



CIMA

América Latina y el Caribe

By Agustina Thailinger and Diether Beuermann

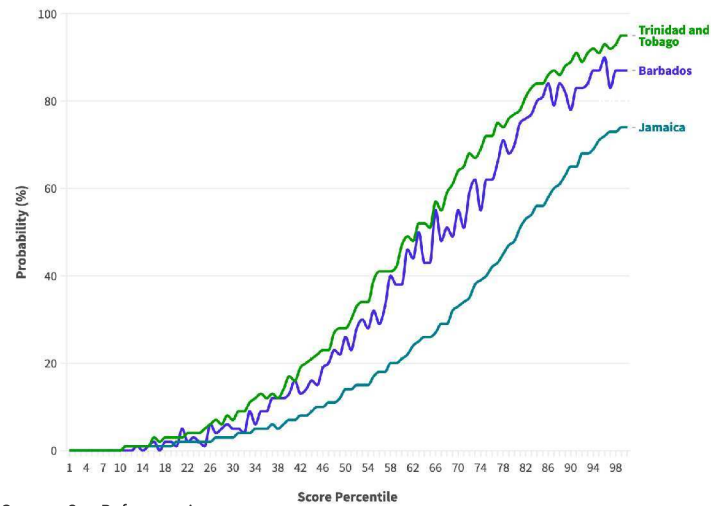
ARE GENDER GAPS INCREASING IN THE CARIBBEAN?

The Caribbean region has made considerable progress in educational outcomes, achieving a secondary school enrollment above 80%. However, there are still significant challenges in learning results, as shown by the relatively low passing rates in the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC). Moreover, the growing gender gaps in educational attainment and completion in favor of girls do not translate to the labor market, as outcomes for women are worse than those for men.

Unequal educational trajectories and disparities in the attainment of certificates are prevalent issues in the Caribbean

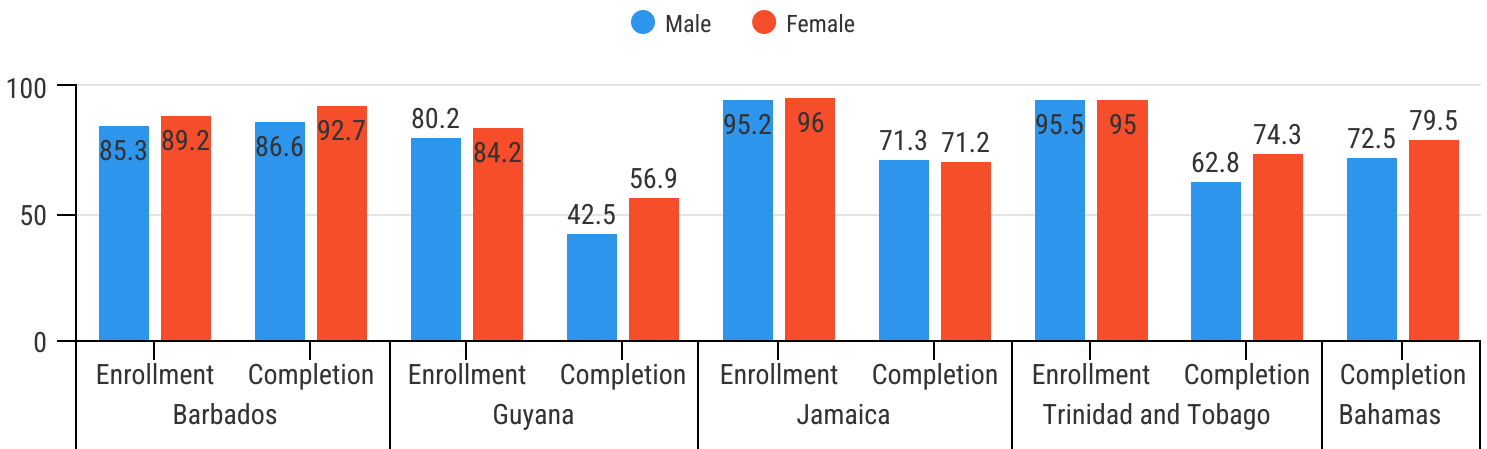
- In most Caribbean countries, students pass a national exam at the end of primary that determines which high school they go to. To enter tertiary education, they need to take the CSEC. A lot of inequalities persist in both examinations.
- Data from Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago shows that only an average of 65% of students who complete primary school qualify for tertiary education based on the CSEC examinations.
- Students who finish primary school below the 40th percentile of the national achievement distribution have almost no chance of qualifying for tertiary education at the end of secondary school.

