International Journal of Education and Psychological Research (IJEPR) Volume 8, Issue 2, June 2019
Print - ISSN: 2349 - 0853, e-ISSN: 2279 - 0179 Available online at www.ijepr.org
Orignal Research Article Open Access

Underachievement of Students' in Technical Education Subjects in Guyana School System

Ritesh Tularam [1]
Sandeep Kumar [2]

Abstract: *Underachievement of students' in technical education subjects is considered to be a major educational issue. Ministers of Education across the Commonwealth and throughout the English speaking Caribbean have raised the issue of underachievement. In Guyana, the issue has formed a key component in the educational reforms proposed by the Governmental agency responsible for education within the country: namely the Ministry of Education. The underachievement of students in technical subjects is a topic which has raised significant debate and a host of divergent hypotheses.*

This theoretical paper utilises the content analysis technique in an attempt to analyze the literature available on this issue, particularly those produced within the Caribbean; it may be argued however, evidence within the Caribbean remains limited. Nevertheless, factors such as parent's perception, teacher bias, overcrowded classrooms, teacher efficacy, students' self-interest and continuous technical teacher professional training are some of the areas that have been considered and commented upon. Finally, this paper draws conclusions from the available reports, journals and articles and concludes with recommendations.

Key Words: *Underachievement, Technical Education, Guyana*

Article History: *Received: 18th May 2019, Revised: 31st May2019, Accepted: 10th June2019, Published: 30th June 2019.*

INTRODUCTION

Underachieving students is a serious concern in schools. Teachers are challenged daily by students who don't seem interested in learning. One of the most persistent questions facing individual teachers is, "How do I get all the students to achieve to their fullest potential?" The real problem facing educators is helping all students achieve optimal learning (conceptual understanding and the ability to apply knowledge to new problems, learning, and creations) with high quality content (from the students' own interests, from state local curricula, and local curricula, and national standards). If we are serious about educating every child, we must include every child in meaningful, engaged learning. That means using teaching techniques that match what we know about how students' learn. [(1)]Muir, (1981) says that research shows that there are a wide variety of reasons why students underachieve. There are just as many solution as reasons but all are based on quality teaching. Incorporating technology into the curriculum, continuous professional development of teachers' in subject and pedagogy area are some possible ways of increasing student's motivation to learn.

There is little consensus on how to define underachieving students. Underachievement can be measured in different ways using any number of criteria. After reviewing publications on underachievement, [(2)]Ford, (1992) states that typically schools use teacher expectations, intelligent tests, achievement tests, aptitude test, and/or GPA. Ford, views that as problematic because schools have adopted a psychometric definition of underachievement and minority students do not do well on standardized tests. [(3)] James R. De Lisle, (2005) states that the definition as a discrepancy between a child's school performance and some ability index such as an IQ score, but neither, of these definitions helps teachers or parents help address the underachieving child problems. Underachievement is a behavior and therefore can be modified. So the suggestion would be, not to label the student as an underachiever but to label the behavior itself. (e.g., the child is "underachieving in Technical Drawing and Electrical Installation" rather than an "underachieving student").

Individual students may be better suited to learning in a particular way, using distinctive modes for thinking, relating and creating. The notion of students having particular learning styles has implications for teaching strategies because preferred modes of input and output vary from one individual to another, it is critical that teachers use a range of, or appropriate pedagogical and content knowledge to effectively meet the needs of individual learners. Sound instruction should incorporate a variety of teaching methods intended to complement the learning styles of children. This should lead to young learners who are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to inquire, infer, and interpret; to think reflectively, critically and creatively; and in the final analysis to make use of the knowledge and skills they have gained by becoming effective decision makers.

[1] Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Education, University of Delhi, India
[2] Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Delhi, India

A number of students will require support to meet the objectives of the prescribed curriculum. This support may be in the form of changes in teaching strategies, approaches or materials and may require the support of resource and/or special education teachers. Education on the other hand, can be categorized in many classifications according to the field of discussions. Some common classifications of education would be Primary, Secondary, Higher and Continuing, Special Education, etc.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training(TVET) is another category of education, that which prepares students for jobs in technology field, and more so to take on the challenges of this new era of technology. Such jobs lie between skilled craftsman and engineering or scientific professions. Learning must be meaningful and appropriate for the child's cultural environment. Learning experiences must be varied and an atmosphere of support must be provided. The active involvement of the whole child: the cognitive, aesthetic, physical and social dimensions, is key in a comprehensive school program for effective teaching and learning.[1]

Explaining the Title

For the purpose of this paper the term "Technical Education"- refers to the academic and vocational preparation of students for jobs involving specialize skilled trades, applied sciences, modern technologies, and career preparation where as "Underachievement" means one (such as a student) that fails to attain a predicted level of achievement or does not perform as expected.

