Online Streaming, Viability, Streaming Adoption, Consumer Behaviour



About the presenter | britanyforsythe@gmail.com

Britany Forsythe is a PhD student in Communication Studies with a strong academic foundation in media and communication. She holds a First-Class Honours degree in Integrated Marketing Communication from CARIMAC. Her current research examines the rise of streaming platforms and their viability in the Jamaican media market, focusing on how emerging technologies are shaping local production models and audience behaviour.

D2-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 02

Digitalization and Communication in the Jamaican Public Sector: A Case Study of the C5 Immigration/Customs Declaration Form.

David Soutar • Mona Campus

This study examines the communication strategies, institutional processes, and outcomes associated with Jamaica's transition of the C5 Immigration/Customs Declaration Form from a paper-based to a digital service. Despite extensive literature on e-government transformation, empirical case-level research on the digitisation of single administrative instruments remains scarce, and no prior study has examined the C5 form's digital rollout. Drawing on Digital-Era Governance theory, diffusion of innovations, and the COM-B behavioural model, this qualitative single-case study investigates how the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) and Jamaica Customs designed, communicated, and implemented the digital C5 form. Employing an interpretivist approach, the research triangulates semi-structured interviews with institutional stakeholders and documentary analysis of public communications, administrative reports, and policy materials. Guided by five research questions, the study explores adoption-focused communication strategies, the role of human-centred design, organisational and technical barriers, efficiency gains, and lessons for future e-governance initiatives. By applying Leão and Canedo's (2018) citizen-centred digitisation framework, the study assesses whether the C5 transition was institution-driven or citizen-responsive. As one of the first case-specific analyses of public sector digitalisation in the region, this research offers timely, transferable insights for advancing innovation-led digital transformation of governance systems across the Caribbean and beyond.

This study advances scholarship on strategic communication and human-centred digital service design by providing one of the first case-level analyses of public sector digitalisation in the Anglophone Caribbean. Through its examination of Jamaica's C5 form transition, the research offers empirically grounded insights into how institutional communication and design choices shape citizen adoption of digital services. These findings carry implications for sustainable development by demonstrating how transparent, citizen-centred digital public services can strengthen institutional efficiency and equitable service access — supporting the Caribbean's broader digital transformation agenda.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Digital Service Design, eGovernment



About the presenter | david.soutar@uwi.edu

David Soutar is currently a postgraduate student in the Communication Studies MPhil programme at the Caribbean School of Media and Communication (CARIMAC) at the University of the West Indies. He also lectures in the areas of Digital Media, Design and Visual Communication and has served on the boards of civil society, research and design organisations. David's current research interests include Digital, Media and Information Literacy, User Experience Design, Service Design and ICT's for Development.

D2-S1B / ROOM B / PAPER 03

Negotiating with my conscience": Tertiary students' experience using AI in policy-restricted settings.

Davion Leslie • Mona Campus

This qualitative study investigates the tensions tertiary students experience when using generative AI chatbots to complete graded coursework when such use is restricted. The research is positioned at the intersection of institutional policies and the demands of academic life and provides insights into how students reconcile competing demands for integrity, success and efficiency. Results from three research questions – how students interact with AI tools, what emotions they experience, and how they construct boundaries of acceptable use – underscore the need for AI policy implementation to be simultaneously more robust and more nuanced.

In order to leverage the complementary insights afforded by interviews and direct observation, the study uses data collected from eight final-year students – 5 females and 3 males – pursuing a 4-year bachelors' degree in Primary Education at a University in the English-speaking Caribbean. Data was collected by interviewing all eight students and then observing five of them using AI to complete graded assessment tasks. The findings reveal that students use AI extensively, despite institutional policies, deploying multiple evasive strategies to avoid detection. Motivated by moral conflicts and internal struggles, students make use of moral disengagement narrative to justify AI usage and to take advantage of opportunity structures present in their environment.

Students' boundaries for appropriate use of AI are fluid and highly vulnerable to peer and institutional norms. The study, therefore, contributes to understanding how students actively construct meaning and ethical boundaries around AI use in constrained settings.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, AI policy, moral disengagement theory



About the presenter | davijoy81@gmail.com

Davion Leslie is a professional with more than two decades of multi-dimensional experience at various levels and in different areas of the education system. Since November 1, 2023, he has served as the Programme Manager for Human Resource Development at the CARICOM Secretariat, based in Guyana. In this role, he is responsible for developing, coordinating and harmonising educational policies across the CARICOM Region in order to unlock Caribbean human potential. Previously, from 2008 to 2023, Mr Leslie served the Ministry of Education in Jamaica, helping to shape the country's teacher development and curriculum delivery landscape. In addition, he has more than 15 years' experience as an educator at the Secondary and Tertiary levels where he has taught Mathematics, Research Methods and various Teacher Education courses. He is now enrolled as a doctoral student at the UWI, Mona, where his research interest is in the area of educational policy capacity in the Caribbean region. He is an eternal optimist, a professional procrastinator and a coffeeholic, who lives by the motto "stir response to duty's call".

D2-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 04

A Mixed-methods Study Unearthing an Institutional Effectiveness Framework for Jamaican Higher Education Institutions

Cynanie Sawyers-Haylett • Mona Campus

This study explored the interplay between psycho-socio-cultural (P-S-C) factors and learning organisation practices (LOPs) in Jamaican higher education institutions (JHEIs) to develop an institutional effectiveness (IE) framework. JHEIs struggle with structural, relational, and operational challenges rooted in the country's post-colonial context. These issues undermine strategic goal attainment, yet limited local research has examined how LOPs and P-S-C dynamics jointly influence IE. Guided by pragmatism, the research employed a sequential exploratory mixed-methods case study design. Phase 1 used a generic qualitative approach, gathering data through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and observations from a purposive-criterion sample of 220 participants across 5 JHEIs. Thematic analysis identified LOPs, P-S-C factors, and perceptions of IE that informed an integrated IE framework. These insights informed the development of quantitative measures and the study's quantitative design. Phase 2 adopted a correlational design using census sampling to survey 185 staff across 3 of the 5 HEIs. Statistical analyses confirmed that P-S-C factors significantly predicted learning organisation practices, and that trust and concrete learning processes were the strongest predictors of institutional effectiveness. The integrated IE framework provides guidance for enhancing IE in JHEIs by offering recommendations for HEI administrators to cultivate inclusive, agile cultures that prioritise learning and development.

Given the limited literature in this area locally, this study is not just a mere exploration, but a significant contribution to understanding the factors that influence the effectiveness of HEIs. The results of this study, which delve into the psychological, sociological, and social-psychological forces that influence effectiveness in Jamaican HEIs, will undoubtedly enrich the local and regional knowledge in this field. This body of work not only contributes to but also expands the theory of effectiveness in post-colonial organisations. Its critical implications for sustainable development and the reform of leadership approaches to better meet the existential needs of our society will undoubtedly strengthen the attainment of Jamaican strategic developmental goals.

