

## ABSTRACT

The Way Forward: Towards a Comprehensive Sexuality Education Programme in Schools – A Multiple Case Study of Secondary Schools in the Southeastern Educational District of Trinidad and Tobago.

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This qualitative research presents an interpretive approach to sexuality education in three secondary schools within the southeastern educational district of Trinidad. The central aim is to gain an understanding of how educational stakeholders with respect to a rural Trinidadian context address the need for school-based sexuality information. This researcher's interest stems from her observations of the consequences of irresponsible student sexual behaviours and inadequate stakeholder responses. By understanding contexts, successful sexuality education programmes are largely determined (UNESCO, 2011). Thus the case study methodology is employed to document and assess the implications of sexuality education provision, to provide evidence-based, relevant, feasible solutions and strengthen programme efficacy. The conceptual framework best suited to this inquiry involved a four-pronged approach. This included the Social Cognitive and Goal Setting theories and Health Belief and Information, Motivation and Behavioural models.

The data collection covers the period 2010- 2011. Primary data included stakeholder interviews and field observations. Data were analyzed using the inductive thematic approach. This study argues that, though instances of sexuality education were identified, it was often fragmentary and not conceptualized as a discrete part of the formal curriculum. The findings highlight the need to prioritize sexuality education, with participants clear and unequivocal in their support for effective, coherent, sustained delivery integrated into the formal curriculum. Policymakers and youth-serving professionals must heed this call.

Keywords: Desrian Wilson; comprehensive sexuality education; case study; inductive thematic approach.