PROBABILITY OF GETTING A CSEC CERTIFICATE BY PERCENTILE OF PRIMARY EXAM



Source: See Reference A.

SECONDARY SCHOOL NET ENROLLMENT RATE AND COMPLETION BY GENDER

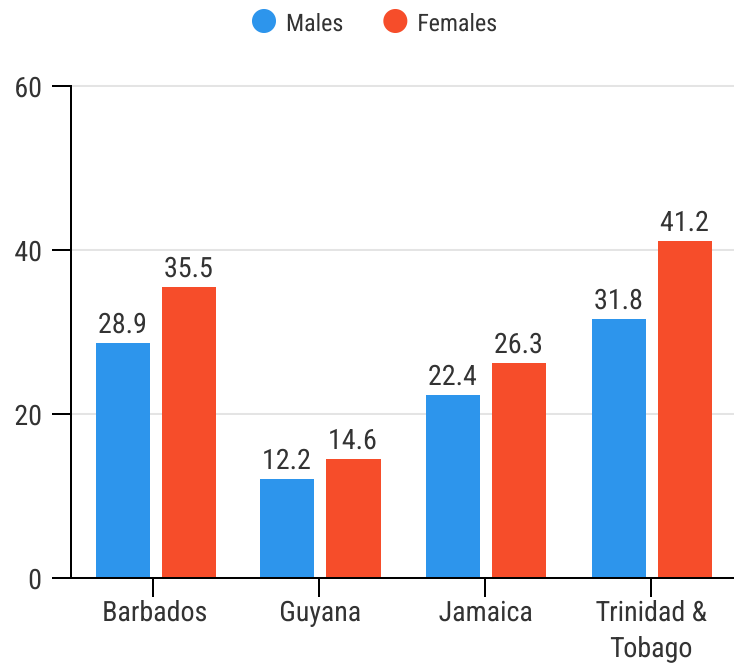


Source: See Reference B.

Gender gaps in education are in favor of girls in the Caribbean

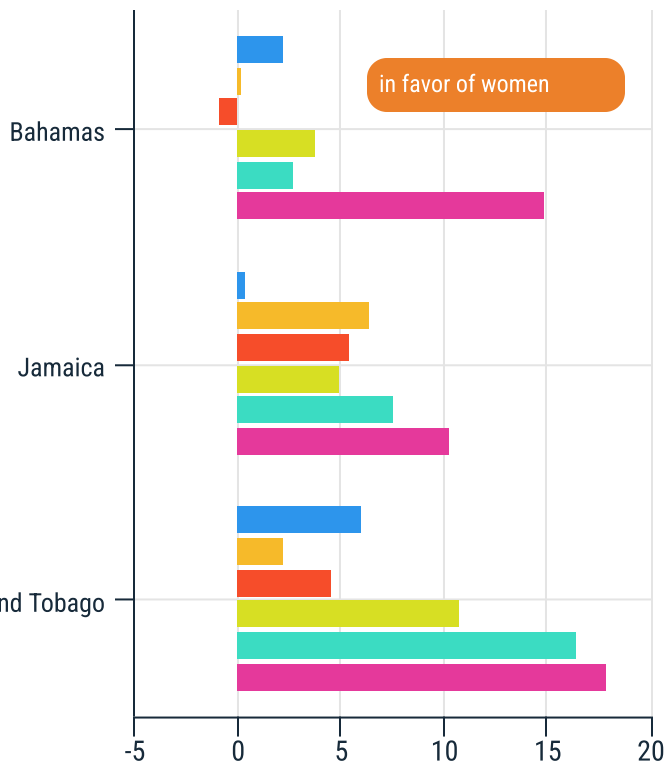
- Secondary school enrollment does not show significant gender gaps, but girls do outperform boys in terms of completion. Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago display statistically significant differences in favor of females: 14.35 percentage points (pp.) for Guyana, and 11.59 pp. for Trinidad and Tobago.
- Females also outperform males in terms of post-secondary education enrollment. However, the differences are statistically significant only for Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Women also exhibit higher levels of learning in secondary school, as indicated by CSEC data, which consistently reveals gender gaps in their favor. These differences are evident in terms of passing rates and the proportion of top performers in all subjects, with women achieving disproportionately higher results.
- It is worth noting that similar gender gaps favoring females in terms of completion and learning can also be observed in other regions.⁵

POST-SECONDARY NET ENROLLMENT RATE BY GENDER (AGES 18-23)



Source: See Reference C.

