

Gender Bias in the Performance of Trinidad and Tobago Students on PISA 2009

Vivian Alexander* & Yukiko Maeda

Purdue University, Department of Educational Studies, Beering Hall of Liberal Arts & Education, West Lafayette, Indiana, USA

This study aimed to investigate the presence of gender bias in the Trinidad and Tobago sample of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 data (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2009a). We analysed the Mathematics, Science, and Reading Literacy items for gender differential item functioning (DIF). Our findings revealed three Mathematics items exhibiting DIF for Mathematics Literacy—two in favour of males and one in favour of females. We found no gender DIF in the Science, but we found one Reading Literacy item that showed DIF in favour of males. We also found that Trinidad and Tobago students did not respond to a substantial proportion of the Reading Literacy items. Further studies of gender differences in academic achievement in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean should evaluate the extent to which assessment items show bias towards particular groups of students.

Keywords: Trinidad and Tobago, gender, Differential Item Functioning, PISA

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