Keywords: learning organisation; psycho-socio-cultural factors; institutional effectiveness; higher educational institutions; Jamaica; mixed methods research



About the presenter | cynaniesawyershaylett@gmail.com

Cynanie Sawyers-Haylett is an educator, researcher, and organizational development professional with expertise in psychology, organizational behaviour, learning and development, and program evaluation. She has extensive experience in higher education, curriculum design, leadership development, and research management. Currently completing a PhD in Organizational Behaviour, Cynanie is passionate about advancing evidence-based practice, fostering learning organizations, and mentoring students and professionals. Her work integrates research, innovation, and leadership to promote organizational effectiveness and meaningful social impact.

D2-S3B / ROOM B / PAPER 05

Survival Mode Activated: Stakeholder Perspectives on the Sustainability and Viability of Small Public Tertiary Institutions in selected Eastern Caribbean

Robyn Joseph Nathaniel • Five Islands Campus

Authors: Robyn Joseph Nathaniel, Dr. Diadrey-Ann Sealy, Dr. Lydia Campbell-George

Small public tertiary institutions in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) operate within increasingly complex environments characterized by constrained financial resources, demographic shifts, evolving labour market demands, increased regional and international competition, and ongoing government policy reforms. These pressures challenge their sustainability and long-term relevance. This study explores stakeholder perspectives on the sustainability and viability of selected public tertiary institutions in the Eastern Caribbean by examining how institutional administrators, faculty members, and students perceive sustainability challenges, institutional responses, and factors influencing decision-making and resilience. A qualitative multiple-case study design will be employed across three public tertiary institutions in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, and St. Kitts and Nevis. Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and institutional documents and analyzed using thematic analysis supported by MAXQDA software. This presentation will outline the research design and present preliminary findings from the three case institutions. These findings will provide initial insights into institutional sustainability and resilience and inform institutional leadership and policy discussions on the future of public tertiary education in Small Island Developing States.

This study will contribute to the fields of higher education leadership and educational administration by providing context-specific evidence on the sustainability and viability of small public tertiary institutions in the Eastern Caribbean. This will inform institutional policy, governance, and strategic decision-making. The findings also support the advancement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by identifying strategies that strengthen resilient, inclusive, and sustainable tertiary education systems.

Keywords: Education, College, Sustainability



About the presenter | robyneboni@gmail.com

Robyn Joseph Nathaniel is an educational leader and higher education administrator with extensive experience in education, academic administration, institutional leadership, quality assurance, and teacher development. She currently serves as Registrar of the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies where she provides strategic leadership for student administration, academic records, admissions, examinations, institutional policies, and cross-campus academic operations during a period of institutional transformation. Prior to her appointment as Registrar, she served as Vice Principal at the former Antigua State College, where she played a pivotal role in academic administration, strategic planning, policy development, and the successful transition to the newly established Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS). In addition to her administrative role, Robyn is an Adjunct Lecturer at The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, where she teaches courses in education and linguistics. She has held several leadership positions within the tertiary education sector, contributing to academic planning, curriculum development, quality assurance, institutional policy, and student success initiatives. She has also designed and facilitated numerous professional development programmes for educators and educational leaders across Antigua and Barbuda, with a focus on leadership, teaching excellence, and institutional effectiveness.

D2-S4A / ROOM A

Education, Leadership and Workforce Futures

3:50 PM–5:15 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator	Proposed Discussant
Ms. Dian Bailey	Dr. Deon Edwards-Kerr

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Nicolette Francis**
Students' Attitudes to Technical and Vocational Education and Training Careers and Career Choices in Antigua and Barbuda: A Mixed Methods Study

02 **Zaida Khan-Ventour**
Teachers' Perspectives on Their Use of Professional Teacher Standards: An Instrumental Case Study

03 **Rawle Heeralal**
Potential for Driving Cultural Transformation: Values, Character and Citizenship Education (VCCE) in the School Environment

04 **Stacia Ali**
Understanding the First-Year University Experience: Students' Personal-Emotional and Social Perspectives

05 **Josanne Cox**
Leading through service and structure: A transformational leadership case study of the St. Joseph Police Youth Club in Trinidad and Tobago

D2-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 01

Students' Attitudes to Technical and Vocational Education and Training Careers and Career Choices in Antigua and Barbuda: A Mixed Methods Study

Nicolette Francis • Five Islands Campus

Technology has transformed society, and created a demand for workers to have new skill sets. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is the response to the evolving demands of the labor market. TVET ensures employability, and entrepreneurism in the Caribbean. Antigua and Barbuda, students' enrolment in the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate technical proficiency subjects have been declining. The purpose of this mixed-methods study is to examine the relationship between students' attitudes to TVET subjects and career choices in Antigua and Barbuda. Additionally, the study seeks to understand the barriers and facilitators towards selecting TVET subjects among secondary school students. A cross-sectional survey will collect data from secondary school students and focus groups will be conducted with students and TVET teachers. The focus groups will be audio- recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data will be analyzed using the SPSS version 30 and the MAXQDA software. Thematic analysis will be used to analyze the qualitative data. This presentation will discuss the research design and preliminary data regarding the barriers and facilitators towards selecting TVET subjects among secondary school students. The anticipated findings may be used by TVET teachers to ensure that TVET subjects remain viable options in Antigua and Barbuda.

The anticipated findings may be used by TVET teachers to ensure that TVET subjects remain viable options in Antigua and Barbuda.

Keywords: Technical and Vocational Education and Training, students' attitudes, career choices, Antigua and Barbuda, Mixed-methods



About the presenter | nicolette.francis@my.fiveislands.uwi.edu

Mrs. Nicolette Francis is the Education Officer responsible for Agricultural Science in the Ministry of Education. She obtained her Bachelors, Titulo de Oro (Gold Title), in Education specialty Agriculture and Livestock from the Republic of Cuba in 2012. Afterwards, she obtained Masters of Science, with distinction, in Management and Educational Leadership from the University of the West Indies in 2017. Mrs. Francis is an advocate for agricultural education and has contributed to bringing awareness to agriculture by initiating events such as the Interschool Garden Competition and Agro Expo. Also, she represents Antigua and Barbuda in the United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub Youth Leadership Program (YLP). Mrs. Francis loves students and believes that education is important to human and regional development.

D2-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 02

Teachers' Perspectives on Their Use of Professional Teacher Standards: An Instrumental Case Study

Zaida Khan-Ventour • St. Augustine Campus

Given two unsuccessful attempts to implement national professional teacher standards in T&T, this study provides a detailed exploration of teachers' perspectives on their use of professional teacher standards at a unique case school, at which formal standards have been implemented since 2020. This interpretivist, qualitative study employs an instrumental case study design involving seven research questions that focus on the teachers' lived experiences with the standards. Preliminary findings are available for two research questions that address the nature and purpose of the school's standards. Comprehensive and detailed analysis was conducted using data from semi-structured interviews, lesson observations, researcher field notes, and official documents.