BACKGROUND OF THE GUYANA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Republic of Guyana, formerly British Guiana, lies between Suriname and Venezuela on the northern coast of South America. Brazil lies on the southern border. [(4)] More than 90 percent of Guyana's population of almost 800,000 people occupy an arable coastal range 40 miles wide. Guyana's ethnic mixture and educational system are the result of the country's colonial economy. Early plantation owners brought in African slaves. When slavery was abolished in 1838, indentured workers became the main source of cheap labor. The largest number came from India, and their descendants now comprise nearly half the population. Afro-Guyanese make up a third of the population, and the remainder consists of Amerindians, Asians, and Europeans. Nonetheless, Guyana's official language is English.

Public schools, operated by religious organizations, began to appear in the early 1800s. Elementary schools flourished under the direction of the London Missionary Society, and in 1876 primary education became compulsory for children aged 6 to 14. Textbooks were prepared in the United Kingdom favoring continental history and literature. All the examinations were given in Great Britain. Technical education was not available. Trades were learned solely from an apprenticeship to a journeyman. Until the University of Guyana was established in 1963, those seeking higher education had to attend universities abroad.

The educational system underwent major reform in 1961, when the government assumed control of the schools and established the Ministry of Education. Gaining independence in 1966, the country inherited a well-established educational system, but its curricula and educational aims were patterned after the British system. The government introduced changes to align the schools with the country's political goals, ethnic blend, and economic needs. In 1976, private education was abolished and education became free from nursery school through the university. Anyone, no matter their income, could attend school. The Constitution of 1980 guaranteed everyone the right to continuous education and training. Those attending high school would choose between academic, academic and technical, and vocational high schools. The government also established trade schools, which offered job training in such fields as engineering and construction.

With these improvements in place, the literacy rate rose above 95 percent, but conditions in the schools were far from ideal. In the 1970s, schools became overcrowded, and teachers who resisted government efforts to make all teachers teach loyalty to the government and its socialist objectives were fired. Truancy and illiteracy increased. As teachers departed and conditions deteriorated in the schools, scores on the Caribbean-wide examinations vastly dropped.

Guyana's economic troubles in the 1980s, combined with the government's commitment to finance free public education, led to underfunding of the schools. The quality of education declined even further. The school structures were neglected, educational materials became scarce or nonexistent, and equipment deteriorated. Teachers' salaries were poor, and as supply budgets dwindled, so did the number of trained teachers, many of whom sought positions out of the country to escape political oppression and job insecurity. In 1989, the government introduced an Economic Recovery

Program, turning from a state-controlled, socialist economy toward a free-market system. By 1999, improvement in education was among the government's top priorities of the government. Teachers' salaries have been raised and new schools are being built, reflecting an upturn in the country's struggling school system.

Historical Perspective of Technical Education

Formal Technical and Vocational Education and Training evolved from the introduction of technical subjects in the primary school curriculum. [(5)] Technical subjects such as Woodwork, School Gardening, Home Economics, Needlework and Bookbinding were taught. At that time exposure to primary education was accepted as preparation for employment. This level of education, therefore, was a form of Vocational Education. Persons who had successfully completed their primary education were able to gain employment in a wide range of low-level occupations.

Between 1890 and 1958 the expansion of the plantations and the introduction of new industries such as mining, timber, rice, fishing and shipbuilding increased the demand for skilled personnel at all levels. The number of primary and secondary schools that offered technical subjects on their curriculum gradually increased, particularly during the 1940s and 1950s.

In 1931 the Director of Education established three Handicraft Centres, now known as Practical Instruction Centres. They were located in Georgetown, New Amsterdam and Fellowship on the West Coast of Demerara. The Carnegie Trade School now known as the Carnegie School of Home Economics was established two years later in 1933.