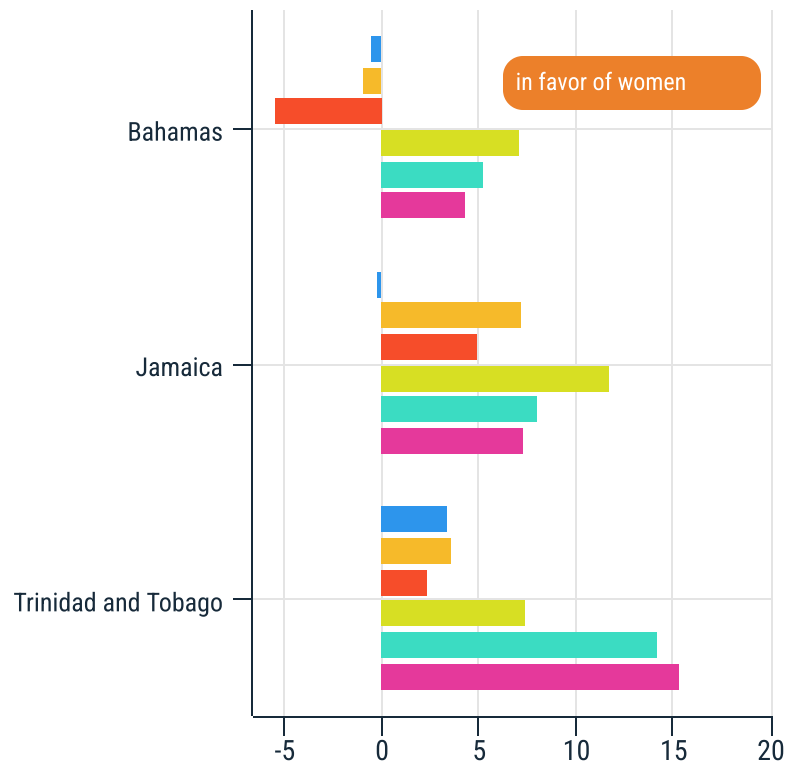
GAPS IN PASSING RATE, CSEC



● Math ● Biology ● Chemistry ● Food and Nutrition
● English A ● English B

Source: See Reference D.

GAPS IN TOP PERFORMERS RATE, CSEC



● Math ● Biology ● Chemistry ● Food and Nutrition
● English A ● English B

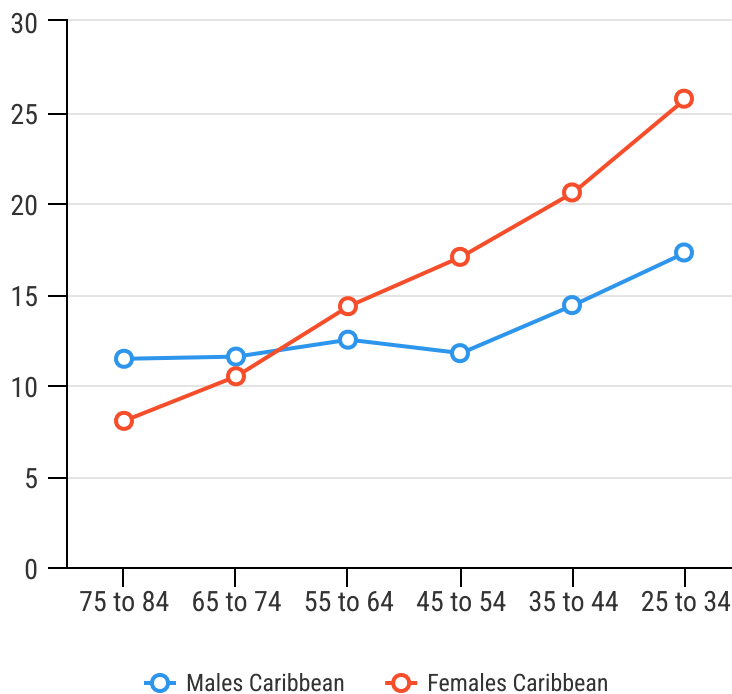
The gap favoring women in terms of educational attainment is increasing between cohorts in the Caribbean, faster than in Latin American countries

- The percentage of Caribbean women with complete tertiary education is higher than that for men, particularly for younger generations. This gap is ubiquitous across all the socio-economic spectrums.
- Although less pronounced, this trend is also observed for countries in Latin America.
- In the Caribbean there is no inter-generational improvement for males currently aged between 65+ and 45-54, with some improvement among younger generations. By contrast, females have consistently improved across generations.
- This starker inter-generational reversal of gender gaps in the Caribbean versus Latin America is reflected in the percentage of females and males with tertiary education for the 25-34 age group: the gap favoring females over males is 8.4 pp. in the Caribbean, which is significantly higher than the 5.2 pp. gap registered in Latin America.