Preliminary findings from thematic and document analysis establish the standards as officially communicated, structured descriptions of performance. Findings reveal uneven knowledge of the standards, with lower familiarity among newly-appointed teachers. These initial findings uncover a disconnection between the official expression of the standards and what teachers articulate them to be. In contrast, the findings relating to the purpose of the standards indicate good alignment between the official purpose of the standards and the teachers' expressed views of the aim of the standards. These findings have implications for induction and communication strategies employed within the school setting.

This study makes a contribution to an under-researched field, and has implications for the development of teacher quality.

Keywords: case study research, professional teacher standards, teacher quality, Trinidad and Tobago.



About the presenter | zaidaventour@hotmail.co.uk

Zaida is a principal with over 25 years of experience in both Trinidad and England. A PhD candidate in Education at The UWI, Zaida was designated as a Specialist Leader in Education by the National College of Teaching and Leadership in England. In this role, she provided support to schools to boost mathematics attainment. A certified Project Management Professional, Zaida holds an MEd and lectured part-time in Education at both Hull University in England, and The UWI in St. Augustine, Trinidad. Her research interests are professional standards and teacher quality.

D2-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 03

Potential for Driving Cultural Transformation: Values, Character and Citizenship Education (VCCE) in the School Environment

Rawle Heeralal • St. Augustine Campus

Given its wide-ranging applications, values education curricula can have influence throughout the school environment that includes but extends beyond classroom lessons (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Harrison et al., 2016). They are living programmes that can help shape institutional culture in the school environment. The Values, Character and Citizenship Education (VCCE) programme is uniquely positioned as a standalone values education curriculum applied in Trinidad and Tobago (TT) and aimed at fostering the development of positive character in students. Since its introduction in 2013, a critical analysis of how VCCE is implemented has not been undertaken. The study uses multiple case study design, employing an ethnographic lens across three primary schools in TT. At each case study school, observations of school operations, observations of VCCE lessons, VCCE-document review, and stakeholder interviews with teachers, students, parents and school principals were conducted. Preliminary results reveal that many stakeholders view VCCE as relevant, appropriate and potentially transformative yet implementation of the programme is not fully leveraged in the school environment. This paper posits that VCCE can take on a centralized role in the school environment, helping to influence a values-based culture in the institution and among its stakeholders.

Keywords: Values Education (VEd), Character Education, Values, Character and Citizenship Education (VCCE), Ethnographic Multiple Case Study, School Culture



About the presenter | rawle.heeralal@my.uwi.edu

Rawle Heeralal is undertaking a PhD in Education at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine. Supervised by Dr. Stephen Geofroy, Mr. Heeralal is conducting a critical analysis of Trinidad and Tobago's only standalone values education curriculum, which has been applied in its primary schools since 2013. With a focus on values and character education in schools, Mr. Heeralal is attempting to address the significant gap in empirical research in this field locally and in the Caribbean region. Mr. Heeralal is also an educator of 15+ years; having served in both classrooms and school leadership.

D2-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

Understanding the First-Year University Experience: Students' Personal-Emotional and Social Perspectives.

Stacia Ali • St. Augustine Campus

This qualitative instrumental case study is an in-depth investigation into first-year undergraduate students' social and personal-emotional adjustment to a university in Trinidad. Moreover, it explored the types of social and personal-emotional support provided by the university to help first year undergraduate students adjustment. The study was framed by Schlossberg's theory of transition. The sample was purposefully selected, which included 25 full-time first-year undergraduate students inclusive of national and regional students across six faculties and four managers from the Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD). The data was collected using semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The results related to personal-emotional adjustment to university life are reflected through psychological experiences, personal qualities, coping mechanisms, past work experience and support systems. The responses from 15 students rating their personal-emotional adjustment to university on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represented the least adjusted and 10 was most adjusted, the findings showed that the majority (80%) rated themselves 6 and above while 20% of students rated themselves 5 and below. Social adjustment to university life is characterized by students' ability to engage socially, form healthy relationships, participate in activities, and adapt to a diverse student body. Conversely, negative social adjustment is linked to struggles in areas such as difficulties in forming relationships, lack of participation in social activities, challenges with social skills, and adapting to the diversity around them. When students were asked to rate their social adjustment to university on a scale of 1 to 10, the findings showed that the majority (69%) rated themselves 6 and above while 31% of students rated themselves 5 and below. The data from students, managers of DSSD and the DSSD documents highlighted there is a gap between the services that students were aware of and the services available from the DSSD. Further, the support provided by the university assisted students in their personal-emotional adjustment and social to university life by providing a sense of reassurance, instilling a sense of calmness, providing clarity about various aspects of the university experience and foster a sense of preparedness. Additionally, limitations of the study and directions for future research are outlined to facilitate the expansion in the understanding of personal-emotional and social adjustment to university life.

Keywords: personal-emotional adjustment; social adjustment; psychological experiences; social experiences; support systems; institutional support



About the presenter | stacia.ali@my.uwi.edu

Stacia Ali is a PhD candidate in Education whose research focuses on first-year student personal-emotional and social adjustment to university life within the Caribbean context. She was a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship programme, which supported a three-month research internship at McGill University, Canada. Stacia has presented her research at regional and international education conferences and is committed to advancing evidence-based practices that enhance students' adjustment, and success in higher education. Additionally, she has over 10 years of experience in educational research, having served as a Research Methods Lecturer and Institutional Research Officer at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, St. Lucia.

D2-S4A / ROOM A / PAPER 04

Leading through service and structure: A transformational leadership case study of the St. Joseph Police Youth Club in Trinidad and Tobago

Josanne Cox • Mona Campus

Authors: Josanne Cox, Davion Leslie, Sasha Goodridge, Alecia Walters-Archie

Transformational leadership offers significant potential to youth development organisations, where fostering growth, resilience, and empowerment among young people is central to the mission. This mixed methods research used data collected through a questionnaire, observations and interviews with key stakeholders – including youth members – to profile a police youth club in Trinidad and Tobago to determine the value of transformational leadership in such settings. The research investigated the leveraging potential of transformational leadership to accelerate youth development and improve perceptions of police and policing – issues about which there is not much contextually relevant research in the Caribbean region. The research found that the deployment of a visible, emotionally intelligent, and service-driven approach to transformational leadership has repositioned the Club into a youth-oriented interventionist institution that fosters trust, participatory problem-solving, youth empowerment, and community-based policing. The research has implications for programme design and delivery in community-based organisations operating at the intersection of education and asset-based youth development.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Youth Development, Policing



About the presenter | josannecox40@gmail.com

Ms. Josanne Cox has collaborated with consulting teams, such as Dr. Gwendoline Williams, Maria Mason Roberts & Associates and Kairi Consultants in designing projects related to education and social and child protection. In so doing, she has engaged stakeholders responsible for the care, education and protection of children in timely discourse on issues of self-monitoring and child protection. For over ten years, Mrs. Cox has led multidisciplinary teams engaged in the processes of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation and has effectively managed human and financial resources towards achieving predetermined objectives. Mrs. Cox is a life-long learner, as demonstrated in her current pursuit of a Doctorate in Educational Planning and Social Development in addition to formal training in Policy and Governance, Workforce Development, Leadership in TVET, Adult and Elementary Education, Adolescent and Child Psychology, Occupational Health & Safety and Marketing. These skills and experiences have been collated into her substantive role as a multipotentialite Consultant. Josanne is however best known for her participation in forest treks, river limes or road races almost every weekend.