The demand for skilled manpower at all levels reached an acute stage in the 1940s. Although an apprenticeship system was in place, this together with the efforts of the primary school system could not satisfy the labour market. The trend was for the major industries and the Colonial Government to recruit engineers and technicians from the developed countries.

The training of craftsmen which was done mainly through the apprenticeship system by some government ministries and departments, and the large industries such as bauxite, sugar, rice and shipbuilding was inadequate. This was so because of the "Sitting by Nellie" approach which was the methodology that was employed in those days and the limited number of apprentices that were trained over a stipulated five-year period. The training was purely practical in nature. These and other problems led to a three-pronged strategy in the training of skilled personnel. They were as follows:

i. The expansion of pre-vocational education at the primary and secondary levels with the introduction of practical instruction centres and the continuous increase of practical instruction departments from 1953.
ii. The development of post-secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions to provide classroom exposure for apprentices and special tailor made training courses for workers and the unemployed; and
iii. The training of middle and senior level skilled personnel overseas.

As a consequence of this policy, the Government Technical Institute was established in 1951. In the years that followed several other major institutions were established. These include the Guyana School of Agriculture (1963), the Guyana Industrial Training Centre (1968) and the New Amsterdam Technical Institute (1971). Some of the main industrial undertakings in Guyana, including sugar and bauxite, also established their own Training Centres. In addition, training was further expanded with the establishment of the Guyana National Service and some small Training Centres such as the Guyana Electricity Corporation Training Centre, and the Guyana Telecommunications Corporation Training Centre.

In the early 1970s the Faculty of Technology was established at the University of Guyana. This input enabled the University to train persons at the Diploma and later at the Degree level in limited fields of engineering. This development can be seen as an up-grading of the policy that was employed in the 1950s.

In 1996 the Linden Technical Training Complex now known as the Linden Technical Institute was handed over to the Ministry of Education by GuyMine. The Essequibo Technical Institute at Anna Regina, Region Two was established in 2001 and the Upper Corentyne Industrial Training Centre at Kingston, Corriverton was established in 2006. Two other Vocational Training Institutions are to be established very shortly. One will be at Groenveldt, Leonora, Region Three and the other at Mahaicony, East Coast Demerara, Region Five. These institutions will address the policy of equality of access in addition to the alleviation of the skills needs of the highly populated regions.

Students of the hinterland regions are awarded scholarships each year to pursue studies in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Programmes at institutions in the Coastal Regions.

In 1973 the Community High Schools were established. Such schools were secondary institutions specially established with curricula that were designed to provide occupational skills necessary for the economic development of the communities in which they were located and concomitantly, the country as a whole. Academic and pre-vocational education subjects were taught for the first three years of the programme, after which students wrote the Secondary Schools' Proficiency Examination (SSPE) Part One. Those students, who were academically inclined, were transferred to a general secondary school so that they could pursue a more academically biased programme after being successful at the Secondary

Schools Proficiency Examination about the age of fourteen (14) years. Transfer was entirely dependent on the desire of the student. Those successful students who remained were required to specialize in a pre-vocational education subject for which they had individually, shown the necessary aptitude and interest. The Secondary Schools' Proficiency Examination (SSPE) Part Two was written at the end of the programme in the fourth year.

Some of the students who successfully pursued this programme were employed in industry as apprentices. Some requested to pursue further studies at the post-secondary institutions while a minority gained employment in their family businesses.

The Community High Schools are being converted to secondary schools. The duration of the programme is now five years and the SSPE examination was replaced by the Basic Competency Certificate Programme (BCCP) which is now being called the Secondary Competency Certificate Programme (SCCP) and the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC).

Limitations of the Study

This review looks mainly at Guyana and therefore just that is represented. Since, no surveys have been conducted by the author, only the thoughts, feelings and opinions that were previously recorded are now represented in print. No thoughts, feelings and opinions of present teachers and/or students are represented. Access to local literature on the subject area was not readily available.

METHODOLOGY

For this article the author have used the discourse analysis methodology under the content analysis to carefully analyse the various articles, journals and reports produced within the Caribbean on the issue of underachievement of Students' in Technical Education subjects. Discourse analysis is a method which is used by authors and critics to answer a variety of

questions about language, about writers and speakers, and about sociocultural processes that surround and give rise to discourse by paying close and systematic attention to particular texts and their contexts.