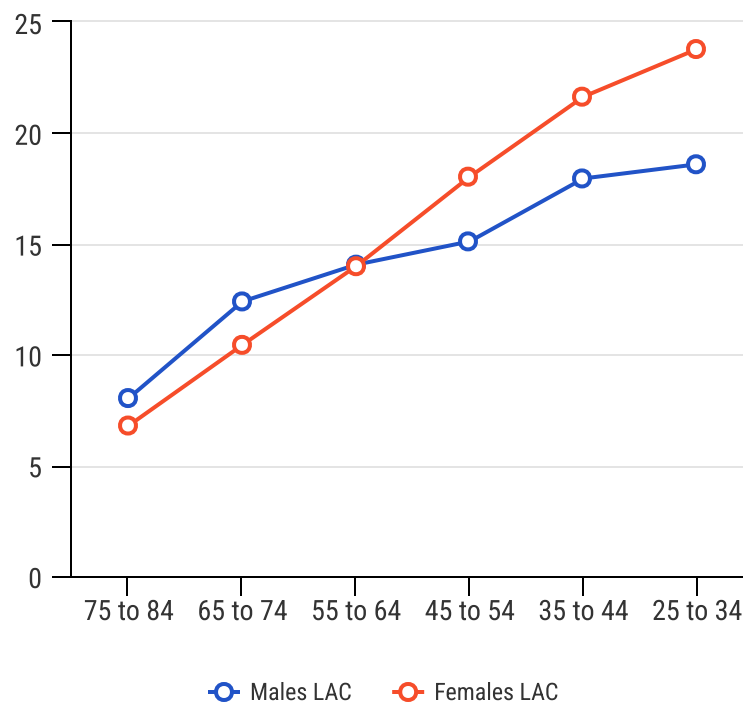
What could be driving these gender gaps?

- While girls' socialization involves closer supervision and teaches obedience, cooperation, and other skills that help them fit into school routines, boys are supposed to "go play" and tend to be not closely monitored, which is associated with lower levels of responsibility and self-control.¹
- Notions of masculinity are strongly related to the ability to provide for oneself and one's family. With this, early entry into the job market is a significant determinant for school dropout among boys.² This is reinforced by the labor market dynamics present in the region, where male's participation, employment rates and wages are higher than females' regardless of their level of education.
- Within the school setting, pedagogy is characterized as teacher-centered, authoritarian, traditional, and abstract, which could be counterproductive for boys, as they tend to be more responsive to interactive and experiential classes.³
- The teaching profession is largely dominated by females. Boys may be less enthusiastic about school when they are taught by female teachers, which may be correlated with poor academic achievement.⁴
- Teachers tend to interact differently with males and females and expect different conducts from the two groups, usually having higher expectations for females.⁵