D2-S4B / ROOM B

Inclusive Institutions, Human Development and Social Reintegration

3:50 PM–5:15 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator	Proposed Discussant
Professor Julie Meeks Gardner	Dr. Talia Esnard

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Natalia Stennett**
Beyond Performance: Reframing Relational Competence in Social Work Education Through an Autistic Practitioner Standpoint

02 **Rodney Seeraj**
Teachers' Perspective Of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (Cse) In The Secondary Schools' Curriculum

03 **Melissa Hutchinson**
Navigating Re-Entry: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Jamaican Adult Male Ex-Offenders Seeking Employment

04 **Dana Ramkissoon**
Explorations of Facebook Postings and Victim Blaming in Trinidad and Tobago.

D2-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 01

Beyond Performance: Reframing Relational Competence in Social Work Education Through an Autistic Practitioner Standpoint

Natalia Stennett • Mona Campus

Social work education positions relational competence as fundamental to ethical and effective professional practice. However, competence in micro-practice is often taught and assessed through interpersonal behaviours such as eye contact, expressive warmth, conversational fluency and affective responsiveness. While these behaviours may communicate relational competence, they may also reflect neurotypical expectations regarding how competence should appear rather than universal indicators of empathy or professional capability.

Situated within social work education at The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, this critical self-study uses the situated standpoint of an autistic practitioner-researcher and Master of Social Work student to examine relational competence as previously experienced and currently taught. Guided by the Neurodiversity Paradigm, the Double Empathy Problem, and Standpoint Epistemology, the study draws on retrospective reflexive inquiry, structured observation of selected undergraduate social work classes addressing relational and micro-practice competencies, and analysis of relevant pedagogical materials.

The study examines how relational competence is constructed and communicated, which expectations are explicit or implicit, and whether particular behavioural markers become conflated with relational effectiveness. A neurodivergent-informed reframing will distinguish the functional goals of relational competence from conventional expectations regarding their performance and consider alternative ways of teaching and demonstrating those competencies without reducing professional standards.

The study seeks to inform more accessible approaches to social work pedagogy and competency assessment while contributing to disability justice scholarship and Caribbean and Global South conversations on professionalism, legitimacy, and whose ways of relating are recognised as professionally competent.

Keywords: neurodiversity; social work education; relational competence; autistic masking; neurodivergent-inclusive pedagogy



About the presenter | stennettnatalia@gmail.com

Natalia Stennett is a social worker and Master of Social Work candidate at The University of the West Indies, Mona. Her research explores neurodiversity, professional identity, and inclusive social work education, with broader interests in mental health, identity, human development, and disability justice. She is committed to advancing equitable professional practice and contributing to Caribbean social work scholarship.

D2-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 02

Teachers' Perspective of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (Cse) in the Secondary Schools' Curriculum

Rodney Seeraj • St. Augustine Campus

Sex education is one of the most debatable 'taboo' topics, within the Caribbean region. Since the discovery of the HIV/AIDS in the 1980s, CARICOM was forced to develop and implement policies with the thrust of reshaping values and promoting positive behaviours in youths, towards arresting the pandemic. Consequently, in 1994, a CARICOM Standing Committee implemented Health and Family Life Education (HFLE), in schools throughout the region. Subsequently, several gaps in both the content and delivery of the HFLE curriculum were exposed (UNFPA 2022 p.10).

As such, the objectives of this research were to determine if CSE is needed at the secondary school's level, what are age appropriate and relevant content and what are the anticipated benefits and challenges. A qualitative research was conducted, using a case study approach, interrogating teachers. The findings confirmed deficiencies in HFLE, with regards to appropriateness and relevance, suggesting LGBTQI+ and relationships topics are critical to any sexuality education curriculum. Participants indicated their willingness and comfort in teaching CSE, once provided with the training and resources. However, they anticipate resistance from major stakeholders, suggesting a need for collaboration, advocacy and further research on the issue of CSE, as aligned to UN's SDGs, specifically # 4 and #5.

The relevance of this study is to highlight the trajectory of Comprehensive Sexuality Education, in the Caribbean region, in light of global standards. Based on the recommendations of UN's International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE), in promoting positive behavioural changes and advocacy in young people towards achieving the SDGs 2030 agenda.

Keywords: Comprehensive, Sexuality, Age appropriate, Relavant.



About the presenter | rodney.seeraj@my.uwi.edu

Rodney Seeraj is an educator by profession, passionate about youth development and polices to safeguard the well-being of young people. He is an advocate for youth empowerment in capacity building, civic inclusion and advocacy. He holds a B. Ed (Business Studies) from the University of Trinidad and Tobago, PG Dip. Ed (Social Science) from the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine), M. Ed (Youth Guidance) from the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine) and is currently a Ph. D candidate (Sociology) at the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine). His focus is on the need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the secondary schools' Curriculum of Trinidad and Tobago, against socio-economic issues of a sexual nature, that are problematic for young adults.

D2-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 03

Navigating Re-Entry: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Jamaican Adult Male Ex-Offenders Seeking Employment

Melissa Hutchinson • Mona Campus

Upon reentering society, ex-offenders face considerable challenges, such as limited employment opportunities from prior convictions. This study seeks to explore the lived experiences of Jamaican adult male ex-offenders seeking employment post-release, after enrollment and completion or non-enrollment and non-completion of a vocational or educational program while incarcerated. The Labelling and the Life Course Desistance Theories will be examined to show relevance and explain possible outcomes. Together, these theories help to shape the understanding of how labels create barriers for ex-offenders and examine the factors that facilitate reformation over time.

The study will employ the use of a phenomenological qualitative case study, comprised of eight participants, to understand their lived experiences. The literature presented revealed that vocational and educational rehabilitation programs provide knowledge and skillsets required for post-release employment, while highlighting stigma, lack of support and limited employment opportunities further propagate challenges.