In the process, writes discuss methodological issues involved in collecting texts and systematically describing their contexts (ethnographic participant-observation and other forms of naturalistic inquiry; transcription and "entextualization"; legal and ethical issues connected with collecting and using other people's voices) as well as methodological issues that arise in the process of interpreting texts (analytical heuristics; reflexivity; standards of evidence).

As a result, of the nature of discourse analysis the author decided to use this methodology because it gives the opportunity to carefully analyse the existing literature in the form of reports, articles and journals on the topic, and to careful present the information base on his interpretation. The writer was able to review five (05) articles, five (05) journals and two (02) reports on the subject which has provide sufficient for him to make his own analysis on the topic.

THEMATIC DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

This paper attempts to analyse the literature available on the issue of "Underachievement of Students' particularly those produced within the Caribbean. After a thorough review of journals, reports and articles on the above subject. The following categories/themes emerged as issues contributing to underachievement of students'. These are as follows:-

- *Perception of Parents;*
- *Teacher's Bias;*
- *Students' Self Interest;*
- *Teacher's self- Efficacy;*
- *Overcrowded Classrooms and*
- *Continuous Professional Training for Technical Teachers.*

Analysis and Discussions

1.Perception of Parents:

This is a serious and growing concern in the Guyana Technical and vocational Education and Training System. This issue of parent's perception of students pursuing technical education subjects is greatly linked with the colonial times of "hard labour", and continues even in today's society. Many parents when asked about their child doing technical education subjects will give the following statements, that technical education subjects are for the less fortunate children, is for the people who are not clever, is for school dropouts, is for the low achievers in school, it does not offer a lucrative job, and for the problematic and delinquent child. Again, some parents will say that having their children doing technical education subjects will make their child get low managerial skills jobs.

As a consequence, parent's perception towards their child pursuing technical education subjects automatically contribute to the child's underachievement. There are many cases where the child had positively opted to study technical education subjects based on the teacher recognizing his potentials and capabilities, but the parents have a different option for them. This is because there is a current notion in the school system that technical education subjects are for the "dunce" students as mentioned earlier. This by itself creates a negative impact to the students who are pursuing studies in the technical subject. Most parents wants their child to become the lawyers, doctors etc., but fails to recognize that those areas are technical in nature as well, and that the foundation starts form doing the technical education subjects.

Hina,[6] (2017) states that the requirement for skilled workforce is increasing day by day but the lack of skilled work force is the serious issue in the various sectors of industrial production. Parents should encourage their children for Technical Education and they should reject this perception that this field is for low academic background students. The major benefit of doing technical education subjects is that it support for alleviation of unemployment as it assist in increasing skills of youth for meeting the requirement of industry.

2.Teacher Bias:

Teacher's biasness amongst students have a direct and long standing impact on their underachievement. In the case of Guyana, most students entering for the Technical subjects after completing their grade nine (9) examinations are all excited and enthusiastic, since that is the stream which will gave them the biasness of moving to study in the respective engineering fields at higher level.

As the complete their first level schooling and move on to the second level, that high degree of commitment and dedication gradually decreases because of some degree of biasness purported on to them by the teacher. This biasness would be in the form of not recognizing their efforts and contributions, deliberately awarding low scores as compared to other students with the same quality of work, always finding faults in their work and completely rejecting their ideas.

Kunjufu, [7] (1986) states that some students felt they were receiving different treatment from their teachers and complained about what they saw as teacher unfairness; and tend to state their career goals very, have much lower aspirations than achievers and often choose goals that are not in line with their major interest or abilities.

3.Teacher Self-efficacy:

It has been recognized over time that even though teachers who have successfully completed the Teachers' Training Programme through the Teachers Training Collage, a training institution of the Ministry of Education. There are still major concerns of the quality of teaching that is done in our school system. As a result, this issue has severe impact on our student's performance and their results at the end of the day.

Bandura, [8] (1997) precisely define "self-efficacy" as an individual judgement of his or her capability to organize and execute the courses required to attain the required type of performance. Consequently, there are many teachers who are delivering the respective technical curricula who still have difficulties planning, organizing, executing and effectively evaluating their lessons. Even thought they would have

received pedagogical training this deficiencies exists. It is very important to note that teachers with higher teaching efficiency (the teachers confidence in his or her ability to promote students learning) finds teaching meaningful and rewarding, expect students to successfully assess themselves when they fails, set goals and establish strategies for achieving those goals, have positive attitudes about themselves and students, have a sense or feeling of control, and share their goals with their students.