TERTIARY EDUCATION IN THE CARIBBEAN, BY AGE GROUP



TERTIARY EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA, BY AGE GROUP

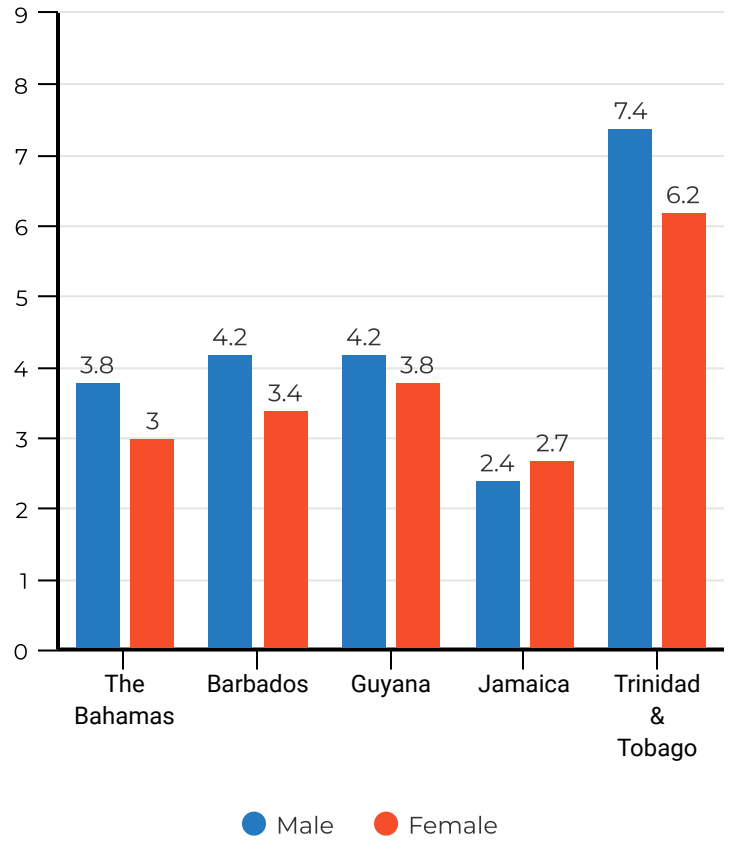


Source: See References F.

The labor market in the Caribbean does not reward the higher educational attainment achieved by girls, as men earn higher wages

- While girls in the English-speaking Caribbean are outperforming boys in terms of access to education and learning outcomes, the situation is reversed in the labor market. Conditions for females are less favorable than for males in terms of wages.
- Countries across the Caribbean, except for Jamaica, show a systematic difference in wages between males and females. Considering the English-speaking Caribbean countries, males average hourly salary is around PPP\$4.14,⁶ whereas for females it is approximately PPP\$3.5.
- The highest hourly wage for males is in Trinidad and Tobago, with PPP\$7.4, and the lowest is in Jamaica, where males earn PPP\$2.4 per hour. For females, the highest hourly wage is in Trinidad and Tobago (PPP\$6.2), and the lowest is in Jamaica (\$2.7).
- These undesirable dynamics will likely limit productivity and long-run growth potential.
- Further rigorous research on these issues is needed to shape evidence-based policies and promote educational gender equality in the Caribbean.

HOURLY WAGE (2017 PPP INTERNATIONAL DOLLARS)



Source: See References F.

The Information Center for Improvement in Learning (CIMA, for its acronym in Spanish) of the Education Division of the Inter-American Development Bank seeks to promote the use of data and indicators in evidence-based decision-making when developing education policy, with the goal of providing a quality education for all. With this objective, CIMA publishes a series of briefs that analyze indicators that contribute to the improvement of education quality in the region.

Web: www.iadb.org/cima
 Contact: education@iadb.org
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References: A. IDB-CCB calculations using matched SEA, GSAT and BSSEE exams (2004-2012 for SEA, 2004-2018 for GSAT and 2004-2011 for BSSEE) with CSEC databases. B. Thailinger et al. (2023), based on Barbados' 2016 Survey of Living Conditions, Guyana's 2012 National Population and Household Census, Jamaica's 2018 Survey of Living Conditions, Trinidad and Tobago's 2014 Survey of Living Conditions, and The Bahamas' 2014 Household Budget Survey. C. Thailinger et al. (2023), based on Barbados' 2016 Survey of Living Conditions, Guyana's 2012 National Population and Household Census, Jamaica's 2018 Survey of Living Conditions and Trinidad and Tobago's 2014 Survey of Living Conditions. D. Thailinger et al. (2023), based on Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago's learning assessment data. E. Own elaboration based on IDB's SCL Data Lake harmonized databases. F. Thailinger et al. (2023), based on The Bahamas' 2014 Labor Force Survey, Barbados' 2016 Continuous Labor Force Survey, Guyana's 2019 Labor Force Survey, Jamaica's 2016 Labor Force Survey and Trinidad and Tobago's 2015 Continuous Sample Survey of Population. [1] Figueroa (2007); USAID (2011). [2] De Lisle (2022); The Institute for Gender and Development Studies (2014). [3] De Lisle (2022). [4] Gayle (2002); De Lisle (2022). [5] Gayle (2002); USAID (2011); Parry (2000). For a deeper analysis of gender gaps in the English-speaking Caribbean, see: Thailinger, A., Pecha, C., Beuermann, D., Arias, E., Hobbs, C., & Piras, C. (2023). Gender Gaps in the English-speaking Caribbean: Education, Skills, and Wages. Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank. [6] Currency exchange rate that equalize the purchasing power of different currencies. This means that a given sum of money, when converted into US dollars at the PPP exchange rate (PPP dollars), will buy the same basket of goods and services in all countries (UIS Unesco).



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