The study is expected to contribute valuable insights into the lived experiences of this group and may inform rehabilitation programmes and policies to facilitate successful reentry by creating more effective, equitable and empathetic systems. The findings of this study may also be used to inform Jamaica's crime and rehabilitation efforts long term, revise policies, such as the National Correctional Services Policy and identify evidence-based practices to improve reintegration efforts locally.

This study will contribute to the advancement of the social work discipline by deepening understanding of the lived experiences of this group as they navigate employment and community reintegration following incarceration. By capturing the perspectives of individuals with lived experience, the research addresses a gap in the Jamaican context and provides evidence to inform more responsive interventions. The findings may support the development of policies and programmes that reduce stigma, strengthen reintegration services, enhance employment opportunities and improve collaboration among stakeholders.

Keywords: employment, ex-offender, vocational and educational programmes, Jamaican male, lived experiences.



About the presenter | m.hutchinson_01@yahoo.com

I am a social work professional and Master of Social Work candidate at the University of the West Indies, Mona, concentrating in Community Development and Administration. I hold a Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a Minor in Criminology and has experience in research, community development, project planning and implementation and social outreach initiatives. My professional interests include offender reintegration, social justice, poverty reduction and community resilience. I am passionate about advancing evidence-informed policies and interventions that promote equity, empowerment and sustainable social development in Jamaica.

D2-S4B / ROOM B / PAPER 04

Explorations of Facebook Postings and Victim Blaming in Trinidad and Tobago.

Dana Ramkissoon • St. Augustine Campus

This study investigates the relationship between Facebook postings and victim blaming in Trinidad and Tobago. It looks specifically how gender-based violence (GBV) is framed and interpreted within the online sphere of Facebook, analysing how ideologies are reproduced and challenged within Facebook postings.This study was grounded in the theoretical framework of the framing theory to uncover how media framing, language, and online engagement shape public perceptions of victims and perpetrators. Methodologically, the study adopted a qualitative research design using Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS). Six Facebook posts related to violence against various women, published between 2020 and 2025, were purposively selected alongside their respective comment sections.The findings revealed that each of these Facebook posts framed the GBV incidents in ways that shifted responsibility onto the victims. Comment sections frequently reinforced patriarchal ideologies, rape myths, and Just World beliefs, with women often labelled as irresponsible, reckless, promiscuous, opportunistic and overall deserving of their victimization. The findings however, also identified anti-victim blaming discourses where a smaller percentage of commenters expressed empathy, challenged victim blaming narratives, and criticised media framing practices. Overall, the findings show that Facebook postings frame GBV incidences to reinforce victim blaming ideologies in Trinidad and Tobago.

This study can help advance the discipline of sociology. Firstly, it uncovers the serious need for more Caribbean-centred research on the intersection of GBV, victim blaming and social media. Additionally, the findings suggest the need for comparative research across different social media platforms (like TikTok, X (formerly known as Twitter) and Instagram). This study can also help with sustainable development as it can help advance three of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These include: 1). The Promotion of Gender Equality (SDG 5), followed by 2). Supports Quality Education (SDG 4), which can eventually result in 3). Strengthens Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16).

Keywords: victim blaming, gender-based violence (GBV), Facebook, framing theory, Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS)



About the presenter | danaramona123@gmail.com

Dana Ramkissoon is currently a MSc Sociology student at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine. In 2023, she completed a BSc with majors in Psychology and Sociology, which inspired her to further explore sociological and gender-focused research. Her MSc entitled, “Explorations of Facebook Postings and Victim Blaming in Trinidad and Tobago” addressed issues of localized rape cultures, harmful Facebook discourses, and overall gender inequality. She aspires to continue conducting research that empowers women, supports policy development, and promotes sustainable social development in Trinidad and Tobago.

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Conference PROGRAMME

DAY 3

Friday, 20 November

Online • All times in Jamaica time (GMT–5)

9:00 AM to 10:15 AM	Opening session and guest speaker • Ulli Herrmann
10:15 AM to 10:30 AM	Technical transition
10:30 AM to 11:45 AM	MAIN ROOM **Words That Shape Worlds: Language, Media and Public Communication**
11:45 AM to 12:00 PM	Comfort Break
12:00 PM to 1:25 PM	MAIN ROOM **Creative Caribbean: Identity, Memory and Cultural Expression**
1:25 PM to 2:10 PM	Lunch Break
2:10 PM to 3:00 PM	Break before the closing ceremony
3:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Closing Session

DAY 3 • FRIDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2026

Opening Ceremony

9:00 am to 10:30 am Jamaica time (GMT-5)

Moderator

Dr. Shara Williams-Lue
The UWI, Mona Campus

Welcome & Opening Remarks	**Professor Aldrie Henry-Lee** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Studies and Research), The UWI
Introduction of Guest Speaker	**Dr. David Forgenie** Legacy Presenter, One-UWI Postgraduate Student Conference, and recent Postgraduate Graduand of The UWI
Guest Speaker	**Ms. Ulli Hermann**, MSc *Beyond Word: Navigating Intercultural Communication*
	Q&A
Vote of Thanks	**Ms. Mechelle Atwell-Brathwaite** President, Cave Hill Campus Association of Postgraduate Students

GUEST SPEAKER

Ulli Herrmann



Sales Account Manager
Apple Ads

Ulli Herrmann, originally from Germany, is a dynamic global professional currently based in Dublin, Ireland. Her journey into the complexities of human communication began early, shaped by an international education that included her undergraduate degree from the University of Southern Denmark - which featured a year of studies in China - followed by a Master of Science degree at the Montpellier Business School in France, with additional studies across Canada and South Korea. This deep dive into diverse educational landscapes laid the groundwork for her academic focus: her undergraduate thesis explored the intricate dynamics of Western-Chinese negotiations, while her master's research centered on the efficiencies and effectiveness of intercultural communication within global workspaces.

Translating these academic insights into high-stakes corporate environments, Ulli has spent the past seven years building a successful career in the tech industry, working with global powerhouses like Salesforce, Google, and currently as an Account Manager at Apple Ads. Drawing from her extensive background living and working across multiple countries, Ulli brings a unique, grounded perspective on how unspoken cultural codes shape our daily interactions, relationships, and professional success.

D3-S1

Words That Shape Worlds: Language, Media and Public Communication

10:30 AM–11:45 AM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Dr. Clavia Williams-McBean

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Bolapeju Agboola

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Noor-ud-din Mohammed**
Development and Qualitative Validation of a Questionnaire for Investigating Translanguaging Attitudes among Caribbean Secondary School Teachers.

02 **Yvonne Grinam Nicholson**
"Shapeless Mass and a Book of Rules": Evaluation Research Practices for Planned Communication Activities by Jamaican Communication Practitioners

03 **Toni-Shea Grey**
Debates and Dubplates: An Exploration of two Political Communication Tools Used by the Jamaica Labour Party and People's National Party in Jamaican General Elections, 2011–2025

D3-S1A / PAPER 01

Development and Qualitative Validation of a Questionnaire for Investigating Translanguaging Attitudes among Caribbean Secondary School Teachers.