In the Guyana context the students are either left by the side or they are asked to work on their deficiency by themselves with minimal or no support. As a result, of these poor performances/underachievement, the Ministry of education have embarked on a series of coaching/workshop sessions. The objectives of these sessions are to enhance teacher's capacity in planning, organizing and executing their lessons more effectively using new methodologies and practices which will have an impact on improve student's performance.

Swars, [9] (2002) says that given the importance of teacher's efficiency regarding instructional practices further investigation should occur in these areas. In depth exploration should occur regarding teacher's perception of their effectiveness in their specific subject area.

4. Overcrowded Classroom:

Overcrowded classrooms is another serious issue that contributes to the underachievement of students in Guyana. According to the Non- Academic standards, an instrument that is used by the Ministry of Education to ensure that all schools delivering instructional programmes must satisfy the standard requirements. It articulates that the teacher to pupil ratio in any class should not exceed one (1) teacher to twenty five (25) students/pupils.

Conversely, the reality is that this is not the case. This is because of the less numbers of schools, and a large student's population. Moreover, the Ministry is working feverishly to ensure that more schools are built to compensate the large classes that are existing. In an overcrowded classroom they teacher(s) has little or no control over the entire class.

Very specifically, in an overcrowded classroom the teacher cannot control the entire class and manage the instructional period simultaneously. In situation like these the normal tendency will be that students will lose their attention span quickly, there will be lots of movements and communication in the classroom. Groups of student will be having their own form of discussion which will result in no learning taking place.

Holt, [10] (1976) in his findings reveals that overcrowded classrooms in many schools all over the world are causes of students not learning which resulted in poor performances, and lack of teacher control. He also further stated that where classroom are overcrowded, it affects students attention span, thus not allowing them to learn what they want to learn because the conditions for learning is not appropriate. In Guyana, most of the schools doing the technical education subjects are overcrowded. This is due to the fact the teachers operate on the premise that the low achieving students should be placed in these classes since it is for the weak students.

It is always important that teachers have small groups of students to teach. This has proven to be more effective and resulted oriented. In this case the teacher will have sufficient time to address each child individually based on their learning abilities; prepare instruction for individual child or group of children so that the lesson can be meaningful and the end product improved performance of students.

5.Continuous Training for Technical Teachers:

Continuous professional training for our technical teachers have always been a topic for discussion at all levels of the ministry of education. In any system where teachers, officers, and other classes of workers are not exposed to continuous training to improve their knowledge, skills and aptitude will become stagnant. Hence, the system that they are working for becomes immobile, no productive and one that is obsolete. Over the years the Education system has failed to attract and keep the technical teachers in the system, even though many attempts were made they were all futile. Only a small fraction of trained teachers are existing in the current education system. A larger percentage of them are untrained and unqualified.

As a results of this dilemma, students who shows potentials and commitment to pursue technical education subjects are not motivated to do so. Since, the persons in the system would have never benefitted from continuous professional development training to upgrade their knowledge and skills in the respective areas. Teachers are still delivering in the traditional mode of teaching when the world at large would have advanced. In this technological era and time new technologies and approaches have been developed, new materials, processes and principles that governs the usage of machines have emerged and our teachers are still operating in the traditional system.

Hayes,[11] (2010) in her findings states that even experienced teachers confront great challenges each year, including changes in subject content, new instructional methods, advances in technology, changed laws and procedures, and student learning needs. Educators who do not experience e? ective professional development do not improve their skills, and student learning su? errs. New teachers juggle an overwhelming number of unfamiliar issues, such as classroom management, instruction, curriculum, school culture and operations, test preparation and administration, state standards, parent relations, and interactions with other teachers.

Left to themselves, they may develop counterproductive behaviors. With extra support, however, new teachers learn more e? ective practices to apply to daily challenges. Many school systems provide mentors and induction programs for novice teachers. Most importantly, research shows that new teachers who received intensive mentoring had a significant e? ect on student achievement after as little as two years (Strong, Fletcher, & Villar, 2004; Serpell & Bozeman, 1999).

