Supporting the Integration and Learning of Students with Disabilities at U.W.I. Cave Hill and St. Augustine Campuses

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What Barrier to Participation is depicted?
What barrier to participation is depicted?
Literature Review
What do we know about supporting students with disabilities in HE?

• Negative attitudes towards accommodation and support can negatively impact the performance of students with disabilities (Dowrick, Anderson, Heyer, & Acosta, 2005)

• Gender difference exist with respect to whether or not lecturers grant access to accommodation for SWD (Lombardi and Murray, 2011)
Literature Review

• Reinschmiedt, Buono, Sprong, Upton, and Dallas (2013) study found that students with disabilities were dissatisfied with
  – Type of classroom accommodations given in HE
  – Assignment extensions and modifications
  – Academic accommodations

• Access to curriculum and instruction are enhanced when lecturers use Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2011)
Research Questions

• What barriers to participation and integration do students report experiencing at CH and St. Augustine?

• How do students with disabilities at university level navigate the barriers to access and participation in Barbados and Trinidad
## Methodology

| **N = 12** |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| **Participants**| Mean Age 26.7 years (SD 7.71) | Purposive Sample |
| 4 Cave Hill; 8 St. Augustine | | |
| **Measure** | In Depth Interview Guide | Barriers to Participation-school, society, tertiary level; employment |
| **Design** | Qualitative; Phenomenology | |
| **Data Analysis** | Content Analysis | Grounded Theory (Glaser & Stauss, 1967); Open & Axial Coding, Themes and Theory Application |
Type of Impairment

Sample by type of impairment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Impairment</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Impairments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Impairments</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample by Sex

Students in the study by Sex

- 75% Females
- 25% Males
Findings
Barriers to Participation and Integration

Contextual
• External Factors that influenced levels of participation and integration
• Related to the environment

Psychological
• Internal Factors that influenced levels of participation and integration
• Related to self
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equality of Opportunity</td>
<td>A call for responsive teaching that caters equally to all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know who we are and what we need</td>
<td>Build awareness and sensitization about SWD and their needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Barriers to Integration</td>
<td>Contextual factors that influence student performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not my disability</td>
<td>Personal factors that influence psycho-social and academic adjustment of students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Equality of Opportunity

Andragogy as a Barrier - Duration of lectures

These . . . are three or a two hour lecture sometimes. It makes it a lot harder to focus. [I think that] some lecturers can adjust their teaching styles to accommodate different types of students. (Shannie, ADD, CH)
Andragogy as a barrier

• I am doing a course right now and everything is done on the PowerPoint. [However] I need to write it to process the calculations. I can’t follow it like that [only using the PowerPoint] Because for me, I can’t like zone out in the class, and I say ‘Jacob it doesn’t make sense fighting up’.

(Jacob, ADD, St. Augustine)
Know who we are and what we need

• **Awareness and Access to Accommodations**

• The system should be in a way that where the lecturer knows [all] persons in his/her class who are visually impaired. Every visually impaired person is not going to tape record [lectures] they may need something else like large print (Martha, p.18, Visual Impairment, Cave Hill).
Institutional Barriers to Integration

• Administrative Challenges
• Early in the semester like week 3 or week 4 there is a group of guys in one row always talking in class, and this particular lecturer has a problem with noise. And it so happened that one day he walks into the class, and . . . and takes the ID cards of the whole row. He doesn’t say a word. [He] leaves the classroom and then comes back and hands us back the cards and then starts back [continues] lecturing. At the end of the semester -- I did 4 courses I got A+s in 2 of them, I got a C+ in one -- and that course, I failed.
Institutional Barriers-Environment

I think the unevenness of some of the walkways could be improved upon. It would be easy when you are walking but when you have that impairment or you are in pain then you realise “oops!” ....there is a lot of bump-t-bump so that can be worked on (Karen,p.1. physical impairment, St. Augustine).
I am not my disability: Perceptions

- People can look at your disability and not even worry about [listen to] what you are saying. So it is not that you shouldn't read like that or it can distract the audience. Instead of taking in the information they are more concerned with why you are reading like that. (Martha, p.22, sensory impairment, Cave Hill).
I made mistakes sometimes. I got assignments and I would keep it until the last minute. I use to lime, a lot of liming because they don’t give ya homework in UWI. So if they don’t give you homework you know you could go home. You had a choice of either going to study, go and lime, or watch tv or do some other thing. (Jason, p.1, Dyslexia, St. Augustine).
Summary of Findings by Gender

Males
Politics, & Administration

Females
Environment & Accessibility

Andragogy, Need for Accommodation
Type of Barriers to Participation and Integration

- Learning Disability
- Sensory Impairment
- Physical Impairment
Navigating Barriers
## RQ2: Navigating Barriers

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Family as central to academic success</td>
<td>Examines ways in which family support students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology as support</td>
<td>Examines the need for other technology assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Actualization through self-advocacy</td>
<td>Examines how students exercise self-advocacy and self-determination</td>
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</table>
Family as Central to Academic Success

- Emotional and Financial Support
- My sister thinks I can conquer the world to be honest. That's if I had to say the one body in my family without a shadow of a doubt that supports or believes in me. It is my sister and my passed brother, her [financial] support from her financially was tremendous . . . the support from her academically pushing me where I wanted to go and where she knew I should be (Martha, p.20, physical impairment, St. Augustine).
Family as Central to Academic Success

• **Advocacy**
• Without my mother’s insistence at the age of 9 to take that test, I wouldn’t have been diagnosed with ADD; I wouldn’t have gotten extra time at CXC at CAPE and at UWI (Jacob, ADD, St. Augustine).
Technology as Support: Hardware

- ‘Better hardware’ (Trevor, p.4, Physical Impairment St. Augustine),
Self-Actualization Through Self-Advocacy

- **Self-Determination**
- What I have been able to do is email the lecturer or talk to the lecturer and let them know that I would not be able to attend night courses because I have [only] one major source of transportation. They have allowed me to keep track and submit my work via E-Learning. (Crystal, p. 5, Cerebral Palsy, Cave Hill).
Discussion - Theorizing the findings

- Exo System
- Meso System
- Micro System

Exo System:
- Administration
- Environment

Meso System:
- Andragogy
- Accommodation

Micro System:
- Identity, Family Support, Peers, Lecturers
Further Research

• Could broaden the study to 50
• Could explore more ‘hidden’ disabilities
• Could explore the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of lecturers at Cave Hill and St. Augustine and other non-UWI campuses
• Could develop targeted interventions to address any negative psycho-social and environmental barriers that might further inhibit the participation and integration of students with disabilities at both campuses