Noor-ud-din Mohammed • St. Augustine Campus

For decades, English underperformance in the Caribbean has been attributed to the disconnect between Creole languages spoken at the home and community levels and the Standard English required in schools. Increasingly, translanguaging is emerging as a pedagogical framework that assetizes, rather than problematizes, students' home language(s)— a shift currently gaining traction globally and within Trinidad and Tobago's Ministry of Education. Consequently, it is necessary to determine the extent to which translanguaging is reflected in teachers' attitudes toward Creoles. Language attitude research often relies on questionnaires adapted from existing studies in similar contexts. However, common adaptation practices, like adding or removing questions, can compromise instrument validity. Scholars now emphasize the need for transparent reporting on instrument design, analysis, and validation to ensure replicability. Despite a long tradition of language attitude surveys in Creole studies, detailed research on instrument construction and validation remains absent, particularly within the nascent field of translanguaging. This paper presents the instrument development methodology from a larger ongoing study. It details the determination of attitude constructs, the creation and validation of questionnaire items, the potential for data analysis and further psychometric instrument validation. Ultimately, this work provides a framework for reliable survey research in Caribbean educational contexts.

Instrument validation for translanguaging attitudes remains a critical, underdeveloped area. As of February 2026, a search of the IRIS repository revealed 3,340 results for "language + attitude + questionnaire," yet only three for "translanguaging + questionnaire," none of which address Caribbean contexts. This study addresses this gap by providing a validated instrument for Caribbean-focused research. It also serves as a toolkit for postgraduate and early-career researchers, promoting greater methodological rigor and data integrity when designing attitude surveys. Regarding sustainable development, the framework can be utilized by stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education, to conduct large-scale, empirical assessments of teacher readiness for language reform. This is critical for designing professional development programs that reduce the educational achievement gap, thereby fostering social mobility and long-term economic sustainability within the region.

Keywords: Translanguaging; Caribbean Education; Attitudes to Creoles; Questionnaire Design; Instrument Validation



About the presenter | nooruddin.mohammed@my.uwi.edu

Noor-ud-din Mohammed is a linguistics graduate student at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. His research on language access for Deaf students has garnered national recognition and international publication. He has presented his work at various conferences, including those hosted by the U.S. National Science Foundation and the University of Witwatersrand. Inspired by his experience teaching high-school English, he is now exploring linguistic theories and approaches to improve education for Caribbean Creole and vernacular speakers.

D3-S1A / PAPER 01

"Shapeless Mass and a Book of Rules": Evaluation Research Practices for Planned Communication Activities by Jamaican Communication Practitioners

Yvonne Grinam Nicholson • Mona Campus

The purpose of this research was to advance the understanding of evaluation research in the implementation of planned communication programs of Jamaican practitioners. It sought to establish the elements for a best practice framework, and to get more information about the training, expertise, and interests necessary for success, captured from the cross-industry experiences of fifteen (15)practitioners from private and public sectors and publicly listed companies across industries. The sampling technique was a purposive quota sample utilizing thenarrative inquiry and thematic narrative analysis. The themes emerging for bestpractices were the use of literature-endorsed traditional/systematic approachesalongside non-traditional ones, some of which emphasized the oral tradition anddigital technology, such as measurement software and social media with itscommunities and shared connections. Those evolving from training and expertiseincluded the significance of competency and how certain personality traits canbolster success. Competency included practitioners' knowledge in numeracy andresearch. The framework that evolved is cyclical, starting with an identification of keyperformance areas: cognitive, affective, and conative, that would effect change. It iscentered on strategy, setting goals and objectives, the lynchpin to drive the decisions about what practices are to be used, while competencies strengthen opportunities for success.

The research has for example, highlighted the digitalisation gap that exists in countries such as Jamaica, in the face of the pervasiveness of digital communication. Jamaica, as an upper-middle-income country, as designated by the World Bank, is influenced by factors beyond its control, which can impact any target audience. This is particularly relevant for the Jamaican communication practitioner, as the experience of their audiences may include limited availability and access to technology, socio-economic options, and literacy levels.

Keywords: monitoring; evaluation research; measurement; competencies.



About the presenter | ygrinamnicholson@gmail.com

Yvonne Grinam Nicholson is an internationally trained, accredited business communicator. Her areas of speciality are: strategic and business communications, project management, and business development. Her technical competencies are in the areas of writing, editing, event planning, and project management.She has an MBA from the University of New Orleans (USA), an MA in Literature in English, and a BA from the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus. She successfully defended her PhD thesis in Communication Studies at the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communications, University of the West Indies, Mona, May 2026.

D3-S1A / PAPER 01

Debates and Dubplates: An Exploration of two Political Communication Tools Used by the Jamaica Labour Party and People's National Party in Jamaican General Elections, 2011–2025

Toni-Shea Grey • Mona Campus

This study examines televised debates and election dubplates as communication tools in Jamaican general election campaigns between 2011 and 2025. In alignment with the conference sub-theme of Culture, Identity, and Creative Industries, the research explores how political messages are symbolically constructed by the Jamaica Labour Party and People's National Party and interpreted by citizens within Jamaica's distinct cultural and media landscape. Drawing on theories of representation and meaning-making, the study investigates how debates and dubplates communicate leadership, authority, party identity, and popular cultural relevance, while examining their perceived effectiveness in shaping political engagement.The research adopts a mixed-method, sequential exploratory design. Phase one comprises semi-structured interviews with politicians and a content analysis of selected debate excerpts and dubplates to examine the production and symbolic construction of political messages. Phase two will consist of a survey of Jamaican citizens that explores exposure, interpretation, engagement, and perceptions of communicative effectiveness across demographic groups. Findings will contribute to Caribbean political communication scholarship by analysing how meaning is negotiated through formal and popular communicative forms within Jamaica's evolving electoral landscape.

The findings from the study will contribute to Caribbean political communication scholarship by demonstrating how meaning is negotiated across formal and popular communicative forms, by identifying the communicative strengths and limitations of each and by providing recommendations for enhancing the communicative effectiveness, inclusivity and accessibility of televised debates and dubplates in future Jamaican election campaigns.

Keywords: Political communication, Media Studies, Election Dublates, Televised Debates, Jamaican Elections



About the presenter | tonishea.grey@mymona.uwi.edu

Toni-Shea Grey is a 26-year-old Communications and Public Relations Specialist currently pursuing a Master of Philosophy degree in Communication Studies at the University of the West Indies, Mona. She is also the Founder and CEO of Thread Lightly by Toni, a crochet fashion brand that reflects her creativity, adaptability, and entrepreneurial spirit as a Jamaican woman. Crowned Miss St. James Festival Queen in 2024, Toni-Shea continues to use her platform to advocate for youth literacy and educational development. She actively supports students in Southern St. James through her Read to Achieve Literacy Programme, helping to strengthen their reading and comprehension skills. Known for her charisma, determination and commitment to excellence, Toni-Shea embraces self-growth, creativity and meaningful challenges as she continues to make a positive impact in her community and beyond.