Our teachers need to be exposed to regular continuous training so that they can see emerging trends that is occurring within industries. Industrial attachments and plant site visits need to be organized so that the can adopt the best practices and share same with our students which forms a motivation for their improved performance.

6.Students Self- Interest:

Self-interest of the students has been recognized as a contributing factor to underachievement in technical education subjects. It is suggested that once students are not motivated by themselves or by their own will to do certain things, the activities or field of study they are placed into will not be meaningful or rewarding for them. In respect to the Guyana situation most of the students who are placed to do the technical education subjects are determined by their teachers. This is so because teacher's places students in TVET classes based on their scores gained at the end of their grade nine (9) class examination.

Some students initially had great expectations to be in the Arts or the Business fields, but later learnt that they are in the technical field. This situation right away creates a negative feelings within the child, where he loses interest and start to develop a behaviour that will lead to him not performing. The child entering the classroom on the first day is going with a negative attitude which will not work well in his academic pursuits .Added to this complex situation is some of the teachers who are delivering the concepts with the technical subjects does not make the teaching learning process an interactive and meaningful one.

Kate and Sauccer, [12] (2012) in their findings states that children wants to be able to relate and connect to what they are learning, as well as to one another, and the larger world. The lack of student's interest and engagement impacts not only on their learning, but the learning of others in the classroom. It can be concluded that that student's self-interest is a factor which contributes to their underachievement.

Suggestive strategies to curb underachievement of students

The following are some of the strategies that Delisle and Berger suggested to reverse the underachievement:

Supportive Strategies. These are the classroom techniques and designs that allow students to feel they are part of a "family," versus a "factory," Examples of such strategies includes;

1. Holding class meetings to discuss student concerns;
2. Designing curriculum activities based on the needs and interests of the children; and
3. Allowing students to by-pass assignments on subjects in which they have previously shown competency.

Intrinsic Strategies. These strategies incorporate the idea that students' self-concepts as learners are tied closely to their desire to achieve academically. Thus, a classroom that invites positive attitudes is likely to encourage achievement. Examples of such strategies includes;

1. Teachers encourage attempts, not just successes;
2. They value student input in creating classroom rules and responsibilities; and
3. They allow students to evaluate their own work before receiving a grade from the teacher.

Remedial Strategies. Teachers who are effective in reversing underachieving behaviors recognize that students are not perfect - that each child has specific strengths and weaknesses as well as social, emotional and intellectual needs. Example of remedial strategies;

1. Students are given chances to excel in their areas of strength and interest. Opportunities are provided in specific areas of learning deficiencies. This remediation is done in a "safe environment in which mistakes are considered a part of learning for everyone, including the teacher.
2. You should start your lessons with show and tell. Put simply, telling involves sharing information or knowledge with your students while showing involves modelling how to do something. Once you are clear about what you want your students to know and be able to do by the end of the lesson, you need to tell them what they need to know and show them how to do the tasks you want them to be able to do. You don't' want to spend your entire lesson having the students listening to you.

All of the above strategies are based on getting the student motivated. The more the student is motivated to learn the more involved there will be in the learning process. A student could be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. Intrinsically motivated students tend to employ strategies that demand more effort and that enable them to process information more deeply. Whereas, extrinsically oriented students gravitate toward tasks that are low in degree of difficulty and put forth the minimal effort required.

Recommendations

Below are some recommendations, but not limited to, that can remedy the underachievement of students' in technical education subjects.

1. That government and other stakeholders must provide the basic equipment and facilities to schools delivering TVET in order for them to achieve their aims of providing practical skills to students;
2. Expanding the number of school spaces and facilities;
3. That schools deepen collaboration with industries and other institutions that have the necessary equipment and skilled staff to enable all their teachers to perform industrial attachment in order for them to obtain the required practical skills needed;
4. To have a stimulating and engaging learning environment which promotes high levels of teacher and student interaction may contribute towards increased levels of involvement in the learning process by students.
5. Improvement in the learning environment along with a combination of strong leadership, pedagogical reform and inclusion of all education stakeholders (Governmental Agents such as the Minister of Education and School Supervisors, Teachers, Teachers' Union and parents) can help schools to achieve desired results regarding the performance of students.
6. Technical/Vocational Boards Official and Head of schools delivering TVET can play vital role to promote importance of TEVT in Guyana by arranging guidance and counselling sessions with parents during “Parents Teachers Meeting” at secondary schools.
7. Representative of TEVT can play an important role by guiding parents regarding importance to Technical education and Vocational Training during meetings

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to outline the issue of underachievement of Students in Technical subjects, particularly within a Guyanese context. The paper discussed some of the possible causes and analyzed some of the initiatives that appear to have addressed the issue using study that was conducted within the Caribbean. However, it is clear that a lot more research has to be conducted in order to facilitate greater understanding of the underachievement of students' in technical education subjects.

It can be concluded that students that underachieve can be helped with simple changes to course content and delivery of material. Student motivation is a large part of a student reaching their highest potential. Technology is a great tool to engage and empower students to heighten their attitude towards learning and allow them to succeed. Teachers can setup classrooms to encourage this motivation. The students experience should be caring, supportive and a sense of belonging. If the student has experience such as these they will participate in the process of learning. Class goals should be challenging but obtainable. The material should be relevance and shown how the skills taught in class can be applied in the real world.

Additionally, teachers within technical departments delivering technical subjects needs to ensure that the exposed themselves to many continuous professional development training programmes, so that they can be equipped with the relevant and up to date knowledge , skills, attitudes and competencies to deliver the respective curriculum. It has been recognized from the readings done by the researcher from the journals and reports that this is one of the factors that contribute significantly to the students under performance in the technical subjects.

Conversely, once the factors identified above can be remedied, then definitely base on the opinion of the writer and his experience in this field of education there will be significant improvement in the performance of students opting for the technical subjects.

References

- Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.
- De Lisle, J., Smith, P., & Jules, V. (2010). Evaluating the geography of gendered achievement using large-scale assessment data from the primary school system of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. International Journal of Educational Development, 30(4), 405,417.
- De Lisle, J., Smith, P., & Jules, V., (2005). Which males or females are most at risk and on what? An analysis of gender differentials within the primary school system of Trinidad and Tobago. International Journal of Educational Studies 31(4), 393-418.
- Ford, D. (1992). Self-perceptions of underachievement and support for the achievement ideology among early adolescent African Americans. Journal of Early Adolescence, 12, 228252.
- Hayes, Mizell. (2010), Why Professional Development Matters, United States of America.
- Hina, Ayuh. (2017), Parental Influence and Attitude of Students towards Technical Education and Vocational Training, International Journal of Information and Education, Vol.7, No: 7.
- Kate, Saucer. (2012), The Importance of Students Interest and Instructor Effectiveness on Student Performance, Education Masters Paper 243.
- Kunjufu, J., Lomax, P., (1986). Motivating and Preparing Black Youth to Work. Chicago: African American Image.
- Muir, Mike. What Do Underachieving Middle School Students Believe Motivates Them to Learn? Retrieved from: http://www.mcmel.org/motivatingUA.html.On: November 13, 2017.
- Read more: Guyana - History Background - Schools, Education, Government, and System - StateUniversity.com. Retrieved From: http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/586/Guyana-HISTORY-BACKGROUND.html#ixzz4zEzFx6yd. On: November 13, 2017.
- Strong, M., Fletcher, S., & Villar, A. (2004). An investigation of the e? ects of teacher experience and teacher preparedness on the performance of Latino students in California. Santa Cruz, CA: New Teacher Center
- Swars, S. L. (2005). Examining perceptions of mathematics teaching effectiveness among elementary preservice teachers with differing levels of mathematics teacher efficacy. Journal of Instructional Psychology, 32(2), 139-147.
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training Policy, 2017 https://education.gov.gy/web/ERIC EC Digest #E478, 1990.Retrieved from::http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/underachieving_gifted.html. On: November 13, 2017.

---

1. What Do Underachieving Middle School Students Believe Motivates.
2. Self- perceptions of underachievement and support for the achievement ideology among early adolescent African Americans.
3. Evaluating the geography of gendered achievement using large- scale assessment data from primary school system of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago.
4. Read more: Guyana- History Background- Schools, Education, Government, and System-State University.com
   http:/ / education.stateuniversity.com/pages/586/Guyana-HISTORY-BACKGROUND.html#ixzz4zEzFx6yd
5. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Policy,2017 https://education.gov.gy/web/