D3-S2

Creative Caribbean: Identity, Memory and Cultural Expression

12:00 PM–1:25 PM • Jamaica time

Proposed Moderator
Dr. Nicole Phillip

Proposed Discussant
Dr. Livingston White

Presentations in speaking order

01 **Dayana Williams**
Cinematic Sound Cartographies of the Insular Caribbean: Cultural Resistance and Identity in Contemporary Regional Cinema.

02 **Juliet Jackson**
How Setting Shapes Narratives: A Digital Ethnographic Exploration of Jamaican YouTube Cooking Shows

03 **Ryan Leacock**
Masked Meanings: A Qualitative Study of Masquerade Perceptions Among Caribbean Youth in Barbados, Grenada, and Trinidad in the Age of Social Media

04 **Tameeka Figaro**
Gender and the Social Pre-Conditions of the 20th Century Labour Movement in Trinidad and Tobago

05 **Rudolph Ellis**
Beyond the Damage Narrative: Consciousness, the Humane Discourse, and the Completeness of the Post-Colonial Self

D3-S2 / PAPER 01

Cinematic Sound Cartographies of the Insular Caribbean: Cultural Resistance and Identity in Contemporary Regional Cinema.

Dayana Williams • Mona Campus

Aligning with the conference theme of regional innovation and impact, this study aims to dismantle the historical marginalization of sound design in Caribbean film studies. It addresses the question: How does insular cinematic acoustic space operate as an archive of collective memory? The objective is to map a distinctive Caribbean identity through contemporary soundscapes. The multidisciplinary methodology synthesizes audiovisual semiotics (Chion), acoustic ecology (Schafer), and decolonial thought (Wynter, Brathwaite), applying this framework to a comparative film corpus from, Martinique (Rue Cases-Nègres), and Jamaica (The Harder They Come) and Curazao (Ava & Gabriel: A love Story).

Preliminary findings reveal that sonic devices—such as acoustic saturation, the acousmatic voice, and anempathetic music—subvert Hollywood-centric visual hegemonies. Furthermore, the tracking of regional vernaculars (such as kreyòl) and localized acoustic markers functions as an act of ontological humanization for the subaltern subject. Consequently, this research concludes that a shift toward auditory epistemologies is vital for the region. The application of this study lies in providing an innovative conceptual framework that directly impacts the preservation and valorization of the Caribbean's intangible acoustic heritage, shaping future regional discourses.

Ensuring that Caribbean cinematic voices actively shape future regional discourses.

Keywords: Caribbean Cinema, Sound Design, Decolonial Aesthetics, Identity



About the presenter | dayana.williams@gmail.com

Dayana Williams Agramonte is a postgraduate student in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica. She holds a bachelor's degree in art history from the University of Havana, Cuba, and is currently pursuing an MPhil in Spanish at The University of the West Indies.

Research Interests
Her research fields encompass Caribbean and Latin American Cinema, and Cultural Studies. Her primary areas of investigation include music and sound narratives in the Caribbean and Latin America, contemporary art specifically from Cuba and the Caribbean islands, and the historical development and production of audiovisual and radio in Cuba.

D3-S2 / PAPER 02

How Setting Shapes Narratives: A Digital Ethnographic Exploration of Jamaican YouTube Cooking Shows

Juliet Jackson • Mona Campus

This study examines how Jamaican YouTube cooking shows act as catalysts for linguistic diversity, social restructuring and individual agency, and it highlights how content creators are advancing cultural knowledge and shaping futures using unrestricted food talk in JamEng, AmEng and JamCre (Jamaica Creole), narratives, folklore and digital affordances. The researcher assembled and analyzed data comprising twenty-four hours of raw footage from six popular Jamaican YouTube cooking channels featuring recipes based on meat, pastry, beverage and porridge categories. The AI transcription tool, Turbo Scribe, was used to transcribe raw data from video to text for ease of analysis, and Conversational Analysis (CA) approach was used to identify what default features of YouTube determined the types of narratives featured in the beverage recipes on each channel, and these were deliberately selected to ensure consistency and validity. The findings show that social media platforms such as YouTube provide a liberal environment for diverse linguistic expressions, so that influencers can successfully integrate both high and low-status linguistic codes, incorporate nostalgia, humour, Jamaican sayings as well as multimodal texts and ensembles during interaction. By addressing a gap in research regarding the digital status of creoles in the Caribbean, this study provides a model for understanding how creolophones navigate and shape digital spaces. The results could provide actionable insights for educators, marketers and media practitioners who intend to advance their markets through digital media engagement. Ultimately, the study underscores the transformative potential of authentic, linguistically diverse digital content from the Caribbean.

Keywords: Social setting, digital hybrid variety, ethnography of communication, multimodal texts, cultural narratives



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Juliet Ann Jackson is a Lecturer of Communication at Excelsior Community College. She holds B.A in Mass Communication from Northern Caribbean University, an M.A. in English from The University of the West Indies Mona, and she is an MPhil/ PhD Candidate in Linguistics also at The University of the West Indies, Mona. Her research interests include culinary linguistics, linguistic anthropology, ethnography of communication and creole linguistics.

D3-S2 / PAPER 03

Masked Meanings: A Qualitative Study of Masquerade Perceptions Among Caribbean Youth in Barbados, Grenada, and Trinidad in the Age of Social Media

Ryan Leacock • Cave Hill Campus

Unmasking the meaning of masquerade entails navigating a tunicate structure, where the traditions at the core give rise to complex and polysemic identities mediated through cultural heritage, commercialization, embodied and digital representations. The study, "Masked Meanings: A Qualitative Study of Masquerade Perceptions Among Caribbean Youth in Barbados, Grenada, and Trinidad in the Age of Social Media" entails examining these overlapping layers of meanings, to discover how young people, ages 18 to 30, interpret, negotiate and participate in the masquerade space.

Framed within interpretivist and constructivist paradigms, Spice Mas in Grenada, Crop Over in Barbados and Carnival in Trinidad & Tobago are the cases that will be used to generate qualitative data through semi-structured interviews (20 interviewees per territory), focus groups (2 focus groups, 6-8 participants per territory), participant observation, and digital ethnography involving Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and other relevant digital spaces. Reflexive thematic analysis and cross-territorial comparison will be used to interpret the data.

By positioning young people as active cultural agents rather than passive recipients of tradition, the study contributes to scholarship on Caribbean identity, cultural heritage, youth participation, and digital culture. Its findings will aim to inform cultural policy and festival-development strategies across the region.

Keywords: Caribbean youth, masquerade, digital mediation, cultural identity, heritage



About the presenter | ryanleacock@gmail.com

An educator, cultural practitioner, researcher, and creative entrepreneur from Barbados with over twenty-five years of experience in education, sport administration, and cultural development. Serves as Head of the Physical Education Department at Harrison College, President of Clapham Sports Club and Director of Adinkra The Band, a masquerade organization dedicated to preserving and reimagining Caribbean cultural traditions through performance, costume design, and festival production. Holding a Master of Arts in Creative Arts (Creative Entrepreneurship) with Merit from The University of the West Indies, along with Bachelor of Science in Management - Specializing International Business, with Associate Degrees in Physical Education and Sport Management. Professional interests span cultural policy, festival tourism, heritage preservation, youth development, and the creative industries.Currently pursuing graduate research PhD in Cultural Studies at The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. His research examines youth perceptions of masquerade in Barbados, Grenada, and Trinidad, with particular attention to the intersections of cultural heritage, commodification, performance, and social media. Through both academic inquiry and creative practice, he seeks to contribute to the preservation and sustainable development of Caribbean cultural traditions while exploring their evolution in a rapidly changing digital world.

D3-S2 / PAPER 04

Gender and the Social Pre-Conditions of the 20th Century Labour Movement in Trinidad and Tobago

Tameeka Figaro • St. Augustine Campus

This paper reassesses Trinidad and Tobago's twentieth-century labour movement through a gendered lens, contributing to the scholarship on women and gender history in Trinidad and Tobago. The primary aim of this paper is to assess the extent to which gendered principles shaped the social preconditions of working-class women and catalysed their agency in the labour movement. A mixed-method research design is employed, utilising primary materials including newspaper reports, colonial documents, autobiographies, memoranda, and public speeches, as well as secondary sources such as books, journal articles, and pamphlets. The findings suggest that gendered principles did, to an extent, create the social preconditions of working-class women and catalysed their agency in the labour movement. Newspaper reports, autobiographies written by women who were part of the labour movement, and public speeches by women provide evidence that gendered principles impacted women's social conditions and propelled their agency in the labour movement. Therefore, the paper argues that a gendered reassessment of the labour movement is necessary to appropriately historicise Trinidad and Tobago's past and to reinforce women's place in the country's history.

This study reassesses the labour movement through a gendered lens, thus expanding the labour historiography and reinforcing women's place in the history of Trinidad and Tobago.

Keywords: Labour movement; Working-class women; Social pre-conditions; Women's agency



About the presenter | tameeka.figaro@my.uwi.edu

I am Tameeka Figaro, a second-year MPhil History candidate at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. My research is centered on a gendered analysis of the labour movement in Trinidad and Tobago to assess the catalysts for women's agency. I have a keen interest in historical research evidenced particularly by persistent and rigorous involvement in research opportunities both at the co-curricular and professional level. I have served as a research officer for the Guild's International Affairs Committee and a research analyst for the UWI Sisters' Society. I have also worked professionally as a research assistant for the Central Bank Museum of Trinidad and Tobago and the UWI Mona History Department. I therefore consider it a valuable opportunity to take part in the UWI Postgraduate Conference to both share my research findings and engage with the scholarly work of my fellow postgraduate researchers.

D3-S2 / PAPER 05

Beyond the Damage Narrative: Consciousness, the Humane Discourse, and the Completeness of the Post-Colonial Self

Rudolph Ellis • Mona Campus

The dominant tradition in Caribbean philosophical discourse has produced a systematically incomplete account of the post-colonial self. From Wilson Harris through Sylvia Wynter, Caribbean philosophy has engaged the self almost exclusively through its material and historical dimensions, overlooking the immaterial constitutive element this research identifies as the most philosophically significant component of what the self is. The omission is structural: the colonial encounter became not merely an event Caribbean people experienced but a constitutive fact about what they are.

This research challenges that inheritance. Drawing on the Humane Discourse, grounded in the convergent recognition of African, Western, and Asian philosophical thought, the paper argues that the self is constituted with two elements: matter and spirit. Consciousness, the immaterial element given at creation, is prior to all historical encounter and indestructible by any historical event. What slavery and colonialism damaged were the predicative conditions of Caribbean existence. They could not damage consciousness itself.

The Bar of Reason is applied to the damage narrative and demonstrates its philosophical failure against the full evidence of Caribbean history, the Haitian Revolution, the Maroon communities, the creole languages. The post-colonial self was never broken. The task of Caribbean philosophy is to recognise its completeness.

Keywords: post-colonial self, consciousness, constitutive account, Bar of Reason, Humane Discourse



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Rudolph Percival Ellis is a doctoral candidate in Philosophy at the University of the West Indies, Mona. He is the author of the Humane Discourse, a systematic philosophical programme of twenty-nine manuscript volumes developed from within the Caribbean intellectual tradition. The programme argues that every person is constituted with an immaterial element, given at creation, that no historical event can destroy, and applies that account to law, education, ethics and culture. His work has appeared in the Journal of Arts, Science and Technology.

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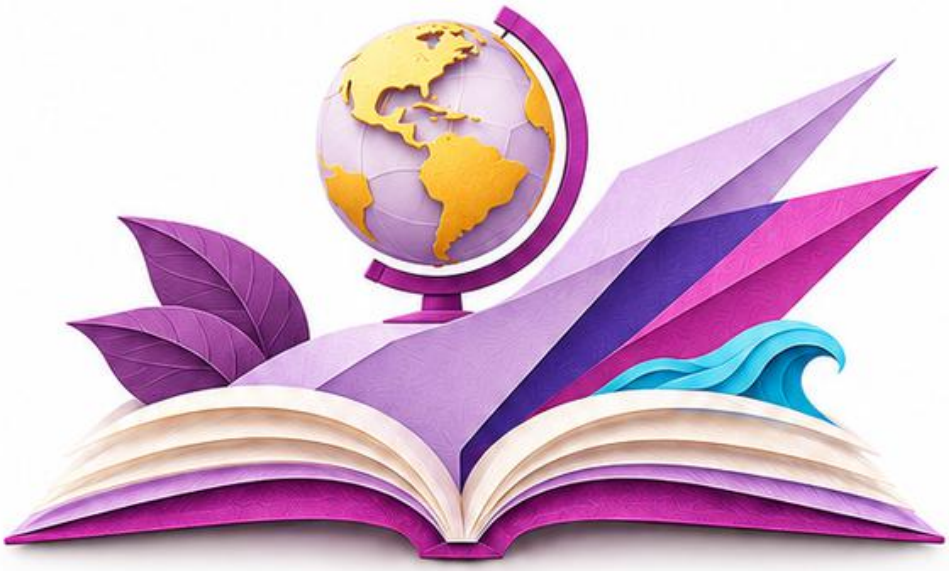


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